

The views shown were very fine and clear and it was a treat to see them. Mrs. Hall's closing remarks were that Nebraska should erect a monument to the soldier hero, Colonel Stotsenburg.

Wednesday afternoon was devoted to a musicale prepared under the direction of Mrs. E. H. Barbour. The numbers were all of American authorship and was one of the most delightful and successful musicales ever given here. Mrs. Eames of Lincoln read a paper on the music of American Indians and Negroes and the celebrations when it was most used. The lecture was illustrated by songs and piano selections. After Mrs. Eames there were thirteen numbers representing J. C. D. Parker, Henry Parker, Abt, Nevic, Liebling, MacDowell, Herbert and Schlieffarth.

Wednesday was a day of social and musical diversion fully reported in last week's Courier. Luncheons, dinners and a large reception with the afternoon musicale characterized the day.

Thursday was devoted to the discussion of economic subjects. The morning meeting opened with a short business session at which a proposed amendment was read relating to the election of officers. According to amendments already in force officers are nominated by the Lincoln system. The new amendment cannot be voted upon before the next annual meeting. It reads that the presidents of clubs shall constitute the nominating committee. This plan has been tried in Colorado. Mrs. Decker was called upon and testified to the satisfactory results achieved by that mode of election.

Mrs. Mary Moody Pugh, chairman of household economics, presided over the Domestic Science discussion. Mrs. Pugh reported the work in her department accomplished over the state and pled for the greater co-operation of club women. In addition to the work of clubs she told of the many practical lectures given by Mrs. Harriet S. MacMurphy who addressed sixteen farmers' institutes and also conducted a scientific kitchen during the state fair.

"Are cooking school methods practical in everyday life?" was answered in the affirmative by Miss Rosa Bouton.

Mrs. J. Paul of St. Paul, presented "The Domestic Problem and Its Solution." She recalled the early household efforts and felt assured that the naturally robust constitution of her family was alone responsible for the survival of its members.

Mrs. Fletcher of St. Paul, spoke of the sanitation of the home and of the necessity to guard against the microbes in impure air.

Doctor Georgiana Grothan of St. Paul reported the domestic science session of the biennial convention.

Mrs. MacMurphy talked about food adulterations and the methods of enforcing pure food laws. She had found pure food laws in Nebraska but no funds with which to enforce them. She read a letter from Mr. Frank B. Hibbard, food commissioner, telling what had been done for food protection in other states. He wrote that Nebraska had become the dumping ground for all articles of food prohibited in other states. The letter excited so much interest that by request copies of it will be distributed to the clubs.

Mrs. Minnie Durland of Norfolk, told of the methods by which her club induced women to enter the home department through which women might enter without incurring other club obligations.

One of the most interesting speakers was Mrs. Susa Young Gates of Provo, Utah, who gave an enthusiastic report of the household economics convention held at Toronto, Canada.

"Ethics of Home Life," was briefly treated by the Reverend Mary Girard Andrews of Omaha.

Mrs. Anna M. Steele of Fairbury, treated the topic, "Science vs. Drudgery," and advocated the training of both boys and girls in the duties and requirements of the home life.

Miss Julia Haskell, chairman of the educational committee, presided at the afternoon program.

Mrs. Wheeler's paper on the School laws of Nebraska:

The School Laws of Nebraska.

There are a number of good things which might be said of the school laws of Nebraska—too many for the time. Do the laws make the schools what they are? Are the schools as good as they can be? If yes, the laws are all right. If no, remember that no law is self-enforcing, either of the statutes or of the home. What a different proposition it would be to train up a child in the way he should go if the home laws, once enacted and delivered to him, insured obedience. We know that behind the law of the home must be a force impelling or compelling acquiescence. Behind the school laws of Nebraska must and does stand the force of public opinion, which is absolutely irresistible. And what makes public opinion? We, the people. If city school boards are corrupt, if school district officers are inefficient and indifferent, it is because we permit it. Not even behind the screen of no suffrage can we women shield ourselves from or shirk this responsibility. The school district in this state is all powerful in school affairs, and every woman twenty-one years old holding real or personal property assessed at the last annual assessment, or having children of school age in the district, is entitled to a vote at annual meetings and school elections. School age is five to twenty-one years. School district officers are: Moderator, who acts as presiding officer of the board; director, who acts as clerk, and treasurer, whose duties are those usually performed by that officer. The district board consists of these three officers, who are elected at the school meeting. This board employs the teacher, makes the course of study and does all things pertaining to the management of the school, except what the school meeting itself determines, as, for example, what the tax levy shall be. The importance of the school officers to the community interested in having a good school is tremendous. Whom you elect for school officers is as much more vital to the children's welfare than whom you elect for governor, as it is more to you who is your husband than who is your pastor. Yet how many go to the school district annual meeting? How much thought and discussion is given in our homes to our school elections in comparison to what is given to who shall be governor, or senator or congressman. Yet the one affects not nearly or personally but as a state, the other in our nearest interests, our children. Not to decry a keen interest in all public affairs—far from it—but let us not overlook our nearby duties and opportunities. The educators in our state realize the gap between the district school as it is and as it might be. Some of those who have considered the subject with care favor larger graded schools and transportation of pupils where necessary. But such changes, no matter how advantageous, must be sanctioned by the voters at the school meetings and must be agitated before they can be carried into effect.

