

CLUB NOTES

THE WEEK'S REVIEW

walls, there are certain people and certain characters in a book that we recognize as conventional. We have seen them in other books and we will see them in many more. Mrs. Zelotes is so common, yet I have never met her elsewhere in literature. For this power of original creation, or rather recognition and preservation of distinctly human and common types there is no American novelist to compare with Miss Wilkins, and abroad there is only Hardy, he of "The Laodiceans," "Far from the Madding Crowd" and "Tess of the D'Urbervilles."

Only frequent quotations from "The Portion of Labor" can give any idea of its great excellences and its grasping power. It is, I think, the most significant of any book yet written by Miss Wilkins. And she has written the most significant stories of any contemporary American.

She does not sacrifice her story to socialism or to a disapproval which she may hold of the wage system, for when her heroine and her hero meet to talk together, but mostly to be together, they do not use the sociological terminology, but they talk about themselves and of each other in the old fashion of lovers, to whom everyone else and everything else are tiresome. The portion of labor is to "Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity which He hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity; for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labor which thou takest under the sun." The meaning of the book is that the reward of labor is love for them who will take it and be content with the permanent, natural, whole-some affections.

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JAPANESE LULLABY.

Sleep, little pigeon,
and fold your wings,
Little blue pigeon;
with velvet eyes;
Sleep to the singing of
mother bird swinging—
Swinging the nest where
her little one lies.

Away out yonder
I see a star—
Silvery Star with
a tinkling song;
To the soft dew falling
I hear it calling—
Calling and tinkling
the night long.

In through the window
a moonbeam comes—
Little gold moonbeams
with misty wings;
All silently creeping, it asks:
"Is he sleeping—
Sleeping and dreaming
while mother sings?"

But sleep, little pigeon,
and fold your wings—
Little blue pigeon,
with mournful eyes;
Am I not singing?—see,
I am swinging—
Swinging the nest
where my darling lies.
—Eugene Field.

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A VICTIM OF PHILANTHROPY.

A meditative kitten looked
exceedingly distraught,
Across her furry, furrowed brow
were lines of deepest thought.
"How shall I best improve my lives?
I heard her, musing, say:
"I've only nine to live—I must
not fritter them away."

"It is appalling when I think
"It is appalling when I think
Has spent eight lives already,
and not one of them spent well!
But I shall plan mine carefully,
and make them all sublime,
And so leave noble paw-prints
on the shining sands of Time."

"I'm such a little kitten,
the first life of them all
I'll only chase my tail around,
and play with baby's ball.
The second, I'll be older—
and I think it would be nice
Entirely to devote my second life
in catching mice."

"And then the next one—let me see—
yes, I am sure the third
Could be employed with profit
learning how to catch a bird.
The fourth I'll roll in catnip,
oh, won't that be immense!
The fifth, I think I'll yowl away
on the back garden fence."

"But no—these are my pleasures,
and it isn't right a bit—
I know I ought to live my lives
for others' benefit.
I'm sure I ought to try the
philanthropic dodge and that
is awful hard for such a small
and ignorant little cat."

"These questions overwhelm me!"
She drew a shuddering sigh.
"I'm tired of living my nine lives,
I think I want to die!"
And with a sad, despairing moan,
the kitten, then and there,
Gave up nine ghosts. And once
again a cat was killed by care."
—Carolyn Wells, in Life

One of the marked results of club work for women is the increasing ability to look at both sides of a question. To consider a subject from all points of view, to comprehend not only its isolated significance, but its relations to other subjects and conditions, is unmistakable evidence of broadening mental power. The intelligent and animated discussions which are prominent features of all club meetings, radical differences of opinion freely expressed without feelings of personal injury, whatever the decision, are an advancement over the conditions of twenty-five years ago. Club women become less selfish and self-centred with every year of organized activity. Concerted effort is the enemy of littleness. At the recent meeting in Springfield of the Massachusetts State Federation, one session was devoted to discussion of "The Relation of Club Women to the Public Schools." Of vital interest to all club women, this subject was ably handled by Mrs. Ella F. Adams and Miss Maria Baldwin, both of Cambridge. Said Mrs. Adams, speaking from the mother's point of view: "Our relation is of a twofold nature. First, we have a duty to perform as citizens; secondly, we have a personal duty, owing to the fact that the schools are carrying on the work which we have begun in our homes. The mother reluctantly faces the separation which school involves, but finally throws too much responsibility upon the teacher. The mother needs to be vigilant, because great evils may creep into the schools."

"Many women hesitate to interest themselves in the public schools lest it should be called interference. But the schools are the hope of our republic. When they represent the best character of our people, they are adequate to raise the unpromising material sent to us from other lands."

"The mother helps by keeping in close personal touch with the teacher. She can open the eyes of the teacher to the human needs of the child. She can emphasize the value of ethical training. As her work in the home is the making of character, she can draw the attention of teacher and school officer to the frequent disregard of this goal."

"The mother can be influential with the school committee. That body generally welcomes the intelligent views of the community. It recognizes the right of the mother to make suggestions upon broad lines."

"The work of the mother is especially dwelt upon, but all women have a great responsibility in the matter. Since women have the school suffrage, they may control the schools if they choose, and that they do not largely avail themselves of the right seems to show a deficient civic sense, as well as an indifference to the welfare of the children."

Said Miss Baldwin, speaking from the standpoint of the teacher: "There is at present among those who are concerned with public school education a conviction that the school and the community should be brought together in more intelligent and helpful relation. A superintendent in a town near Boston directed his work chiefly to the end of bringing the best people of the town to appreciate and advance the aims of the schools. A large teachers' association in Boston has for its expressed purpose the acquaintance of parents with teachers and their work. Each of these movements expresses the dependence of school education upon an intelligent public interest. Undoubtedly this dependence is today greater than it has been in the past. The public school is not now the guardian of the intellectual interests only. Gradually there have been laid upon it many of the schemes of social reforms. Temperance, floral cul-

ture, manual training, love of the beautiful, humane feeling for animals—each of these asks the school to work out its great results. One need not seek farther for reasons why the community and the school should co-operate. He has only to realize how surely the social functions are being passed over to the schools."

