

WOMEN'S CLUBS AND WORK

Edited by Mrs. Sarah A. Evans

SENATOR MONDELL of Wyoming, in his attack upon Gifford Pinchot, chief of the forestry service, in the United States senate a few days ago, charges that employees of the forestry bureau have been sent to speak at conventions which were not conducted by the government.

This is a veiled criticism of the bureau having put at the disposal of the General Federation of Women's Clubs the services of Enos Mills for one year in recognition of the services the clubwomen of the country had rendered the forestry bureau. While this may not come strictly within the limitations of our hidebound laws, it proves beyond a doubt that Mr. Pinchot has the presence of the forest at heart. His experience had no doubt taught him that it was worse than wasted time and money to talk forestry to conventions conducted by the government. Witness the recent debates in congress whenever the subject of forest reserves has been under discussion. Has there ever any love of the trees injected into the discussion? Was there ever anything but two sections standing opposed to each other and each backed up by huge commercial interests viewing the forests through the eyes of their wealthy constituents, while the grand old trees continued to mute victims to the money interest of the country? Men who contend against our forest reserves and are not willing for the paltry sum that it costs to enlighten the people of the country and bring before them plainly and intelligently the results that they know will follow the destruction of the forests are prompted only by commercial interests and interests of the most selfish kind—the kind that let the public take care of itself according to the Vanderbilt code.

In one of his addresses before the clubwomen of this state Enos Mills said in substance that if the forests were to be saved we must do it through the children. If a child loves the trees and birds, in the nature of things it would talk of it at home, and few parents would willingly destroy the things their children loved. Men out in the world never heard of the preservation of the forests except as it touched them through their business interest, but their hearts could be touched by the prattle of a child at home, and to bring this love and knowledge into the American family, as it was instilled into the home life of Germany, was why the United States forestry bureau had planned this method of instructing the mothers of the country.

Never has there been such an awakening among the women of the country in the matter of forestry. Scarcely a club in the country but has given at least one day to the consideration of it on its program. Many forestry clubs have been organized for systematic study, and the benefit that is to accrue from hundreds of thousands of women taking an interest in the subject would appeal to any congressman who was not blinded by other considerations, as the most potent force that could be engaged to stay the hand of the destroyer of our forest. But, then, is this the object of such attacks as Senator Mondell's?

THE Beautiful America club of North Bend is an organization that was formed by some of the progressive women of that little seaport city several years ago. Its object was civic improvement, and for some time the club did notable work along the lines indicated, success crowning their every effort. With the removal from that vicinity of some of the prominent members and the influx of new duties and obligations, the club gradually disintegrated, much to the detriment of the town.

Recently, however, it has been reorganized and now gives promise of being more helpful and powerful than before. During the club's previous existence an artistic bandstand had been erected in Lincoln square and trees planted near by. Unfortunately these have been neglected, but the club has now commenced the work of beautifying the square with a hedge of native trees, and indigenous shrubs, such as the rhododendron, huckleberry and tasselwood, will be cultivated so that when all these graceful denizens of our forests have perished before the devastating advance of civilization there is even now overtaking them, strangers in our midst may see the beauties that once profusely adorned our woods.

A wonderful spirit of harmony and cooperation with this club pervades all North Bend, and great results may be looked for from its work. The mayor, the city council and the board of health are all strongly in favor of civic improvement and they assist an encourage the ladies in every possible way. A few weeks ago a prominent dry goods firm gave to the club a percentage on all its sales for a certain Saturday and in the afternoon a committee of ladies received the visitors at the store and served delicious refreshments there, much of the raw material being donated by the generous grocers of the town. One gentleman, a non-resident, was so impressed with the energy and ability displayed by the clubwomen that he presented with a check for \$250 several smaller contributions were also received and the sum noted by the club was \$115, notwithstanding that the day was one of the most inclement of the season.

A short time ago the club inaugurated a cleaning up day. All unsightly and unnecessary objects were removed, back yards were renovated and put in sanitary condition and a wagon was sent around to collect the refuse.

This is but the beginning of the work planned by the Beautiful America club, and as all the members are women that do what they intend doing we may expect long to see the town one of the prettiest little cities in Oregon. The officers of the club are: Mrs. W. S. Winsor, president; Mrs. E. H. Brigham, vice-president; Mrs. E. J. Simpson, treasurer. The club has just been admitted to membership in the state federation.

HOOD RIVER women never do things by halves, as will be seen from the following account of its last meeting, given in Hood River News-Letter.

The Women's club held a rousing gathering at the Commercial club rooms Wednesday. All of the chairs occupied by the business boosters at their regular meetings were pressed in service and some of the ladies were compelled to sit on the billiard table to find comfort and rest.

