

been adopted of dividing the subject for the next meeting into heads and sub-heads and writing them on slips of paper for distribution at the meeting before the discussion of the proposed topic. Discussion is as peremptory as the preparation and reading of the papers. Mrs. John Parker Bronk, the president of the league and one of the founders reports that: "The bishops say that it is the only organization of the kind in the world and they hope that branches or chapters throughout the United States may be established."

Women form four fifths of most congregations. If it were not for their interest, work and influence, churches would be in a bad way in this and every other country. Without their detaining hands and voices many more men would wander off to a club on Sunday mornings or intrench themselves behind the interminable sheets of the Sunday papers. Especially in the Methodist church are the women zealous and effective workers. Yet in that church the women are excluded from representation more than in any other, unless it be the Roman Catholic, which is without semblance of self-government. It therefore has been not entirely without a sense of satisfaction that most women listen to the reproaches of preachers and others who talk about how church work is neglected for club work. The only privilege woman has in churches is that of washing and wiping dishes at sociables, cooking cakes, salads and fowls for "delegates" and church entertainments and selling tickets for concerts at the behest of the trustees "who need the money" but are too proud to sell tickets. These are not all the privileges women are allowed in the church but the others are similar. When it comes to the dear privilege of giving advice, or bossing or of filling any of the ornamental and dignified church offices it is not considered seemly that a woman should be appointed or elected to any of them. It is not at all surprising therefore that a large number of women have slipped away from the drudgery of unappreciated manual labor into places where she may hold dignified and honorable offices, which, after all, are as dear to woman as to man.

#### G. F. W. C. Educational Committee.

"Information before Reformation," has been the motto of the educational committee of the federation. For two years of the four years of its existence the members studied schools, their needs and deficiencies, and how women may increase their efficiency. The committee has evidently decided that four reforms are necessary, for it advocates the introduction of manual training, the incorporation of kindergartens as a part of the state system of public schools, the maintenance of vacation schools in the larger towns, where statistics show a large increase of crime committed by juvenile offenders during the summer months, and the systematic teaching of morals in the public schools. Miss Evans, the chairman of this committee explains in her report that she does not mean the teaching of any religion, but that she does think that a more exhaustive exposition of the beauty of holiness, the rewards of virtue and the misery of breaking the moral law, would make better citizens of the little boys and girls we spend so much money to cultivate into something useful. "I would have," she says, "morals taught by concrete examples, beginning in the kindergarten, with stories of great and good persons, and bring the work up through historical examples, biogra-

phy, famous essays, and the like. The educators would have to devise some working plan, but they have evolved ways of teaching history without giving offense, and they might, I am sure, do the same thing with morals."

Miss Evans says that the committee desires the extension of kindergarten work into country schools, and therefore advocates special training of country-school teachers in kindergarten methods. In Minnesota, where the chairman lives, club women have carried out some of her suggestions in regard to cleanliness and decoration of school-grounds and school-houses. The City Improvement society of Minneapolis offers prizes to the children for the prettiest and neatest flower-gardens. The seeds are given to the children and the gardens are planted in the home yards; the prizes are fine, large pictures, and the gardens are graded so that each school-room works in unison in an effort to win a picture for its walls. The club women visit the gardens and advise and encourage the gardeners. Last year twenty five pictures were given away. The result not only improves the school-house but the work itself has a valuable moral influence. Whole neighborhoods have been improved by the subtle teachings of these neat and attractive little gardens.

#### "Babs the Impossible."

There is a choice of villains in current fiction. Conan Doyle's villains are lithe, thin-moustached, saturnine, and silent. They lay intricate and very interesting plots, so much so that we feel kindly towards them before they are foiled and decapitated or run through, for the time they have killed for us while they have been trying to kill the hero or alienate the love of the heroine from his nibs. Anthony Hope's villains are as brave as the bravest hero. They are dashing, graceful, impudent and until the end where, of course he must die, Mr. Hope's villain has a hero's luck in war and love. He does not viciously gnaw a scraggy mustache, but if he is a knight he slays his enemies and his plume waves in the thick of the battle in saucy triumph. With the legs and bearing of the matinee girl's idol, Anthony Hope's villain has sincere mourners, when the end of the tale, and the artistic tyranny of composition condemn him to a violent but sudden death.

Mr. Howells' villains are just tainted with vice or suspected of it. They are convicted on gauzy circumstantial evidence that has no effect at all on anybody but a Boston literateur,—a dainty man who can distinguish and separate from a tangle forty-nine different shades of the same color and correctly classify and locate all the odors which float into his laboratory from the back bay window. Mr. Howells' villain is vulgar rather than vicious. He breaks the laws of the table, of the drawing room and of my lady's boudoir and his actual offensiveness is as culpable, until we consult the statutes, as if he had murdered or robbed somebody.

