

the rare personality of its founder, that it is useless to speak concerning it without referring to Mrs. Stoutenborough, in spite of her protest.

One evening, at dusk, Mrs. Stoutenborough heard a violent pulling of her door bell. On opening the door she discovered six boys standing in the uncertain light, with the request on their lips:

"Say, Mis' Stoutenborough, won't you start a boys' club?"

A boys' club was soon organized that grew and flourished. The boys who were charter members six years ago are now seniors in the High school or graduates, and having too many demands upon their time, they relinquished their membership to thirty-five younger boys, who hold this privilege as the greatest of honors.

Historical subjects that are of vital and throbbing interest to every boy are discussed in the club. Besides the knowledge gained from books Mrs. Stoutenborough reads or tells some story that has a practical application. One thought that is especially impressed upon the boys is that it is the quality not quantity of work that counts. The following lines are favorites among them:

"If I were a cobbler  
It would be my pride  
The best of all cobblers to be;  
If I were a tinker  
No tinker beside  
Should mend an old kettle like me."

A story that is well-liked and known to the boys is that of a judge of wide reputation who sent for a carpenter to build a fence. A strong, young fellow appeared. The judge said:

"I want you to make the fence strong and substantial." Later the judge on a tour of inspection, found the carpenter planing the boards and numbering them carefully.

"My good man," he exclaimed, "there is no use in all that work, and, besides, I'll only pay you \$1.50."

Coming back an hour later the judge was displeased to find the carpenter still finishing up the boards with his planes.

"Why, didn't I tell you there was no need of all that care? The fence is to be covered with vines. I don't care how it looks."

"I do," said the carpenter. When it was finished the judge asked the price. "A dollar and a half," said the carpenter.

"Why did you spend so much labor on it, if it were not for more money?"

"For the job, sir."

"But nobody would have seen it."

"I should have known it, sir."

Ten years later—and this is the part that pleases the boys most—that judge had the letting of a contract, in which there was much money, for the erection of several public buildings. There were a number of applicants, but there was one he particularly noticed, his carpenter of ten years before. The judge gave him the contract for he knew that the work would be well done. When some perplexing problem now disturbs the boys they often remark, "Remember the fence-builder."

The boys are extremely fond of anecdotes of Sir Walter Raleigh and any deed of gallantry is a joy to them. A story from Scotland is one they particularly relish. A Christmas treat was given in a mission hall in Edinburgh. Several hundred children, many of them barefooted, were at the doors, waiting long before the hour of admission. One little girl, more delicate than the others, and seemingly unused to the cold, shivered and danced from one little bare foot to the other until a small boy, who had been watching her, could endure it no longer, and throwing his hat to her, exclaimed:

"Ye maun stan' on that."

The boys take these lessons of chiv-

alry deeply to heart. It was not long after this story had been told, that Mrs. Stoutenborough on going into the post office was met by a little boy who sprang forward to open the door saying, "I want to be a Sir Knight too."

When these boys are full grown men and their influence is making itself felt through their integrity, thoroughness of work, and courtesy, then only can Nebraska begin to measure the effect of the Boys' History club of Plattsmouth.

#### Report of the Lincoln City Improvement Society.

**ORGANIZATION.** The City Improvement Society of Lincoln, Nebraska, was organized in January, 1897, at a meeting of the board of directors of the city federation of women's clubs. The formation of this society was the result of study undertaken by the Civics Department of the Woman's club. The course of study conducted by the leader of this department, Mrs. W. G. L. Taylor, was on the subject of Municipal Government in European and American Cities.

**COMMITTEES.** The work of the society is conducted by special committees. About thirty different committees acted during 1897. These included committees for improving and beautifying the school grounds,—a special committee for each school being chosen—also a committee on the health ordinance, care of the streets, repair of sidewalks, cutting down of weeds, cooperation with the Charity Organization, removal of waste papers, suppression of obscene pictures, drafting of ordinance against expropriation, etc.

