



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

THE
BOSTONIAN

AN ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY MAGAZINE.



Vol. III October 1895-March 1896



BOSTON, MASS.
THE BOSTONIAN PUBLISHING COMPANY
83 NEWBURY STREET

The title 'WOMEN'S CLUBS' is rendered in a large, stylized, outlined font. The letters are filled with a stippled or dotted pattern. The text is flanked by three clusters of flowers, each with several dark petals and long, thin stems. The background behind the text is a light, stippled texture.

THEIR TRUE CHARACTER

BY MRS. ABBY MORTON DIAZ

NOW that the so-called "fad" of women's clubs has become a national affair, it is important that their true character be made known to the public at large. If it be asked—Why? it can be replied—Because the public at large believes so thoroughly in women's responsibility as home-makers, and socially, and is on perpetual guard, and justly, lest so powerful an influence be lessened or perverted.

The significance of this more recent club movement is so little comprehended that probably many, even many Bostonians, have not been made aware of a national institution, regularly organized as the General Federation of Women's Clubs, formed in 1890, and having now a national organ and publishing company, and numbering at its last count nearly four hundred and fifty clubs; these representing fifteen States, and belonging also to their respective State Federations. This, of course, does not include clubs having only an individual existence.

As National and State conventions of club representatives must make known the ideas and opinions of this extended membership, it would seem that reports of the proceedings, and of the sentiments expressed, and of the standards and aims declared, should have wide circulation, in order that the harm, if any, be exposed; and the benefit, if any, recognized. To calm the anxiety of those who predict harm from woman's womanliness being endangered by thus associating, it may be stated that one annual report speaks of the regular half hour devoted to "such formidable subjects as the simplification of housekeeping, physical culture, and dress reform, discussed with intelligence and ability."

At the last meeting of the Massachusetts State Federation fully twelve hundred women assembled, representing nearly every club in the Federation. Of this gathering it is said, that any who have questioned the good to be derived from such meetings have but to attend them to be

convinced of "the business ability developed in women, as shown in the concise, unfaltering manner in which much business was despatched under Mrs. Julia Ward Howe's knowingly wielded gavel; the intellectual wealth, and extended resources, as demonstrated in the able impromptu speeches of delegates, and the broadening, strengthening effect on woman's character, as illustrated in the whole day's session, during which there was not the merest shadow of any friction or any deviation from perfect harmony."

In the general discussion, Mrs. Cheney, a Boston club-woman, speaking of the "Influence of the Clubs in Towns and Cities," said: "The Public Library should be a pet object with women of the clubs. By example and work they should teach all people to love cleanliness, and to maintain it. They should make beauty lead on the whole community to love of cleanliness, and a world fit for human beings to live in."

Said another member: "There are three different ways in which the club influences the home,—by developing the woman who helps make the home; by the direct information it gives concerning improved methods of home-making, sanitation, and child-training; and also by its influence on homes other than those of its own members. If the woman who helps make the home is sunnier, brighter, then the home is sunnier and brighter, too. If it gives her better ideas of duty toward her children than that of merely providing for their physical needs, then the children are the chief gainers. There is a point where the hearing of lectures or papers dulls, instead of brightening." For a corrective—"Simply remember that the Club is more than a place where other people will do your intellectual work for you, and that a study class is of lasting service only as it arouses your own energy, and stimulates your own

thought, and makes you work for the acquirement of your own information."

Said another: "Strive to know of what you are capable, above all all things letting every word that falls from your lips better those who come in contact with you."

And still another: "Women should exert every effort toward the preservation of natural beauty in the landscape, such as the preservation of old trees, and wooded roads."

In regard to the Armenian atrocities, it was,—

"*Resolved*, That we, representing fifty-five clubs, with an aggregate membership of over eight thousand women, wish to record our earnest protest against these barbarities." Also, "that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the British Foreign Office, and to 'The London Daily News.'"

