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OBSERVATIONS.

Nebraska club departments and club work is increasing to such an extent that it is at first thought unseasonable to beg for a new department and to divert even a small amount of attention from those departments now in existence and at vigorous work. Second thought of the subject, however, does not present the same foreboding aspect; hence the plea for an Audubon or bird-study department. The name is not all-important. The New York and the Iowa club curriculums offer either an Audubon or bird study department; other federations presumably presents similar courses. In Nebraska there are many birds and the number of species is constantly increasing. Nevertheless if the results from such a department were purely instructive and scientific the reasons for organizing such a course of study would be at the present time neither sufficient nor convincing. The benefits derived from keen observation and intimate acquaintance with birds are numerous and intricate and offer a whole field of new experiences that are worth while to every woman.

The study of birds, whether during freshman or graduate work, necessitates many both short and long out-of-door excursions; thus establishing a fresh air bureau in the family, which not infrequently acts as a wonderful health restorer. To those interested in child study the subject offers another phase. There are few children who do not possess a lively interest in birds. A mother who is intelligently informed upon this theme is held in added respect by her offspring, especially male, and often by this means she can discard the continual don't, don't, and substitute the prevalent theory of do,—that is do something

else. Birds, their language, their moral and social customs, offer a field of activity wide enough even to employ many of the proverbial small boy's hours of wide awake energy.

Bird-study also gives to the mind a certain grace and beauty just as special physical movements give added grace and suppleness to the body. A woman whose name is on the list of speakers for the coming Iowa State Federation with the subject of "birds," is one of the most charming companions imaginable. Some months ago she happened to be in a region that was strange to her, but she knew the note and call of many of the native birds and could gossip of their life and habits in the most interesting manner to her friends. She felt the harmony of the out-of-door world and each breath of the pine, each bird, each flower that lifted its head quickened her joy in life. Doubtless she had always taken joy in nature, but much of it began with the organizing of a club of women for the purpose of bird-study. Soon the husbands and children were interested and shortly this small club become one of the main factors in the family life and hence in the town life.

A humanizing influence must naturally result from this close observation of a life that is so much more fragile and dependent than our own. This increased appreciation of birds will make itself felt and the altruistic day will come, when on Easter morning, women in the spirit of contrition and worship will not go into the house of the Lord, wearing chapeau confections, adorned with gay birds, whose glassy eyes and stiff throats mock the Easter anthem that is their birthright.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

We accept with gratitude the timely and generous invitation of the Courier to "send a message to the club women of Nebraska." Always a pleasant task, at this Easter time it is a doubly agreeable one. The tides of being rise higher when the spring winds blow. We feel the ecstasy of a world returning but not yet here. The first bursting bud, the greening blade of grass, the crocus, the blue-bird's song, or even the chirp of the sparrow, each have a special message filling us with the subtle elation of spring. So with energies renewed and fresh thoughts in our hearts, we rededicate ourselves to the work that lies before us.

The hearty responses to the leaflet so recently sent out, and the commendatory words of the course pursued are most encouraging. This enthusiasm and eagerness to help on the work are notes which ring true and augur well for the future of the federation. Several clubs having already named a "State Federation Day" and appointed a club extension committee.

At the annual meeting in October we confidently expect every club report to include these two items, as well as the appointment of an "Education Day" of which the educational committee will speak.

It has been stated that the policy of the present administration is club extension. If a woman's organization can carry two policies, the statement is correct. If not, club extension is an important part, but not the whole policy. The strongest desire of this administration is to establish closer and more helpful relations between the federation and the clubs that now exist; to create in clubs a more active interest in state work; and to encourage co-operation between our clubs and the various standing committees. In this union of interest only lies the strength of our federation. To this end it is most desirable that we have a larger executive force. In addition to our present officers, I would advise a vice president from each congressional district to represent the interests of the federation in the clubs of her district and to represent their interests in the executive board. In our growing and prosperous condition many changes seem advisable, which will be noted by the constitution committee. All went without it. But once federated committee reports in this issue are full of interest, and should receive the careful consideration they deserve. In no other way can committees be of assistance, nor can clubs become imbued with the spirit of the federation.

"All great work depends upon organized co-operation—systematized, regulated, mechanically perfect." Nowhere is it, or will it ever be possible, to supplant the individual effort and the individual initiative, but in addition to this for the accomplishment of any specific purpose, there must be a union of forces. No one of us can do everything, but each can do something, and if we work together the aggregate of these somethings will be most satisfactory.

Women suffer too much from isolation. Men find diversion in innumerable ways that society does not vouchsafe to women. As every one knows, while American men have been busy making those industrial and commercial improvements that have become the surprise of the world, women have been their able assistants, remaining in the homes, spinning and weaving. But now that invention and civilization have taken the trades from the home we have earned our leisure and as human beings may certainly come together on a human basis, and talk human needs and hopes and aspirations.

The Rev. Newell Dwight Hillis says: "The problem of the republic is the problem of Childhood." Who solves this problem of childhood? The mother. Can she, then, be in too close touch with every force which has for its aim the betterment of that child, physically, mentally and morally? That, today, is the ideal of women's

clubs. They constitute a strong social force, one that in the past has thrown its influence toward the betterment of social conditions, and believe its past a prophecy of the future. The club movement is now recognized as a part of the great educational trend of this era, and as a factor to be counted in shaping public opinion. A clever man has said: "As think the women, so thinks the nation," and we are not disputing this clever man. Membership is not limited to any one church or neighborhood or walk in life, for the club has fused into good fellowship the conflicting elements of many a community as nothing else has ever done. The fact that great bodies of women—women whose deeper natures have been roused to activity, who are interested in the thought and progress of the age—are studying the educational and industrial needs of their own state, is in itself a sufficient proof of the use of women's clubs. As Mrs. Henrotin concisely states, "It will always be to the advantage of any state to have within its borders a large body of women pledged to the higher interests of education, civics and social economics, apart from politics."

It is a well accepted rule of conduct that privilege implies obligation. Service to others is the great solution to the problem of life, and women can well afford to be pioneers in every movement whose aim is the elevation of humanity. All things for everybody, is the new cry. To quote from Mrs. Croley, "The lesson of the hour is, help for those who need it, in the shape in which they need it, and kinship with all and everything that exists on the face of God's earth." But while we are learning this lesson of how to live for others, let us not forget that we are living with others, in an atmosphere where caste is not recognized, where every one is on the same footing and where the most opposite ideas find equal claim to respect. In the club we pool our individual notions, and out of this common fund comes, not your idea nor mine, but like a composite picture a well-rounded, beautiful whole.

Opportunities are commands. And to be useful according to the measure of one's opportunity is to live. I could not close without making an appeal to every Nebraska club woman on her personal responsibility in this matter. Determine henceforth not to wait to be ministered unto, but to minister, in order that we may attain our highest usefulness. To those who have learned the lesson of organization, pass it on to those less fortunate. Women's clubs have come to stay. They should be accepted and made the most of to the end that kindness, helpfulness and service should enter into them, and make them a power for good in the community. Our energies, as a rule, can be employed to much better advantage in uplifting than in pulling down. This creation of good, prevention of evil, education for all, and the