"No part of the public has recognized this obligation more than women's clubs. Their interest has been expressed in hundreds of helpful ways. In many a small town they have been to the teachers an inspiring influence. It is of course inevitable that as women draw near to the schools they should recognize how great are the opportunities to use what power the school suffrage confers. For though they may be disposed to grumble at the meagreness of the grant, the quality of it does, in some measure, atone. It at least permits women to work where well-directed effort yields large returns. One earnest, united effort can effectively rebuke unworthiness in public school administration; can put in its place pure motives and disinterested zeal; and it surely is no mean privilege to uplift the character of educational service."

Following these discussions Reverend Charles F. Dole of Jamaica Plain addressed the Federation on the subject "What Good Can Women Do by the Use of School Suffrage?" Among other things he said: "It is strange how much more ready people are to cry 'What is the use?' over good things than over evil things. They do not say 'What is the use?' before they drink millions of dollars' worth of beer and whisky. They do not say 'What is the use?' before they rush into war. But they say 'What is the use?' about going to church, or when you call a meeting to start a boys' club, or ask their interest for honest government in their own town. The friends of nearly every good thing that has come into the world have had to hear the cry, 'What is the use?' raised against it."

No one needs to waste time in proving that it is of some use for women to be public-spirited. You all agree that it is well for women to have an interest in the schools where your own children are educated. The record of your clubs proves the growth of public spirit among you. You have fostered kindergartens, helped develop manual training, hung pictures in the schoolrooms, established lunch counters in the high schools, looked after the health conditions of schoolhouses, besides many other things of public service. But 'what is the use?' of voting, many of you still ask. I could recite plenty of objections. I will even run a risk and go further than some of the objectors and frankly tell you of certain dangers which I see when women vote. Is it not a fault in women that they lack intellectual modesty? They tend to be self-assertive and over-confident of their own opinions, whereas modesty is always hospitable and ready to learn, even of its opponents. This intellectual immodesty makes people intolerant and arrogant. Did I say that women had these faults? No! They are human faults whenever men or women enter upon a new field of thought or action. They are the faults of amateurs in public affairs. I will therefore concede that there is sure to be some friction when women take a hand, even in school politics. There will probably be needles broken when you let a beginner run your sewing machine!

"Why, then, do I advise women to take a scrap of a ballot offered them in school suffrage? First, because I want their interest and co-operation in behalf of the schools. Now the law of human nature is that interest grows in proportion as it expresses itself and

exercises power. I say give a noble interest every mode of expression possible and therefore give women the power of the ballot."

"Secondly, I believe that in the long run, if not at once, the growing intelligence and conscientiousness of women's vote will vastly strengthen the good influences which are working to improve the control of our schools."

"Thirdly, we do not believe in democratic government merely to save trouble, risk and expense. A despotism might do this. We believe in our form of government because it is a constant discipline of manhood and womanhood. To accept responsibility, to take large and generous views of public affairs, to rule out favoritism and prejudice and to decide questions with fairness, good will and disinterestedness—this practice develops and ennobles men; it makes a robust citizenship; it constitutes civilization. I believe that this splendid training is just as good for women as it is for men. It is needful, also, in order that the woman shall be man's true helpmeet."

Even young club women can remember the time when the woman's club was nothing if not literary; when the work of the club was confined to the writing of essays and the ransacking of encyclopedias, and when such a thought as public work never entered a club woman's head. It was in these early days that the newspapers found in woman's clubs admirable subject for caricature. But, like many other movements, the woman's club has passed the stage of caricature, and has reached the point where it demands respectful and dignified consideration.

A record of woman's club work during the present year reads like a tale of fairy godmothers—vacation schools, free kindergartens, curfew laws, marriage and divorce laws, women placed on school boards, vacation play grounds, traveling libraries, civil service reform, household science, village improvement, mothers' meetings, hospitals, homes for children, social purity work, free scholarships for poor students, industrial schools, industrial farms, public health, temperance, jail and hospital work—what is it that the club woman is not interested in and working for?

It is noticeable that club work, as it is understood now, says the Record-Herald, includes every variety formerly done by the much-reviled woman "reformer" and the "short-haired woman suffragist." In ceasing to be purely literary the club had to become something else, and such was and is the spirit of the time that it had to become progressive. It is never likely to be less progressive than it now is, and municipal and state governments are likely to feel the power of organized womanhood more and more as woman herself realizes this power and grows skilled in its use.

Last year the Indiana federation had four bills in the legislature; Illinois and Wisconsin federations were busy with the legislature all winter; legislative work is a prominent feature with the Alabama clubs; the New Orleans club woman is a most adorable type of the political worker; the Kentucky federation is interested in "Forestry," a subject that carries with it opportunity for much legislative work; and one of the most conservative clubs in Kentucky—a club so conservative that it stays out of the federation for fear of getting too progressive and advanced—recently enlarged its borders by petitioning the town council to pass a stock law prohibiting stock from roaming the streets and destroying the shrubbery. And when one considers the comfort, safety and beauty that would result from such a law, it does seem that municipal work like this is just as worthy the attention of cultured women as the writing of essays on the motives of a Browning poem or an Ibsen drama.

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The Syracuse Woman's club gave a reception in the public library rooms on Monday evening. The guest of honor was Judge Joyce, founder of the library, who has recently returned to his old home. A program of music and addresses was rendered.