#### WORK OF THE SOCIETY THROUGH ITS COMMITTEES DURING 1897.

**SCHOOL GROUNDS.** The improvement of the school grounds included setting out additional trees, grass-seeding, making flower-beds, and placing window boxes in all the schools, a new fence at the Elliott school, special improvements on the Capitol school grounds; grading, a new fence, and other necessary improvements at the Park school. In this work the principals, teachers, pupils and patrons all assisted. The school board furnished some of the necessary means. At the Capitol school over \$40.00 was raised by subscription among the pupils and patrons; \$60.00 was made by the pupils and teachers of the Elliott school by an entertainment, and \$58.00 was raised for the Park school by a concert organized by the chairman of the school grounds committee, Mrs. Seamark. This movement toward the improvement and beautifying of the grounds aroused and induced the children themselves to free the grounds from waste paper and rubbish, and to keep them tidy. The credit of initiating this movement among the schools is due to the first chairman of the Capital school grounds, Mrs. H. H. Wheeler, whose good example was followed by other schools.

**WEEDS.** Incessant war was waged against weeds by the chairman of the weeds committee, Mrs. Welch. She devoted herself to ascertaining the localities, chiefly vacant lots, where the weeds were most of a nuisance, and then reported these to the proper authorities who had them cut down. The city spent in this way during the summer of 1897, over \$250.00.

**NUISANCE AVERTED.** The society, by a resolution personally presented to the city council, was instrumental in preventing the erection of sign-boards at the street corners for the purpose of advertising.

**STREET-CLEANING PROCLAMATION.** The mayor, at the request of the society, set aside two days for street-cleaning.

**FINANCES.** During the year \$38.00 was received as membership fees from the 152 members at twenty-five cents each. Five dollars was given to the society by Sorosis Junior, and the same sum by Sorosis. Twenty-seven dollars and six

ty five cents was spent for incidentals, leaving a balance on hand of \$20.35, as the funds of the society at the end of the year.

1898.

**CANS FOR WASTE MATERIAL.** Thirty galvanized iron cans for waste papers were placed on the street corners through the efforts of the society's committee appointed for the purpose, Mrs. Welch and Mrs. Richardson. The cans were made under the direction of this committee, and paid for by the city.

**ORDINANCE AGAINST INDECENT PICTURES.** An ordinance in regard to indecent and objectionable pictures, posters, etc., was submitted by the society to the council and favorably acted upon.

**SCHOOL GROUNDS.** The work of improving the school grounds was accomplished as in the previous year. Eighty dollars at the Capitol school was used for this purpose. Extensive improvements were made at the Park school. Through the efforts of the chairman, Mrs. Seamark, \$40.00 to aid in this work was raised by means of an entertainment given by the high school seniors. The co-operation between the society and the school board was evinced by the meeting of the board with the officers of the society, and the chairmen of the different schools for the purpose of presenting the needs of the schools and discussing plans thereto.

**SEATS.** Through the efforts of the chairman, Mrs. Ogden, seats were furnished by the Traction company at the intersection of lines, for the accommodation of those obliged to wait.

**POSTALS PRINTED.** Postal cards were printed for the convenience of those wishing to inform the proper authorities of a violation of the ordinances. These cards were signed by the name of the society, and enabled one to give information without giving his own name, and perhaps thereby giving offense to neighbors or acquaintances.

**WASTE PAPERS.** Untiring efforts were made by the chairman, Mrs. J. R. Webster, to improve the untidy condition of our streets, due to waste papers. The theater managers and hotel proprietors were interviewed concerning the accumulation of waste papers, etc., on their premises, and much improvement followed in consequence of the removal of this source of evil. The chairman conferred with the superintendent of schools to secure the co-operation of self government leagues, and thus to help educate the school children of the city in the matter of tidiness.

**ARBOR DAY PROGRAM.** At the suggestion of Mrs. E. T. Hartley, the society furnished a city improvement program for Arbor Day.

**FINANCES.** The receipts of the year were \$5.25 from the twenty-one new members. The expenses were \$6.45; the balance remaining was \$19.15.

1899.

