

WOMEN'S CLUBS AND WORK

Edited by Mrs. Sarah A. Evans

If there are any women in Oregon who still doubt the far-reaching influence and magnificent results of the woman's club movement of the United States, they will certainly be convinced after reading the biennial report of the national president, Mrs. Sarah Platt Decker, which was delivered at Boston last week, and a copy of which was most graciously given the editor of this department of The Journal. Mrs. Decker says:

In presenting the report of my second term of office, I have no word but of happiness and satisfaction. As I review the achievements of this organization for the past two years, you will remember that the keynote of the report at the St. Paul biennial was expressed in these words: "The great effort should be to concentrate and weld together, to make the General Federation with its board and committees the center of all activity, and to have the information and influence to which every smallest and most remote club shall give heed."

Steadily, faithfully and surely, this welding process has progressed, and today there are stronger bonds between the state federations, the individual clubs and the general body than ever before. During my first term of office I sometimes attended state and club meetings where the speakers were spoken of the policies of the General Federation or of the organization itself; whereas, during this biennial period this experience has not been repeated, not even a single instance. The organization of state and club committees in harmony with those of the General Federation, has gone far to make a definite policy of union and concerted work. It is not the purpose of the biennial report to issue commands or decrees; it is not to interfere in the slightest with the independent activity of state federations, or to dictate to those who do not aspire to be a dictator, or in the parlance a "boss." Never in the smallest measure has that been the policy, but believing that the strength of union is the essential lesson to be taught to the women of this generation, because their inherited traditions, habits and mode of life have made this great principle foreign to their minds, the effort has been made, to set the example, to give wise counsel and sympathetic advice, to develop above all, the idea that the federation is a nation, and that its perpetuity and stability depends upon the fidelity and loyalty of each member to the avowed head.

Bureau of Information.
The authorized establishment of the bureau of information has gone far to bring about this centralization process. I believe the bureau should be continued and with added powers and responsibilities. The routine, detail work of the federation is of great and increasing proportions, and the general secretary, authorized by the board of directors, is heartily approved, its intent being that the board of directors may, if necessary, authorize the compilation of directory and biennial report by the bureau, instead of by the two busy secretaries. Even with this relief for these two officers, there remains daily and unremitting service in the interest of the federation. There will come into your minds, doubtless, the question of the support of the bureau with increased responsibilities, but do not think the additional expense will be commensurate with the work, as it will be readily seen that the bureau with its office force, its files and machinery, is much more equipped than the usual office in her home, for work which is routine in its nature. If the General Federation will endure, it is to retain its high place and recognized power among other national organizations, it must come through the maintenance of a bureau of the bureau of information, headquarters, or central office, whatever may be the name selected. Naturally, the question of the income of the federation enters into such a plan. No woman's organization, and far and away no many, as ours, exists with so small a membership fee as the General Federation. One national society requires one half of every individual membership fee to be paid into the central treasury. Another requires one third. This latter society, with perhaps one fifteenth of our membership, has an income quite as large as the federation. From study of various organizations, it is my firm belief that the General Federation gives value received to its members, beyond all other national organizations. Let us take a moment to glance at the material benefits derived from the federation in direct membership, receives the literature of the 12 standing committees, receives the report of the biennial convention with its stimulating and expert information, receives the Federation Bulletin, the official organ, and the General Federation Directory. Every organization receives all matter sent out by the board of directors, all council and general information and much literature sent out by the individual clubs and federations to the organizations listed in the directory. Every member of every organization has the privilege of applying to the bureau of information for programs, literature, assistance in all lines of work or study.

Every member may also apply to the chairman of standing committees and be sure of interest and cooperation. During the past two years, hundreds of clubs and many state federations have had the privilege of lecturing from Mills without extra expense, on account of membership in the General Federation. The traveling galleries have also brought a glimpse of the veritable in art to many federations and clubs at a minimum of expense because of the foresaid membership. In addition, officers, members of the board of directors and chairmen of standing committees have been most willing to give their presence and add to the pleasure and interest of state federations and club sessions. I set this forth in detail because it is inevitable that in the near future the federation must have income of some kind, and it has not been deemed wise or expedient to propose a definite plan for this increase at this time, but the hope is entertained that during the week of association here, there will be informal discussion, that the state and club members generally will take careful note of the business conditions of the federation, and will realize that in order to continue its upward growth, there must be constant out-reaching, both on account of committee plans and work, and to make it possible to continue the conduct of its affairs in a manner worthy of its high calling and honorable position.

