

CLUBS.

Officers elected by the Nebraska State Federation on the last day of the sixth annual session, October twelfth:

President—Mrs. Draper Smith, Omaha.
 Vice-President—Mrs. Durland, Norfolk.
 Rec. Sec.—Miss McCann, Fremont.
 Corr. Sec.—Mrs. Neely, Omaha.
 Treasurer—Mrs. Cross, Fairbury.
 Auditor—Mrs. Page, Syracuse.
 Librarian—Mrs. Stoutenborough, Plattsmouth.

The program of the sixth annual Federation of Women's clubs will be preserved in cold type, and on reams of typewritten paper, but the inspiration and the new courage that women of one state and one purpose get from meeting together cannot be recorded, though the inspiration and courage will last longer than the type.

After the business sessions of Tuesday morning, and the hearty address of welcome from Mrs. Bushnell, chairman of the local board of entertainment to the delegates and visitors, and a graceful response from Mrs. Adelaide Doane of Crete, the federation listened with a very apparent pleasure to Mrs. Apperson's address to the federation of which she has been the conscientious president, the past year. The morning session was concluded with gratifying reports from the recording secretary, Miss Mary Hill of York, from the corresponding secretary, Mrs. Virginia Arnup of Tecumseh, from the treasurer, Mrs. Doane of Crete, from the auditor, Mrs. Hainer of Aurora, and from the librarian Mrs. Lambertson of Lincoln, the chairman of the reciprocity bureau, Mrs. Scott, from Mrs. H. H. Wilson of the credential committee, from Mrs. Smith of Omaha of the program committee, and from Mrs. Ricketts who was chairman of state correspondence, an office made obsolete by the late Biennial at Milwaukee.

The evening session was prefaced by two reports from the Biennial from Mrs. Monett of Central City and Mrs. Welch of Lincoln. Mrs. Fuller of Ashland, who is a clever china painter and chairman of the ceramics division of the evenings' work introduced the subject in these words:

The time has at last arrived although slow in coming, when no art exhibit is complete without an exhibit of decorated china. It also means that the time has at last arrived when ceramic art has taken its proper place among us and is recognized as one of the fine arts.

China decorating is more difficult to achieve than any other because of the varied processes through which it must pass before it is finished. A china decorator cannot apply the colors, and stand back and view the effect as the oil or water color artist. From the first stroke of the brush she must bear in mind the finished piece, or what it will be after it has passed through the furnace. For unless she works intelligently and knows perfectly the effect of the colors after they pass through the test of the crucible, she is not yet an artist. But there are hundreds today who can do this, and because of these things which must be taken into consideration, I think that the ceramic art should take the highest place in the list of fine arts, and the time is fast approaching when it will.

At the Paris Exposition the exhibit of ceramics has attracted as much attention as the finest painting or sculpture, and that of the National League of the United States, which is composed of clubs and individuals, who for the most part knew nothing of the art a few years since, has attracted universal attention

and has been the admiration and wonder of all Europe. It has been said "There is no other display of such exquisite variety in the whole exhibition." Daily visits have been made by the directors of the largest foreign factories. The director of the Royal Berlin factory visited the exhibit nearly every day and brought many distinguished visitors with him. He was delighted with the good firing which was done by the decorators themselves in their small kilns. The Paris Exposition has also demonstrated the fact that we need not go abroad to study ceramic art.

One visitor at the Exposition says "Our teachers show a better knowledge of technique, designs and firing, and a more independent style of decoration than the foreign teacher which shows that they are studying seriously and that this is only the first era of what will follow." When we realize that the United States has over seven hundred large potteries and a large number of smaller ones and over 30,000 china decorators who spend over a million dollars annually for material to work with, we can realize in a measure what is being done. The wonderful advancement that has been made in the art in the last decade will be followed by still greater in the next. The American ceramic artists are doing much to eradicate the erroneous belief that an article to be valuable and artistic must be foreign.

Mrs. Jaynes of Omaha read an historical treatise on pottery prepared by Mrs. Wiggernhorn of Ashland, who was unable to be present. "Prehistoric Pottery of the United States," was the subject of a careful paper by Mrs. Morey of Hastings. Mrs. Perfect of Omaha, gave the following definite information on the potteries of the United States:

Potteries of the United States.

"Pottery is its own historian," and presents the domestic, social and religious customs of both savage and civilized nations, and is a memorial of many people who were patrons, collectors and accomplished potters themselves. There are records of its existence many centuries before the christian era. "Clay is the first medium of artistic expression, and pottery is the oldest art." "Behold as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel." It is this absolute "power over the clay" which inspired men to work their concepts out of it.

After the discovery that clay could be made into household vessels, decoration suggested itself immediately. The pottery of today plainly shows how nations have advanced from crude ideas to more perfect tones and harmony. The potter's art was intuitive. Just as in our childhood we made mud pies and shaped the oozy mud into dishes, pans and various familiar forms. Educated taste in pottery and porcelain is immediately effective in the home. Public exhibitions have revealed the beautiful pottery that belonged to our grandmothers. Every collection of old and rare china educates the people, and creates a desire to possess beautiful porcelain.

The history of East Liverpool, Ohio, is really the history of the pottery industry in the United States. Mr. James Bennett, the pioneer potter there came to this country in 1834, from a pottery district in England. He found employment at the Jersey City pottery, (which at that time was one of the foremost potteries in the United States) and afterwards at Troy, Indiana, where "The Indiana Pottery Company" had recently begun to manufacture white ware. In 1839 he built a small pottery at East Liverpool, having found a proper clay for yellow ware. This was the pioneer pottery in that section. It has since become one of the greatest cen-

tres of the pottery industry in this country. The "Knowles, Taylor and Knowles Company" is now the largest pottery establishment in America.

