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Mrs. Philip H. Moore, St. Louis, 1st Vice-President of the Federation.

The Work Their Clubs Have Accomplished in the Past Decade

WITH some interest the country watched the proceedings of the recent convention, in Boston, of the General Federation of Women's Clubs. And, as was to be expected, the same time-honored question swept along in the wake of the news emanating from that gathering. "Of what use are women's clubs, any way? What good has ever been accomplished by them? Can any permanent reforms be traced to the influence of the movement, now grown to such extensive proportions in the United States?"

"Do not these clubs take women from their duties at home? At any rate, have their members been taught or influenced to become better housewives, better mothers?"

Such questions, no doubt, will be recorded to learn even a part of the record made by these organizations during their comparatively brief history.



Mrs. John D. Sherman, Chicago, 2nd Vice-President.

In the connection, the care of the sick has peculiarly appealed to the women, and hundreds of clubs support fresh-air camps, hospitals, vacation houses and district nurseries. A hospital is owned by the Woman's Charitable Club of Boston.

The preservation of forests, which has become such an important national issue, long ago was championed by the clubwomen of the entire country. In the East, Pennsylvania has the finest reserves—the result of the work of clubwomen.

In New Hampshire, Massachusetts and New York they have labored for the preservation of the forests. In Massachusetts the work during one year took the form of a campaign against the brown-tail and gypsy moths, in which almost every club joined, one of which, with the aid of an army of school children, destroyed 375,000 nests.

Planting of 1000 trees in four years by the school children in one town in Pennsylvania, and of 400 in one year in Boston, are but single instances of a widespread and effective propaganda.

In the middle West there are more than 1300 clubs and a membership exceeding 75,000. The women of the West boast of their club idea as antedating that of the East. They point to a Ladies' Literary Society in Kalamazoo, Mich., founded in 1852; the Minerva Club, of New Harmony, Ind., founded in 1859, and the Chicago Woman's Club, of Chicago, founded in 1859.

Forming of state federations, begun with Iowa in 1893, was continued by Ohio in 1894; Michigan and Missouri in 1895, and Indiana in 1896. What the women of the West have accomplished is but a repetition, in a sense, of their proud record in the East. And it is true with the women of the south.

In St. Louis, for instance, the Under-Age Free Kindergarten has become one of the largest institutions of its kind in the country. Within two years manual training was established through the women in six schools in Iowa.

Four normal schools and appropriations for two more were secured in 1902 by the women of Ohio—after five years' effort. Compulsory education bills rewarded the efforts of clubwomen in the states of Illinois, Iowa and Missouri.

The Chicago Woman's Club established the Glenwood Industrial School for boys at a cost of \$40,000. The vacation schools' committee of the women's clubs of Chicago opened eight schools within a few years, and hundreds of children, among them many foreigners, were enrolled.

Lunches were served in the high schools by several clubs, one, the Englewood Woman's Club, serving within twenty minutes about 420 cooked luncheons. The School of Domestic Arts and Science in Chicago, established by the clubwomen, furnishes instruction in housewifery and the care of the children to 1100 students.

In Michigan the women endeavored to secure an appropriation of \$40,000 for a building for the Michigan Agricultural College, where women might study domestic arts and science.



Mrs. Robert J. Burdette, the Pacific Coast Leader.



Mrs. Josephine B. Blumenthal, Philadelphia, the Federation Auditor.



Mrs. Nellie M. Cornick, an Enthusiastic Chicago Leader.

Club established a school of domestic science, which was such a notable success that at the end of four years the city undertook to support it.

Manual training has been instituted by clubs in New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Connecticut, while in Massachusetts about twenty clubs have made it their particular work.

Medical inspection was established in the schools of Baltimore through the efforts of the Maryland federation, while a school attendance law there was the result of a movement started by the Arundel Good Government Club.

In Portland, Maine, many bare, unattractive school-houses have been changed into places of charm and beauty through the women's clubs, while throughout the state of New York the clubwomen have encouraged art by teaching children the principles of decoration, also by furnishing pictures, photographs and casts of statues to schools.

Throughout the entire East children have been encouraged in planting trees and vines about schools and at their homes; prizes are given to encourage the cultivation of school gardens; in many communities, indeed,

Club in Philadelphia. This is one of the banner organizations; it gave the inception to vacation schools, inaugurated a school for backward children and first gave public evening concerts.

Tenement house reform, the cleaning of streets, cars and parks and the establishment of public baths have been successfully accomplished by the women of Pittsburg and Allegheny.

Throughout Pennsylvania, women's town improvement clubs have cleaned up their towns, taken refuse off of streets, demolished old and useless buildings, purchased street sprinklers and established parks. The women of Carlisle, Pa., have made their an ideal town.

Throughout New Jersey the town improvement idea has been perpetuated by the women, and in one town, which is typical of many others, they have not only cleaned the town, but secured good milk and maintained a hospital fund for the destitute sick.

