

THE OSSOLI CLUB.

In comparison with other great movements the growth of the club movement is startling. Perhaps it is partly accounted for by the rapidity with which any question is taken



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up, discussed and settled now a days. In considering a club whose membership is exclusively of women it may be well to speak of some of the benefits which every woman derives from a well conducted club. New ideas are obtained, there is a broadening out, a most desirable mental improvement. Many a woman who has felt that the aspirations for betterment were peculiar to herself and who has feared to breathe them aloud is both astonished and encouraged in coming into club life, to find that other women have been wrung by the same doubts, have been thinking the same thoughts, been thrilled by the same aspirations. A well known woman says— "One of the benefits of organization is, that it teaches us the needs of others as well as our own. Formerly we forgot the women at our side. If we got more, the others got less. We did not think of equality, because we were not gathered together in one body."

Organization has proved to be an education. There must be some great truth at the bottom of the association idea, else it could never have estab-

lished itself to the extent that it has within so short a time; and in spite of faults and failures, much progress has been made. There is always a quota in every city and town of the busier women who feel that they can not afford to belong to a women's club and meet its demands upon their time and strength. In Highland Park the prevailing sentiment would appear to be that one cannot afford not to belong, as the club offers so much in the way of stimulus and helpful education.

For many years reading clubs afforded the only mental stimulus in the Park and little coteries of women with similar tastes would meet at each others' houses to read and discuss the subjects of the day. But the want of a larger organization was felt in order to keep pace with the progress of women everywhere around us,—but leaders are the first requisite and they were slow in coming forward, as it is not every woman who can originate, persevere in a course of action or stand by an opinion quite alone. To Mrs. Kenneth R. Smoot belongs the honor of having been the leader in this club movement, as it was mainly through her efforts that a group of women gathered in the rooms of the Highland Park Club House in March 1894 and organized what was then known as the "Monday Club" with no other idea than that of mutual improvement. Mrs. Smoot was chosen president and Mrs. Frederick C. Cushing vice-president; Mrs. Requa, secretary and treasurer; Mrs. Everingham and Miss Annie Hammond, (Mrs. C. H. Warren) directors. The History and Development of Music was chosen as

tastes of all and keep alive the interest in this first venture, and during the first year, the German composers in chronological order from Bach to Wagner was given. To Mrs. Ben C. Jones must be given the credit for much of the success of this first year. A special meeting was called in October 1894 for the purpose of changing the club's name and the name of "Os oli" was decided upon in memory of Margaret Fuller's Ossoli. At that meeting Mrs. Requa and Mrs. Cushing resigned and Mrs.

Ben C. Jones was elected vice-president and Mrs. Henry C. Street, secretary and treasurer. At the end of a year this organization arrived at the dignity of a constitution and by-laws and since that time has been steadily growing in influence and enthusiasm until it now has a membership of 115 and today its members are running the gauntlet of subjects that embrace the best thought and highest achievements of the age. Social and economic questions are frequently discussed and while many clever papers are read by the members themselves; one or two lectures are given each year by professional talent. Its members are all active members. Those who do not have papers, assist in the musical, art and hospitality departments or in some way add to the attractiveness of each meeting.

The Ossoli Club began its second year Oct. 24th, 1895, and following is a brief summary of its officers and work up to date.

SECOND YEAR.

President, Mrs. Kenneth R. Smoot, Vice-President, Mrs. Ben C. Jones,



MRS. T. T. WATSON.

Secretary and Treasurer, Mrs. Henry C. Street; Directors: Mrs. Albert Paul Smith, Miss Jane H. Street. General subject for the year, "Wo-