Standing Committees.
The work of the chairman of standing committees and their associates has been a second factor in the wonderful uniting and upbuilding process of the biennial period. "The right woman in the right place" has been the constant verdict of the officers and board of directors, and I am confident of your concurrence in my opinion as to the respective reports are heard by the convention. Some changes are proposed in the arrangement of the standing committees. I recommend that the civic committee consist for the next two years of two divisions: one to be called "civic department" and "health department." The first taking distinctly the questions of citizenship, and the second, the questions of public health. I recommend the discontinuance of the household economics committee, feel that this will occasion much dismay upon the part of the convention and I take time to explain my reasons for what may seem to you a radical suggestion. I believe every state and every club should have a committee upon household economics or home making, and I am confident that it is almost as impossible to make a national committee effective. Conditions of life vary so much in extent in different states and regions that what applies to one locality is often another. Household economics is a local

question and must be dealt with specifically in order to attain results. The standing committee as at present organized, with one member from each state, was my own suggestion, but I am satisfied that it is not effectively being too cumbersome and entailing too much work upon the chairman. I recommend the creation of a separate committee, to be called "civic chairman and six members, three of whom shall be residents of Washington."

The suggestion at the St. Paul convention of the combination of the library extension committee and the literature committee will be a recommendation for the purpose of discussion.

The placing of the outlook committee and consisting of a chairman and one member, preferably the president, is recommended. This is being in the nature of an investigating medium, needs only a head.

At the request of the chairman of the food committee, the recommendation is made of change of name to "committee on food sanitation." This food committee was originally organized in the nature of an emergency, but the passage of the national law in which the General Federation had so large a share, has rendered the necessity for that particular name. The larger question is now, clean food, which the new name would convey.

I recommend the discontinuance of the reciprocity committee, if the bureau of information is continued. The committee has done fine work in disseminating the doctrine of the use of the bureau, but the latter will establish and the reciprocity committee means duplication of work.

With this plan, the household economics committee, discontinued, the outlook and reciprocity committees eliminated from the standing committee, the library extension and literature, there would remain nine standing committees. It is noted that, as many clubs open their yearly doors in September and continue until June 1, a systematic study of federation subjects could be made, by allotting one month to each of the respective standing club year, in addition to the arranged study program. I suggest this as a recommendation to be heard upon the question of the combination and rearrangement of the standing committees.

State Federations.
The loyalty of the state federations has been one of the great sustaining forces during my four years of service. Every suggestion has met with reciprocal spirit. The busy state presidents have never been so absorbed or so busy that they have not responded to every request or recommendation. I reiterate in this report the recommendation that the former biennial for a rearrangement of the dates of state meetings. My keen regret is, that although I have had four years of time and have made many suggestions, I retire from the presidency with a record of 12 state conventions unvisited. These federations might be omitted from this list, as I have had the pleasure of an interim meeting with part of the officers of the federation of the District of Columbia and also of Maryland, and was present at the birth of the Wyoming organization before taking this office. The states missed, including our latest born, Alabama, omitting the three above referred to, are Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Dakota, Montana and Washington. There has been a cordial response to the request which I preferred, that adjoining states should have successive dates, but more adjustment is needed, if the presence of the national officers is considered desirable. For instance, California, Montana and Washington have the dates for the annual convention arranged for May, June and September. North Carolina, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, Arkansas and Missouri are arranged to meet in the month of August. It is suggested to economize the time, expense and fatigue of travel, holding their state meetings during the three spring months. Another group of southern states, Georgia, Alabama, Texas, Indian Territory, Oklahoma and Arizona choose the autumn. The middle eastern and western, northwestern and far western states, with the exception of those previously mentioned, are well grouped in the autumn, with the exception of Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York and New England states, which are divided, three conventions being held in the autumn and two in the spring, with one in the summer. The New England states, as she holds four meetings a year. Much advantage would accrue to adjacent states in being able to secure speakers and noted speakers if the continued circuit is arranged, and the expense would be correspondingly reduced.

Council.
I recommend the continuance of the council meetings between biennials. While these sessions bring together perhaps the greatest number of members in the immediate vicinity, yet there is always representation from the country at large. At the James O. Russell Council in June last, 29 state federations were represented by 189 club members, 20 of whom were state presidents. The council is a most valuable asset to the federation, and every state and club should exemplify its name, by making its sessions purely for discussion and informal conference. For this reason, the selection of a place for holding the council should be carefully considered. The distraction and crowds attendant upon an exposition are an advantage in a body which should have quiet deliberation. There are many beautiful locations, however, where the council meeting could be held in the season, could have ideal surroundings.

The Official Organ.
The Federation Bulletin, the official organ, adopted as such at the St. Paul convention, has been sent to all officers and presidents, according to arrangement to pass to the next year. The nature of the standing committees has been published and distributed through the Bulletin, the separate leaflets being by reprints of the same. This plan, if perfected, would be much less expensive and fully as satisfactory as the former method of specially printed circulars from each committee. To make an official organ of value, it must have the support of the members. This is a matter of education and is slow of growth, but the results during the past two years have been gratifying and of future promise.