Another resolution extended cordial sympathy and union in the noble stand they have taken in affirming that character and intelligence, not color or race, be the tests of membership in their club.

A worthy resolution, but unnecessary and inconceivable, were our civilization—so-called—in reality Christian and republican. The "stand" referred to is a progressive one,—that it is so is our reproach,—but it has no claim to the term "noble," for as the clubs are formed on a mind basis, and for mind improvement, it should be considered a matter of course that mind meet mind without the least thought of "color or race." Our posterity of years hence will look back with wonder, almost unbelief, upon the present state of things when the leaders and rulers of great religious bodies, meeting in the interest of a faith which proclaims that all are one in Christ, that God, the common Father, hath made of one blood all nations; and then excluding from their conventions clergymen of the same faith, because of their color!

The State Federation of Iowa, which began in '93 with thirty clubs, now comprises ninety-eight. The recent account given of its biennial, at Cedar Rapids, states it to be, "The outgrowth of the necessity for community of thought and purpose" . . . and "for acquaintance among ourselves, so that when we meet we may know each other's faces, capacity, and powers for action." The "Address of Welcome" was given, "not with formal utterance of the lips, but with heartfelt rejoicing that women realize the need of conferring together over those problems of life which belong especially to their share in its activities,—the uplifting of the race and the development of a higher humanity." "We hold this meeting to discuss those topics that are allied most closely with the mental, moral, and physical welfare of humanity. We believe that a broader, more completely developed womanhood means better homes and more efficient mothers . . . nobler sons and daughters—nobler sons and daughters mean nobler manhood and womanhood, the influence of whose lives will preserve and prosper the life of this nation." The President in responding, said: "The inherent vitality of a cause is its true impetus," but "judgment, tact, and wise consideration must be ever at the helm. . . . All progress is made through movement. Truth is relative. . . . We approach it, but it lies beyond; another vista opens up to us once this end has been attained.

'Time makes ancient good uncouth.'

"New questions, new ideas command us. The past is history; the future prophecy; but the present confronts us with ever-pressing needs. . . . I know full well that women's clubs will not be able to make over 'this wise old world.' . . . There is the law of self-development—each one having upon his brow the seal of honor to be the best, to do the best, to

live for the best. Women have known this individual problem. The conscious relation to the family, the clan, the tribe, is the higher and final problem to be solved. Semiramis, Cleopatra, Elizabeth, have exemplified sovereignty. It is for the nineteenth century to exemplify the power of women to identify themselves in their relation to the whole as factors and integers in the fabric of society; . . . and moving in it to the accomplishment of the one great human purpose.

"The question is pressed upon us, What are your women's clubs doing—what active, visible work? And the question is an open one. Shall we engage in philanthropic work? Shall we influence social economics by active co-operation? Or shall we, through education and discussion, make our persuasive influence felt? Of outside aids the Public Library might be selected as one of the most efficient factors of education for young or old; an invaluable aid in a town or city to the investigation of any line of thought or study, and one to which women's clubs could well lend a helping hand. University extension could be well adapted to the field of intellectual club effort. The avenues of opportunity in the numerous directions are so numerous that the caution is needed, 'make haste slowly.' Let us do well what we have undertaken; pay attention to detail, that each step may be secured as you go. Let us hold the nice balance which gives true power and usefulness. Let us uplift and inspire; let us be, and let us do; let us look for the noble purposes of life and hold them aloft as a banner, where those who see its folds waving shall say, Behold the influence of goodness, of purity, of knowledge, of truth!—The State, a union of sisterhoods, let us cherish and uphold her. The Nation, a union of States, may we never be divided!"