The session was a lively one from

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start to finish and a large volume of important business was transacted.

Mrs. Goff presided and Mrs. Richmond acted as scribe.

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The following committees were appointed: Mesdames Jayne and Blanton to interview the mayor and council to appoint a cleanup day on April 3. Mesdames Davidson and Stewart to interest business houses to provide the drays to haul away the trash. Mesdames Bailey, Herschner, Yates, Smith, McClaren, George Castner and Bartness to interview the schools and attempt to secure the assistance of the pupils in the good work. The same committee was empowered to urge the school children to grow flowers for a flower show in the fall, and also to beautify the city. A prize will also be given the school keeping the neatest grounds from now till the time of the flower show.

A proposition was accepted to hold the future meetings at the Unitarian church on account of the kitchen conveniences. The first 10 members were selected alphabetically to serve as hostesses for the meeting two weeks hence. Refreshments will be limited to three varieties of "muck-a-muck."

THE California club of San Francisco is waging a campaign for pure milk. The Western Woman breezily says:

It has been productive of a quickening of the pulses of the milk committees of the local board of health, the state board and the county veterinary whose business it is to maintain a constant and continuous surveillance of the milk that comes to our doorsteps on mornings.

That they were all asleep at the switch, Dr. Minora Kibbe's committee from the north seems to have proved. The milkmen have sent up a loud wail that the gum-shoe methods of the committee were not fair—the milkmen didn't know the women were coming.

Now, really, that wasn't nice of the ladies, was it?

It was just as if some clubwoman called upon another when it wasn't her day at home and found her hair in curlers and her puffs off.

That's just how these poor, persecuted milkmen felt when that committee dropped in without even sending in its card.

So loud was the moan that it looks as though the men inspectors must have been more considerate of the feelings of the milkmen. Surprise parties are not good in the smart set, and what self-respecting inspector is going to risk his social standing by springing one on the milkmen?

Seriously, it is in the power of the honest man—and his duty to himself and his community demands it—to see that no dishonest dealer can become a member of the Milkmen's association; that all clean, sane, honest conditions be complied with according to law, and that each member be furnished with a certificate of membership, which would, in effect, be a certificate of the good character of his milk.

To make this plan effective, the laws now governing the problem would have to be overhauled, the county and state laws now conflicting like pulley lines in a tenement yard.

But the men have a vote.

The men who want to do the right thing have the ballot, and can make laws to govern the milk supply.

All we women can do—we who must drink and cook with it, feed it to our babies, and pay for it (those who aren't man-supported)—is to bug the men to do something. Our hands are tied!

And what man, outside of a health board or the dairymen, is going to concern himself with milk—and be called a mollycoddle? You see, Roosevelt might hear about him.

Assuredly, friends, the matter of pure milk is a woman's matter. So is the whole problem of pure food. Distinctly it is an affair of women.

WEDNESDAY evening the Oregon Women's Press club met with Mrs. Colby in her apartments in the Selling-Hirsch building. The room was well filled and a very interesting program was prepared.

As is customary, each one was asked to give some item of news, an anecdote, or suggestion. This is a happy feature, as it brings out much original thought and the suggestions furnish material for discussion. Among many bright thoughts, the suggestion offered by Miss Baldwin seemed to sink deepest, which was that the Press club take some means to procure for the poor of Portland a letter for the motherly purposes, as was being done by other cities. A motion to that effect was carried. Mr. Galvani was the lecturer of the evening. He spoke on literature in a general way, taking for his "text" some of the beautiful thoughts from Tacitus' "Hirundo" on the value of books. He paid a high tribute to the older masters, but said that some of the greatest thoughts of the world were contained in some of the least pretentious works, such as the book from which he took his "text."

He scored the modern fiction and gave an account of the problem novel. In the whole world there was no literature, he thought, that could compare with the English literature, particularly that of the Elizabethan period. He spoke in scathing terms about the commercialism that entered into the manufacture of books, and dealt some hard blows at the American publishers. His lecture was a rare treat to all, it was practical, full of force and gave his audience time to ponder over for a long time to come.

The Misses Lawler gave several very fine musical numbers. Walter Thomas Mills delighted the audience, as well as convulsed them with laughter, by several recitations. Light refreshments were served, and all went away happy and they had a pleasant and profitable evening. The meeting night has been changed from the first Monday to the first Wednesday night of the month.

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last June are now teaching in the state's common schools and high schools. The demand for well trained teachers is three times as large as the supply. The influence of the university over the school system of the state will become greater as the university becomes stronger.

It is absurd to say that the university appropriation stands in the way of the development of the public schools. The cost of the university annually to each person in the state is less than 20 cents, on the basis of the appropriation of \$125,000. The rate of the university tax would be less than one-fourth of a mill.