Mr. James' bad men are stingy sneaks, or latterly, very repulsive, fast ghosts with a cockney accent and a taste for corrupting little children, strong enough to bring them back to earth in all their hideous waistcoats and big-plated watch chains and fobs.

Mrs. Sarah Grand spices her books with *enfants terribles*. Her most famous children, the "Heavenly Twins" made the book they christened her first success, though she had published others. "Babs the Impossible" is the name of a new serial, just begun in one of the weekly magazines. Babs' real name is Lorraine. She is

the despair of her governess because she will not learn out of her books. She says of them: "Those beastly books," and when corrected, "those objectionable books, the more I try to master them the less I learn. But when I don't try—when I persevere long enough in not trying—then things come to me—things that I seem to understand better than the things which have been explained to me, if you know what I mean." Her governess in trying to excite Babs' emulation says that Julia, Babs' sister will be a credit to the family and that when she comes out, people will be amazed at her brilliant accomplishments. Babs replies: "When I come out they'll be amazed at my brilliant ignorance, and that will amaze them most—it's not so common." Mrs. Grand uses dashes like a school girl essayist or letter writer. She has an original mind, an unconventional habit and a determination to work out her own salvation, "an if" it be destruction she is willing. Her rapid pen or typewriter does not wait for inspiration but hurries along and the movement and air of her stories are their chief attraction to westerners who live in a high altitude where torpor is unknown.

#### Delirious Furniture.

Some of the monthlies devoted to women, homes and man have been running illustrations of what the caption designates as "artistic furniture." Tables with shelves or carving below the board, so that only legless men can sit close enough to them to play cards or to eat, narrow arm-chairs, with arm pieces so high that only the armless man that writes with his toes can be at his ease in them, and beds set in a square hole in the wall where no air or light from sun or globe can reach the sufferers who must rest on them, are some of the articles which publishers have selected to teach women how to make home a happy and beautiful place. The man who drew the plans for this inquisitorial furniture had only one idea, to draw something unique. He went about his work with entire forgetfulness of anatomy. The Ladies' Home Journal secured the furniture architect's first plans and he had many imitators. Chairs that cannot be sat in, beds that are caves, impossible tables and nightmare divans, book-cases and escritaires will certainly not be mistaken by the subscribers to this periodical, for adjuncts of a happy home. If any man can honestly lay intemperance to domestic torture this original furniture will drive him to drink.

#### Land-Grabbing.

The spirit that presides at every meeting of the City Improvement Society of Lincoln is a desire to help the city officers in the enforcement of law, first by keeping the law themselves, and secondly, by example and precept to help the community keep the law. If the society did no more than foster the spirit of law and order its mission were beneficent. At the last meeting of the society a new attempt was reported of a land owner on the corner of Eighteenth and M streets to extend his lots into the street. The sidewalks zigzag in and out at too frequent intervals over the city. If the council decide that the streets are too wide then each lot owner should be given his share. As it is a few privileged ones are taking from the city what they have no legal right to.

An egotist is like the Ancient Mariner—he holds us with his glittering I.

#### THE CHINESE SITUATION.

(BY ANGIE F. NEWMAN.)

I sit by the sea and listen,  
For the waves are bringing me  
The tale of an inland city  
That lies across the sea.

The tale of a frenzied people,  
Who live in the centuries old,  
Who never have heard the footsteps  
Of Time on the mountains bold.

Who never have caught the music  
Of the great cathedral song,  
"Jehovah is God of the nations;  
The world is marching along."

They are dreaming still of Buddha,  
Confucius and the rest,  
And save for the cruel slaughter,  
'T were less than an idle jest.

But the world looks on in wonder  
At the might of an ancient faith.  
A wail comes over the waters  
Like the rush of a tempest-wraith.

The air is full of a tremor,  
Of longing and fearful dread,  
Lest the message of the morning  
Sound the requiem of the dead.

O, eyes that are weary of watching  
For the flag of our native land,  
Shelled, in the angry city,  
A brave, defenseless band.

Are ye the nation's martyrs,  
Ye Messengers of Peace?  
Death struck in the mad arena;  
No "Thumbs" to grant release.

Must life then, be the forfeit  
For faith in her country's aid?  
On the altars of the nations,  
Such costly incense laid.

Yet all the flags are floating  
Just eighty miles away.  
While jealous old commanders,  
Dispute the right of way.

Yet all the flags are floating  
Just eighty miles away;  
While all the bells are tolling  
From sea to sea today.

O, give the Yankee soldiers,  
I pray you, Mr. Hay,  
The longed-for marching orders,  
They'd reach Peking today.

Turn loose the brave young heroes  
Who fought at old San Juan,  
They'd "fix" the Chinese rebels  
And traitor, Prince Tuan.

Do this or let the nation's  
Their flags could float no higher  
Half mast their worthless ensigns,  
Above the funeral pyre.

And freedom sit in judgment,  
With all her banners furled,  
"Surrender arms, ye nations,  
'Tis Buddha rules the world."

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