Several alliances of great importance have been made by the federation during the past two years. Perhaps the most important is that of the five affiliated societies: The Association of College Alumnae, the National Congress of Mothers, the Southern Association of College Women, the National Council of Women and the General Federation of Women's Clubs, which have been admitted as a department into the National Educational Association under the title of "Educational Department of National Organizations of Women." The new department will make its first appearance at the coming session of the National Educational Association June 29-July 3, in Cleveland, Ohio. It was organized at the New Willard hotel, Washington, D. C. on February 26, by the election of the following officers: Mrs. M. C. Decker, president; Mrs. M. C. Decker, vice-president; Mrs. Frederic Schenck, National Congress of Mothers; Mrs. Philip N. Moore, Secretary of Federation of Women's Clubs. The department cites the granting of this department to the National Educational Association as the first step in the cooperation and with the educators of the country in bringing the home and the school into more helpful relation. A further report of the plan will be heard at a committee which promises to have most practical results is called "committee on cooperation of the Association of College Alumnae and the General Federation." It consists of three members from each organization, to be appointed by the respective other uniting convention, made in the appointment of a committee upon the request of the National Council of Women to cooperate with other organizations to make a thorough in-

vestigation of the whole subject of child labor in the United States. The organizations so far reported are the National Association of Manufacturers, the American Federation of Labor, the National Civic Federation, the American Economic Association, and the General Federation of Women's Clubs. One meeting of the united bodies has been held in Washington, and the committees are now at work forming plans and scope. The outcome of the investigation of industrial conditions of business and children by the department of commerce and labor, which was authorized by congress, and for which bill the General Federation disvalues service will determine the future definite plans of these allied committees. Other investigations have been received for cooperative work. It has been the effort of the board of directors to restrict the lines of work to such as are represented by our own committees, believing that the federation will by this method attain a much greater solidarity and fixity of purpose.

The last and perhaps most conspicuous honor conferred upon the federation was the invitation from President Roosevelt to attend the conference of governors held in the White House, May 13 to 16. Invitations to the conference were extended to the governors, each of whom was allowed to bring three advisers, the congress, cabinet, supreme court and various national organizations. While the unique position of being the only woman delegate was not wholly agreeable, yet in the deliberations of the conference, your president had great satisfaction.

An eminent and distinguished gathering, it was not as inspiring as the biennial convention, though it much resembled our assembly, as all were brought before the body for discussion. I believe it was an occasion of historic significance, the first step toward what I have sometimes called in jest, "a men's federation of women's clubs." When the mighty men of the country meet to talk upon subjects which will make for the physical and moral regeneration of this land, and omit for the nonce entirely the topics which generally are dealing in the masculine deliberations, viz., politics and money, then indeed the nation may rejoice—and "take heart of grace."

To Recapitulate.
Recommendation No. 1—Continue the bureau of information with approval of added powers.
Recommendation No. 2—Continue council meetings between biennials with suggestion for quiet meeting place and informal program.
Recommendation No. 3—Reorganize civic committee into two divisions to be called "civic department" and "health department."
Recommendation No. 4—Discontinue household economics committee, recommending organization of state and club committees instead.
Recommendation No. 5—Make legislative committee to consist of six members, three of whom shall be residents of Washington.
Recommendation No. 6—Combine library extension and literature committees, to be called "library and literature committee."
Recommendation No. 7—Place outlook committee in head of business committee, consisting of chairman and president.
Recommendation No. 8—Change name of pure food committee to "committee on food sanitation."
Recommendation No. 9—Discontinue reciprocity committee if bureau of information is retained.

In conclusion, it is understood that it is not the function of the president to set forth the work of the officers or of the standing committees, of that you will have the detailed reports from those who have performed the great tasks and to whom is due the entire credit for the splendid upward growth of the federation. I cannot forbear to express to you my gratitude for the associates and coworkers which have given me. Never has a woman failed or faltered. The remarkable resourcefulness and initiative which has shown itself in a constant stream of work and delight. The selection of the officers, directors and chairmen of standing committees is of paramount importance at this expanding period in the life of the organization. Not too much attention can be given to geographical or sectional considerations, but the main consideration must be ability and fitness.

I thank you every one for fealty and service during my four years of office. I have never heard a whisper, or faintest suggestion of disloyalty. In spite of many mistakes, in spite of many failures, in spite of many unfulfilled, all of which have been apparent to you, you have surrounded me with your faith and constancy, so that my heart has been warm and glad, and my work a burden happily borne. A continuance of this spirit of union, fellow feeling, service and cheerfulness, will result in an organization which shall become not only a powerful, but a determining influence upon the civilization of the twentieth century.