In last Sunday's issue, in this department, appears a letter from Mrs. Wade in reply to an article by "Clubwoman" in which she criticized the appointment of a politician as superintendent for feeble-minded children. "Clubwoman" does not hesitate to say that Mrs. Wade's letter simply adds force to the position taken by those who are opposing this heartless exploitation for political purposes of the helpless unfortunate of our state. Let us analyze the letter.

"Mr. Bickers is no doubt more or less of a politician; it would be well for the women and children of Oregon if more of the citizens of the state were in his class. God forbid! The fewer we have of the men who will accept positions of this kind merely for the salary attached, the better off the women and children of Oregon will be."

Herein lies the kernel. No search was made for an expert in question, entered the minds of the board of control as to qualifications for the position. It was a plum with which a political party of the state treasurer could be paid, and nothing was thought of except the transfer of Mr. Bickers' name from the debit to the credit side of the political ledger. No thought of the character of the human currency involved in the payment.

"Two such suitable persons for the care of the unfortunate as Mr. and Mrs. Bickers," "Clubwoman" yields to no one in admiring and praising the qualities of Mrs. Bickers, nor of her fitness as a mother for the children. But Mrs. Wade should remember that these children are not to be simply herded in an asylum; that is now being done in the asylum for the insane. We did not need an expert on the value of separate grounds and buildings for "asylum" purposes. "Clubwoman" knows and admires the work that Mrs. Bickers did among the boys at the reform school; but, my dear Mrs. Wade, it is not a question of "motherly care and interest in" any class of children; in fact, Mrs. Bickers does not enter into the question under discussion. The sole charge is the inefficiency of the man selected for the position.

You say Mr. Bickers is a good man. Granted; but for our position, no. In these days it is not enough to be a "good" man; we must be good for something, and the something in this case is a position requiring expert knowledge of the work before him. Has Mr. Bickers this knowledge? Has he ever been in a school for feeble-minded? Can he distinguish one grade from another? Does he even know the physical signs of mental defect? Could he tell us whether the doubts of a cer-

tain child was due to a physical "cause or to lack of proper training? I doubt it, and so do you, Mrs. Wade. "Efficiency" is the watchword by which we should progress—not the old, worn-out, degrading, demoralizing "political plum."

It is useless to advance the argument that the superintendent may secure expert assistants. What expert would take a subordinate position at the salary offered by the state? What expert could be expected to take orders from a man who knows not the first letter of the alphabet of expert care of feeble-minded children? Answer that question, Mrs. Wade, and you will relieve not only the writer's mind, but that of many others who are interested in this question.

Mrs. Wade calls for the support of the clubwomen of the state for this infamous procedure of the state treasurer. I call for its condemnation by the clubwomen, and for their earnest petition to the board of control to remove its decision. How Mr. Bickers remains in a position that will require only business ability but for humanity's sake lift the institution out of the grade of asylum into that of a school for unfortunate children by appointing a man "who knows his work"—an "efficient" man—as superintendent.

CLUBWOMAN.

MANY invited guests were present to enjoy the hospitality of the Tuesday afternoon club at the beautiful home of Mrs. A. W. Whitmer on Broadway at its meeting last week.

Ever since the club was organized it has been the custom to close the study year with a lecture upon the period or some central figure of the period in which the club had been studying. For the past four years the club has been studying, as one member said, "not English literature, but about English literature." This year the study included the period between 1760 and 1837; therefore, it was most appropriate that Shelley should be selected for the subject of the lecture this year. The club and its guests were most fortunate in having for the lecturer Dr. C. H. Chapman. Oregon has few scholars of the literary attainments of Dr. Chapman, and none with a broader knowledge and deeper conception of the worth and merit of Shelley. In his exposition of the life of Shelley Dr. Chapman is analytical, and interprets the poet, with the nature of a poet, and the wisdom of ripe and mature judgment. Over 50 ladies were present and appreciation and enjoyment of the lecture was expressed by every one. Some very fine music was rendered, after which a social hour was enjoyed and delicious refreshments were served.

THE Present Day club spent a social afternoon Tuesday of this week at the home of Mrs. R. E. Giltner on Chapman street, Miss Breslin and Mrs. Hamilton sang and Mrs. McCahle read, after which light refreshments were served.

THE up-to-date women at Lents, (the enterprising suburb of Mount Scott) have plans perfected for opening a free reading room and library. A good location has been as-

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Fire in Pendleton Laundry. (Special Dispatch to The Journal.) Pendleton, Or., April 4.—J. F. Robinson's laundry was damaged for the extent of \$300 to \$500 by fire early this morning.

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