WHAT has been the influence of the club movement, now grown to such extensive proportions in the United States? Have the various organizations taken women from their duties at home, or have they enabled them to become better housewives? Putting aside tests and unfounded prejudices, one can judge the organization by its accomplishments.

Through the influence of women's clubs, of which there are now more than 600, thousands of American households have been artistically furnished towns have been improved and cities cleaned.

Civic betterment has been studied and civil service reforms accomplished, impure food dealers have been exposed, pure food movements carried to success, the national pure food laws effected the passage of the national pure food laws.

Forests have been saved, historic spots preserved, parks laid out, playgrounds opened for the children of the cities, the courts established, deficient children cared for, kindergartens founded, libraries built, books put in circulation to a number exceeding 200,000.

Political fights for civic reform have been championed by the women. An education of inefficient housewives has become a feature of the work. The care of children is a chief object. Working girls enjoy blessings secured by clubwomen, in betterment of cottages and places of shelter.

There are at present more than 800,000 clubwomen in the United States.

The club movement has extended to every part of the country—east and west, north and south. There are now about forty-six state federations which include clubs social and literary, civic and other kinds.

This movement had its inception, according to many authorities, in the union of several scattered literary clubs united by the Sorosis of New York in 1858. This was followed in 1890 by the organizing of the General Federation of Women's Clubs.

COMMITTEES CARRY ON WORK

At present the principal work is carried on by committees of the federation—the civic committee, the educational committee, the civic committee, the civil service reform committee, the household economics committee, the pure food committee, the forestry committee, the legislative committee, the industrial and child labor committee, the library extension committee and the out-door committee.

Through the art committee the federation has sent thousands of pictures over the country, into schools and homes. Apartments have been erected, drinking fountains established, houses artistically decorated and parks planted.

School art leagues have been formed. One western state spent \$10,000 decorating a school. The protection of the Adirondack Park, the establishment of the National Park and the preservation of the cliff dwellings in Colorado are results of the work of the committee. The aim is to make America, as a nation, artistic.

The educational committee has improved educational facilities in many parts of the country and established scholarships, the household economics committee teaches mothers and mothers-in-law to be competent in securing the purchase of the federal pure food law.

Through the forestry committee forests have been protected and many thousands of trees planted. Through the child labor committee, conditions in factories and mines where women and children work have been improved, agitation has been successfully waged.

Juvenile court laws which have been passed in the women through the legislative and other committees. Into the West and South, into isolated homes, have been sent by the library extension committee, until now more than 200,000 books are now in circulation. Women's clubs have been formed and Carnegie libraries secured in many towns.

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The New Religion that SO MANY WOMEN LIKE



Ramakrishna, the Hindu Prophet.



Where Ramakrishna Made His Retreat from the World.

IS THE philosophy of a calm, serene "holy man," who passed his life by the Ganges, going off into trances most of the time, to place his cooling hand on the fevered, rioting pulses of our American cities? Already apostles of one Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna have reached these shores, and in the great cities of the country have won disciples. Since his death, more than twenty years ago, the religion of this "holy man" has swept over India. He is regarded by one-half of the population as a god.

swamis. They are said to have won several hundred converts.

Undoubtedly the religion of Ramakrishna is unique in this western world, and in justice it must be said that it is different from many of the new and strange teachings that have been accorded a more or less hearty welcome.

For these brown-skinned, turbaned, gentle-voiced men from India have undertaken to teach hustling, bustling commercial America that worldly wealth is of no value, that power is futile, that the ideal life is that of meditation, concentration and the development of spiritual perfection.

By a course of discipline they hope to develop in the weak worker and banker that spirit of Oriental calm. And it is a calm that is unruffled, which nothing can disturb, which a financier would wish to keep the tiger tick away a million with a placid

smile of resignation, or cause a man to emerge from an automobile smash-up with such serenity and benignity of expression as he would wear after a refreshing nap. This, practically, is what the East has undertaken to teach the West.

This religious crusade is one of those strange anomalies one at times witnesses in a country such as this—and who can say but his inconsistent people, with their love of paradox, say not in their mad, breathless haste take up the gospel of the Eastern sage, which tells them how foolish all their efforts are?

Ramakrishna was born in 1836 in the Bengal village of Kamarpukur. His people were Brahmins, but poor. To make a living the boy became a priest in the temple of Kali, the "Mother of Blessings" near Calcutta. There for hours he would worship the divine mother, placing flowers on her shrine, serving her



Mrs. A. Platt Decker, Detroit, the Retiring President.

which the Illinois law was either entirely or to some extent adopted.

For a number of years a school for children was conducted in the Cook county jail in Chicago by the Woman's Club. The treating of little children offenders as though they were adult criminals struck the women interested in the work as wicked and harmful. What was to be done?

An attorney was employed, and a bill providing for a juvenile court was drawn up. It was presented, and passed by the Legislature, becoming a law in 1899. Then in other states the women took up the problem and juvenile court laws followed. Laws protecting child laborers were passed in many states after campaigns of clubwomen.