We, in our state, take pride in our resources—our corn, wheat, hogs and cattle, and our October days. But the best of all products is men and women—not stolid men and bass wood women—but strong, noble, virulent people who rejoice in usefulness and service to their fellows. Homes and schools—not either, but both; not here and there one, but a strong pull all together will make the next generation an im-

provement on ourselves, and is this not peculiarly the work of women? If this Federation, numbering more than three thousand women, determined today to resolve itself into a huge educational committee, with each woman a working member, such an impetus would be given to school work as would rank our schools among the foremost in the United States. Not infrequently we might discover a need for some reform at home for the benefit of the school, if we took to school visiting. Educators recognize the need of the closest co-operation between home and school. It is dwelt upon at their gatherings. It is discussed in the last published report of the state superintendent where an active interest in the schools and an aroused public sentiment in their behalf is asked.

The present apportionment of school funds is in certain respects inequitable. The public school system derives revenue from two sources—known as the permanent and the temporary school funds—besides the taxes levied for its support. These funds are both provided constitutionally. The Enabling Act provides a common school fund to be derived from Sections 16 and 36 set apart in every township for this purpose. The permanent school fund is derived from five sources—first: Such percent as granted by congress on sale of lands in this state; second: money arising from sale or lease of school land; third: proceeds of all lands granted to this state and not otherwise appropriated; fourth: proceeds of property coming to the state by escheat and forfeiture, unclaimed dividends or estates of deceased persons; fifth: all property now belonging to the common school fund.

The temporary school fund comes from all gifts to the state not otherwise appropriated, interest of the permanent fund, rents of unold lands, and all fines, penalties and license moneys. The school funds are managed by a Board of Educational Lands and Funds consisting of the Governor and four of the State Officers. A school district may levy a tax for the support of its school not to exceed 25 mills. There is a state tax for this purpose not to exceed 1½ miles. In cities an estimate is made by the Board of Education to the County Commissioners who levy and collect the tax. The state funds are apportioned pro rata by the State Superintendent. He divides the whole amount of money as certified to him by the State Treasurer by the number of children of school age in the state as shown by the school census of that year. This census must be taken annually by one of the school district officers or his appointee. The money is sent to the County Treasurer by the State Treasurer, divided on this basis. The County Superintendent distributes it to the school districts in two parts of ¼ and ¾ each. The ¼ is divided equally among all the districts in the county, the ¾ pro rata among the pupils in the county. It will be seen that inequitable division occurs where the ¼ share is the same for districts of 5, 500, or 5000 children. Again, a railroad runs through a school district. The taxes it pays enable the district to maintain a longer term of school at a less levy than the adjoining district having no railroad tax to swell its fund, can at a levy bearing heavily on the property owners. In the Superintendent's report for 1897-98 is a suggestion that if the state apportionment were made on a basis of average daily attendance, it might help to enforce "compulsory education as well as more equitably distribute state funds.

We have a law saying that all children between eight and fourteen years of age must attend school at least 12 weeks every year. The law has that awe-inspiring legal phraseology that obscures the meaning of most laws—has

penalties fixed and appears as legal and binding as any of them. But listen. In Adams county in 1898 between eight and fourteen years of age, the census showed 3,762 children while 2,829 attended school. In Lincoln school district last year 4,722 were returned while 2,688 attended. An excellent example of public sentiment not behind the law. If every taxpayer knew the state would bear a heavier share and his district therefore a lighter one of school expense for every additional child in school, his interest in compulsory education would be quickened. And then the teacher! She must pass an examination in common branches for a third grade certificate—a few additional subjects for a second grade and have a college course or its equivalent for a first grade one. There is a prevalent belief, however, that ability to pass examinations and even the possession of the teaching talent well trained is not all that is required to procure positions in the teaching world. So will it be until the schools are distinctly and forever out of politics and that will happen whenever the children's mothers tell the children's fathers that it must happen and parents work together for that end. This is no Utopian dream. There are cities and country schools of which, had I time, I could tell you, where a man's political party cuts no more figure in his candidacy for a school office than his weight or his height. This condition is what this Federation could bring about in Nebraska and thereby have answered forever the question sometimes impertinently put. For what is the Federation? It has come to my ears very lately that in Omaha, the teachers are on a civil service basis, put there by the efforts of the Omaha women.—I doubt not, the Omaha Woman's Club, to which all honor for this good work.

There are more than 9,000 teachers in Nebraska, more than 7,000 of whom are women. They touch our children closer, influence them more profoundly than any body or thing outside our own homes. Do we know who they are? What their fitness for this trust? We should make it our first consideration. We do, if we make it any at all, put it nearer the last. If we valued teachers as we should, stood by them helping them in their struggles as they do us in ours to bring our children up well, would public sentiment permit that when this teacher is a woman, she be paid 25 per cent less than a man for the same work? We do not put teaching as a profession when we must if we would make ours a state famed for its manhood. When we make people our chief produce, teachers and parents will receive the consideration accorded to those who do the business in a community. Let us pay teachers as well as we can in money without running in debt. As for debt let us oppose it always and cut the garment according to the cloth in public as in private affairs. But we can add the money, honor and consideration. They deserve it. There is no more conscientious and devoted body of workers as a class than teachers. What induces a good lawyer to give up his practice and serve this state as a Judge for half what he can earn in the practice? There are things besides money that lead people to certain vocations and these count. Let us make them count for the children.

We have a few text book laws which includes general school supplies. In the main, it seems to give satisfaction. There are those who object to it, chiefly on the ground that it tends to make children careless of their books. Not owning them, they abuse them. Is this a commentary in their morals for which the home rather than the school must be held responsible? Let us be fair and blaming the schools where they deserve it, take it ourselves