The growth of the pottery industry in Trenton, New Jersey, since its beginning in 1852, has been marvelous. There are now establishments in Trenton engaged in the production of all kinds, from the commonest ware to the finest porcelain, plain and decorated. No doubt our early potters were often discouraged seeking clays essential to the production of white ware. At first no mines except of the common New Jersey fire clays were developed. The first potters of Trenton traveled thousands of miles in search of suitable Kaolin. The clay and mineral mines of England have been worked for perhaps three hundred years while in this country they have not been developed systematically, until within the last fifty years.

Belleek china was made about twenty-five years ago at Belleek Island. The workmen came to this country about eighteen years ago, and interested some of the Trenton people in the ware. The "Willetts Manufacturing Company" imported foreign workmen, and started the manufacture of American Belleek and still manufacture it. It competes successfully with foreign factories, in supplying white art porcelain to decorators. China for decorating is also made at the "Columbia Art Pottery" at Trenton. The Syracuse pottery makes a hard porcelain like the French, only not in perfect pieces. The "Chittanango Pottery," a few miles from Syracuse, makes a porcelain for the trade, more like the English ware.

Numerous other potteries of importance are located at Wheeling, West Virginia, Findlay, Zanesville, Cincinnati and Steubenville, Ohio, Philadelphia, Beaver Falls and Ford City, Pennsylvania, Baltimore, Brooklyn and Elizabeth, New Jersey, Corona, Long Island, Dedham, Massachusetts, and Boston, where the beautiful "Grueby" ware is made. It has been said that "No one of our potters has done more to refine the wares for daily household use, than Mr. Haynes of the 'Chesapeake Pottery' Baltimore. To make the cup and jug of the plainest home a thing of beauty has been his ruling motive.

Some of the exhibits at the "Centennial Exhibition" were a revelation to our potters, and stimulated them to greater competition. It is said that "greater progress has been made since that important industrial event than during the two centuries which preceded it." The "Rookwood" pottery is the most famous and it was the ceramic display of Japan at the exhibition of 1876 that inspired Mrs. Maria Longworth Nicholas, (now Mrs. Bellamy Storer) and thrilled her with a desire to possess a pottery of her own. With several other women, she had been doing satisfactory work, and a great deal of experimenting, previous to this epoch in China. In her own words, "She wanted to import a Japanese pottery, workmen and all." Her father laughed at her, but the idea of her making pottery interested him, so, in the midst of discouragement, he came to her rescue, with his wealth and generosity, and gave her a little old school house that he had bought at sheriff's sale, and so the "Rookwood" pottery began, and the first kiln was drawn on Thanksgiving day in 1880. She named it "Rookwood" after her father's country place near the city, so called on account of the number of crows which frequented the adjoining woods. The present buildings were erected in 1892 on the summit of Mount Adams, overlooking, as some say a hideous, smoke-grimed city, but in some ways a most picturesque and romantic city—that of Cincinnati.

During a recent visit to the "Rookwood Pottery" I was more impressed than ever before, with the idea, that through the untiring energy of American women, ceramic art has attained such successes. A single piece of "Rookwood" is an art education in itself. The designs are suggested rather than displayed, and invariably they are in sympathy with the shape of the piece decorated. The effort in this factory is to attain higher art, rather than cheaper processes. A spirit of freedom and liberty has prevailed, in order that the decorators may in every way be encouraged to cultivate individual artistic feeling; and this freedom is more likely to develop men and women of genius than those methods which do not encourage individuality.

The reports that come to us from the "Paris Exposition" must be very gratifying to our potters. They prove that we are no longer considered imitators. Austria has been successful in imitating Tiffany glass, but Japan was unable to compete with "Rookwood" pottery. The production of new colors and glazes by the Long Island potteries, and Trenton's decorated porcelain made a collection which put America definitely in the lead.

Ceramic art in America has a brilliant future. All the materials necessary are at our command, and with the enterprise, originality and taste with which the average American is gifted, the artist can feel confident of his ability to compete with the best, the world has produced. And with our encouragement and patronage, as loyal American citizens, and ceramic decorators, America will lead the world, in her ceramic manufactures.

Miss Butterfield of Omaha, read a well considered paper on "Pioneers of Ceramic Art in America." At the close of the papers, Mrs. Hall remarked that Rookwood pottery made the best display in the Paris Exposition. Every single piece there has been sold to some European museum. A paper on "The Influence of Ceramic Art on the Home," was read by Mrs. Brock of Lincoln. She paid attention to appropriate methods of decoration. Previous to the talk by Mrs. Hall, Professor T. M. Hodgman, talked briefly in behalf of the Nebraska Art association, mentioning its aims and purposes and urged all the ladies of the federation to become members so that the cause of art in the state may be bettered.

Mrs. Hall occupied the remainder of the evening with a talk about art after which reproductions of some of the art features of the Paris Exposition were shown on a screen. Mrs. Hall made the trip to Paris especially to view the art exhibit which she says is probably the best collection of modern art that will be brought together in the next hundred years. The French are most largely represented of course. They have a majority of the jury that awards prizes and to the French painters ten gold medals have been awarded, the American and the English painters each receiving three. It was the general sentiment, however, that the French were deserving of these honors as more painters among them are turning out better work than those of any other nation. Out of 287 American exhibitors at the Exposition, 103 received medals of some kind, showing the general excellence of the work.

Mrs. Hall thought that the two painters, Whistler and Sargent, will come in for the greatest amount of honor of all exhibitors from this country. From her conversation with leading French artists, Mrs. Hall drew the conclusion that a growing respect for American work is felt. She recently saw that a prominent French artist was quoted as saying that America would furnish the second renaissance in art for the world.