In the isolated sections of the West traveling libraries have filled a crying need. Through the initiative of clubwomen, who inaugurated them, state appropriations have been secured and hundreds included. More than 12,000 volumes are controlled by the Library Commission of Iowa; through the women, thirty-two Carnegie libraries in Indiana; there are more than sixty traveling libraries in Michigan, forty in Missouri, while in Ohio the women secured an appropriation of \$5000 for the circulating of the State Library.

ART NOT NEGLECTED

But hand in hand with literature goes art. Art collections are a bit from place to place throughout the West, and clubs are not only conducting, in Iowa about forty clubs are devoted to this study, and more. Ohio federation has undertaken to institute art as part of the educational system of the state.

A traveling art gallery is supported by the Texas federation. Within five months its circuit included about seventy-five clubs. Nearly 25,000 children were enabled to study artistic work.

Through the efforts of the entire south there are traveling libraries; in South Carolina, for instance, there are 100; in Kentucky more than 85; more than 100 in Tennessee, 65 in Arkansas and about 15 in Mississippi.

With their sisters of the North, the clubwomen of the South have vigorously dealt with the problem of child labor. A child-labor and compulsory education law was passed in Georgia, the last of the states without legislation for children, as a result of the earnest work of clubwomen. In all the states existing laws are enforced under the vigilant eyes of the women. Teachers, guardians of the law, possibly, in kindergarten work, in dormitory and juvenile courts, are demanded and secured, by the women of Atlanta, Ga.

Social settlement work has been inaugurated in New Orleans. An educational campaign resulted in a conquest over yellow fever.

One might pursue a recital of what organized clubwomen have accomplished and indicate, declares Superintendent of Compulsory Education, Bodine of Chicago, to support it. "I believe in women's clubs. What this country needs is more women's clubs. More of the Mothers' Congress, more national Councils of Women, more Catholic Women's Leagues, for in organized womanhood lies the moral and intellectual hope of this nation."

Mrs. Robert J. Burdette, of California, who took a prominent part in the recent convention at Boston when it does not rob the home of father and mother.

"I believe in afternoon club life for women. I believe in evening club life for men and women together when it does not rob the home of father and mother."

"I believe that woman has no right to undertake any line of philanthropy outside of the home, along with the duties of her family. Her sphere is the home, and that does not emanate from the home and in its maintenance she should be content. Her work should be the center, but not the limit, of woman's life."

"I believe in equal rights in the family for father and mother. I believe in the protection and filial respect. These the club should foster."

with food and incense and lights.

Then doubt came to him. Is there a divine mother? he asked. There followed a spiritual struggle, a search for prayer and fasting. So terrible became the spiritual conflict that the boy was unable to stand at the altar, he lost all sense of time and refused to eat.

For months he suffered mental agony, and then, according to his disciples, a vision came. The divine mother appeared to him, clothed in radiant glory, and his doubts passed.

Then, for twelve years, this young man underwent a study of the world's religions. A beautiful woman came to him and taught him the religions of India, the practice of yoga. He sought beggar who men had hunted down, and he studied Mohammedanism, and Christianity—in fact, all the faiths of which he knew.

Of them, he said, were paths to the same goal. The goal was consciousness of the divine. Rama Krishna, having reached this state, spent most of his life in meditation and preaching to the masses.

While in his throes of doubt his family had died. He was a young girl of five years. For many years he forgot her. One day she came to him, a beautiful and beautiful. He fell at her feet, told her he would serve her, that he regarded her as a manifestation of the divine mother.

During his life Ramakrishna, in his retreat in the forest, overcame all earthly desires of wealth, money that, it is said, he shrank from in his hands. He considered power useless. Marriage, he declared, should be purely spiritual.

More than twenty years ago he died, worshipped by thousands. Half of India now regard him as an incarnation of Vishnu. His widow is still living, and is venerated as the "Blessed Virgin Sarada Devi."

"A REAL MAHATMA"

Max Muller in 1895 published a sketch of Ramakrishna's life, entitled "A Real Mahatma." He completed his life and saying two years later, and testified to the philosophy of this Hindu that his apostles have come to teach America. Only recently was the authorized copy of his gospel translated. Some of his maxims are of beauty:

"A true devotee should possess absolute calmness and never be disturbed by the opinion of others. Like a blacksmith's anvil, he will endure all blows and persecutions and yet remain firm in his faith. He who dresses in white, wears a turban, and carries a staff, carry a cane, and such things will draw attention to him. He should be a simple man, and appeal to him. If you have a pen in your hand, let it be the pen of a scribe on anything. Such is the power of the pencil."

"Money has great power. When a man becomes wealthy his nature is entirely changed. A true devotee never has a desire for money. He should be content with what he has, and aim of life should be to serve God. He should be attached to the world, but not to the things of the world. He should be a simple man, and appeal to him. If you have a pen in your hand, let it be the pen of a scribe on anything. Such is the power of the pencil."

"How can a man become a devotee? He should be a simple man, and appeal to him. If you have a pen in your hand, let it be the pen of a scribe on anything. Such is the power of the pencil."