FOR Oregon the state president made the following report:
The Oregon federation numbers 40 clubs with an individual membership of about 1,800. Our standing committees correspond with the standing committees of the G. F. W. C., though we do not attempt aggressive work along all these lines. Our greatest achievement this past year was securing an appropriation of \$120,000 for a home for the feeble-minded, for which we had been working six years. In cooperation with the Retail Grocers' association we secured a state pure food bill which conforms particularly with the national bill. The energy of our pure food committee has been devoted to securing personal market inspection for every town in the state where there is a woman's club. We did not work in securing the 10-hour law for women, which was made Oregon famous, and as clubwomen we here return thanks to Justice Brewer for the decision that affected all women workers throughout the land.

We always maintain federation headquarters at the Clatskanie of the state and have morning classes studying along different lines of club work, with some able leader brought to us for this purpose. This year we were Miss Clark of Missouri, chairman of our national civil service committee. We established an educational loan fund a little over a year ago and at present have \$400 loaned to five young women who could otherwise have had to leave college.

Our individual club work is splendid and includes every branch of club activity and much outside of the regular path. One club of girls in their teens carried 700 bouquets to the hospital in the "Red Cross" month. Another small club paid for expert treatment for a cripple boy. Another club helped financially 25 persons, waited on the people and distributed 1,423 garments in one year. Another club maintains a neighborhood fire station with 100 garden, domestic science, manual training and many other things.

Federations in Oregon have been slow of growth, but a visit from our national president, Mrs. Decker, last year gave it an impetus from which we are still feeling the good effects. Our Federation Bulletin has increased, I think, and it is valued by all who take it.

The bureau of information has been of invaluable help in building up our federation, and I bring many thanks from many of our clubwomen for the generous and courteous treatment they have received from Mrs. Wood. The first time that the federation (city) can separate it from its owner. For particulars consult the following letter sent me by the sufferer:

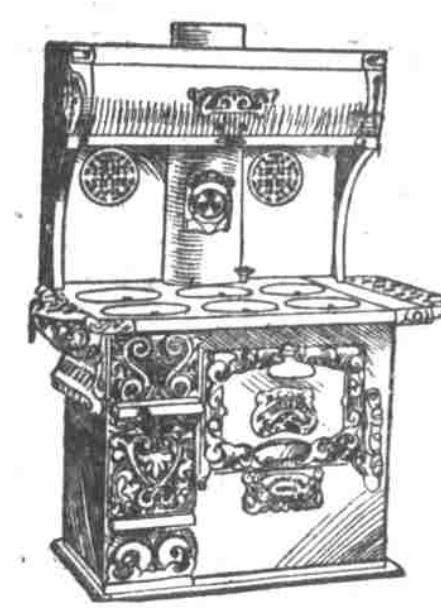
"Allow me Mr. Clark to elaborate a small yarn. At the dawn of the century I possessed myself of a long-sleeved jacket, known as a Prince Albert. In its day it was really a beauty, imparting to the wearer a pillarlike and somewhat presidential appearance very impressive and ornamental. Of late, however, it seemed to me desirable to imagine, therefore, the glee with which I read in a Sunday afternoon extra the announcement that in Chelsea, London, a man had been seen in a tattered and soiled shirt tucked in their shirt sleeves from

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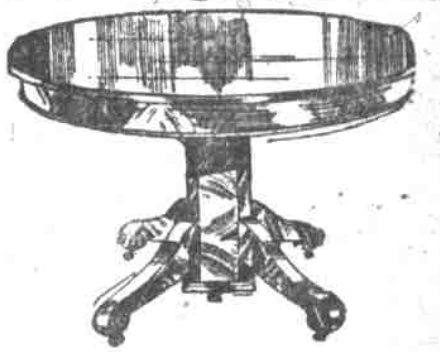
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Bostonian Cannot Get Rid of His Old Prince Albert.
From the Boston Transcript.
Who shall sing the fidelity and adoration of a Prince Albert coat? Not even a Chelsea fire baptism ("baphometic") according to the sage of that city can separate it from its owner. For particulars consult the following letter sent me by the sufferer:
"Allow me Mr. Clark to elaborate a small yarn. At the dawn of the century I possessed myself of a long-sleeved jacket, known as a Prince Albert. In its day it was really a beauty, imparting to the wearer a pillarlike and somewhat presidential appearance very impressive and ornamental. Of late, however, it seemed to me desirable to imagine, therefore, the glee with which I read in a Sunday afternoon extra the announcement that in Chelsea, London, a man had been seen in a tattered and soiled shirt tucked in their shirt sleeves from