For the enlightenment of those

who are inquiring, somewhat loftily and disparagingly, What is the good of women's clubs, any way? it may be well to state what was said of them by the President of the General Federation, Mrs. Henrotin, of Chicago, in her address at the Iowa Biennial. "The aim of a woman's club," she said, "is to create a solidarity of feeling among women upon the basis of a common interest; to further literary culture, to encourage education, to cultivate art, to investigate science, to study social questions, and last, but not least, to prove that a fine social life is the end and result of the best civilization. . . . There is a tremendous power in the social aspect of club-life, which, if not abused, will be a greater influence in uniting human interests than can be realized at the present day. The root of dissatisfaction in modern society is due to the inadequacy and narrowness of our so-called social life." "Society is greatly misunderstood, because people are laboring under an erroneous impression of its meaning. The 'Four Hundred,' about whom so much is said, may be dismissed. They are a passing bubble on the waves of time. The prevailing idea of social life, that of gayety and pleasure-seeking, the wearing of fine apparel, etc., is but a mere form, and no more a part of social life than one's appearance is of his inner being. Little by little the personality of man and woman, which has so often been a drawback to the advancement of both, is fading into a common unity of spirit, in which both become the ideal. Society is really the companionship of intelligent men and women who enjoy literature, the arts,—as conversation, dancing, music, the theatre, etc., and by their presence they encourage and elevate all assemblies, and thus fulfil one of the greatest functions of social life. Society has a great and ever-increasing rôle to play in developing education. It should be able

to point out the right use of art and luxury, and also the right enjoyment of the individual, independent of either of these." "Modern social life should formulate a progressive science of ethics, and see to it that the morality of society conforms to its ethics. Society conducted along these lines will be capable of creating a new world."

She speaks of "the deplorable neglect of charm of personality." "It is true, in a republic it is the average which rules, but why should not the average define a higher civilization, rather than that of poor quality with rough manners? Gradually . . . has arisen an appreciation of good manners; a word kindly spoken, a pleasant smile, go far toward propitiating the adverse forces of life, and in this age of machinery every effort should be made to keep men from becoming themselves machines; and here I think, comes in the gracious mission of women. The higher education is essential for her, but why ignore the cultivation of manners and sentiment?"

In reviewing the work of the various State Federations, the increasing interest taken in the Maine clubs by farmers' wives was specially mentioned.

A representative member from Chicago spoke of the "long historic ages which developed the germs of type in man, and also in woman. The criticism that fears women's unsexing by any modern changes, loses sight of this evolutionary basis of type." In women are developed "pre-eminently the altruistic attributes. In the home, in the society, and in the church, her work has been primarily for others . . . In most of man's relations the basis of altruism has been established, but industrially, individualism is still the dominant force. The economic struggle of our time is to secure for it, also, the higher basis. For safe guidance we have but one adequate

agent, public opinion. It is in shaping and directing public opinion to the lines of women's ethics and altruism that the work of our clubs must be done." This falls in with the conservative's idea that woman's mission is to "influence" our opposite sex to judge wisely, and act righteously in the conduct of human affairs. Her *involved* altruism *evolved* by ages of evolution will help form the public opinion which will dethrone individualism, now the dominant force in men's affairs. After mentioning the Temperance Unions, King's Daughters, and Christian Associations, as conducted by women on their altruistic basis, Mrs. Bates showed that, "The Federation has added to this a powerful feature element in its alliance with literature and art. In all civilizations these have given the greatest vitality and endurance, because they "embody spiritual forces, which alone have the possibility of survival. . . . The things of sense, and the things of

matter, mask as they will, carry in their very nature the doom of the transitory . . . for spirit alone is there hereafter. Poetry and art are the golden links that span all times and places. . . . Their work is wrought of the imperishable,—the spirit of beauty and of truth. Literature is the guardian of principles, those spiritual forces that inspire the race's progress, and in a people's ideals lie all its possibilities. . . . To our age it has been given the thought to accept that dream, the oneness of humanity, the brotherhood of mankind. From greatest to least our ethics are linking men together, one in their common needs; one in their common rights; one in their common duty. With the goal clearly discerned to which our kind is destined . . . we appreciate our place in the economic order, and we realize the ministry of service to which our women's clubs are pledged."

Could womanly service, or human service, be higher?