**EXPECTORATION ORDINANCE.** An ordinance against expropriation on the street cars was passed by the council.

**STREET SIGNS.** At the suggestion of Mayor Winnett, the society considered the matter of placing signs at the street corners, giving the names of the streets. The impossibility of the work for the whole city being done by the society was at once apparent, because of the great expense involved. However, as an incentive toward this much needed change, the society voted to place one hundred signs. The question of renaming the streets arose; many plans and much discussion followed. The matter was of course referred to the council, and until its settlement the society has been unable to proceed with its task of erecting street signs.

**CINDER WALKS.** As the result of the talk by Miss Herron on the Needs of the Social Settlement of Lincoln, before the society, cinder walks were made (at the street commissioner's order) in the

vicinity of the settlement, which heretofore had been entirely without walks.

**ADDRESSES.** During the year Mayor Winnett addressed the society; Miss Herron spoke on the Social Settlement at Eighth and X streets; a poem entitled "The Wider Sphere," written by William Reed Dunroy and dedicated to the society, was recited by the author, and Mrs. Taylor lectured on municipal government themes.

**FINANCES OF THE YEAR.** The receipts were \$6.00 from the membership dues at twenty-five cents each, and \$4.45 collected for street signs. The expenses were fifty cents; a balance of \$29.10 remained.

1900.

**OFFICERS OF 1900.** The officers of the society for 1900 were: President, Mrs. W. G. L. Taylor; vice president, Mrs. M. D. Welch; secretary, Mrs. Nellie M. Richardson; treasurer, Mrs. W. D. Fitzgerald; auditor, Mrs. H. J. Winnett.

**CLUB DELEGATES.** In response to an appeal from the society, the following clubs have expressed an interest in its work and shown a desire to co-operate by sending delegates to its meetings during the year.—Lotos, Fortnightly, Matinee Musicale, Woman's club, Sorosis, Woman's Faculty club, Atheneae, P.E.O., Wives of Traveling Men of East Lincoln, W.R.P.C. (Wives of Railway Postal Clerks), Century, Farragut Corps W. R. C. and Hall in the Grove.

Mr. Elmen, the street commissioner, and several city officers have addressed the society on methods of city improvement.

**ORGANIZATION OF THE CHILDREN.** The organization of the children of Lincoln into bands for the purpose of keeping the streets and yards cleaner, and the sidewalks in better repair, was effected through the chairman, Mrs. Ladd and Mrs. Seamark, and their assistants. These assistants, appointed from each school district, called meetings of the children and organized them into bands, each with its own corps of officers. Badges were furnished the members of the bands by the society; much enthusiasm was aroused, and some work accomplished.

**PROTEST AGAINST EXTENSION OF FENCES.** The society called attention to the practice of many property owners of extending their fences into a portion of the street, and the fact that after ten years of exclusive and uninterrupted possession, a title is acquired. The society sent a petition to the mayor and council for the removal of these obstructing fences, and that any further confiscation be prevented.

**OPENING THE CITY PARK.** Through the efforts of the society the grounds known as the City Park, heretofore used chiefly for the pasturing of the neighboring cows, were put in order and formally opened as a park. On one side a street was opened through, a new cross walk put in, the driveways graded and put in good condition, twenty-five seats, the lumber for which was donated by Mr. Woodward, were put in, swings were given by Mr. J. T. Thompson, and Mr. Elmer Stevenson, one hundred trees by Mr. E. T. Hartley, eight bushels of grass seed by the city; five hundred plants were contributed by florists, electric lights were given by the Electric Light Co., and the city employed a man regularly during the summer months. The formal opening, on the evening of July 12th, was celebrated by addresses of Mayor Winnett and Hon. W. J. Bryan; Hagenow's band furnished music, and ice cream was sold, the proceeds for the benefit of the society.

**MILK INSPECTION.** The necessity of pure milk and the need of its inspection in Lincoln was discussed. A committee was appointed to investigate the conditions in other cities, and the ordinances concerning its inspection. The reports were presented at several subse-

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