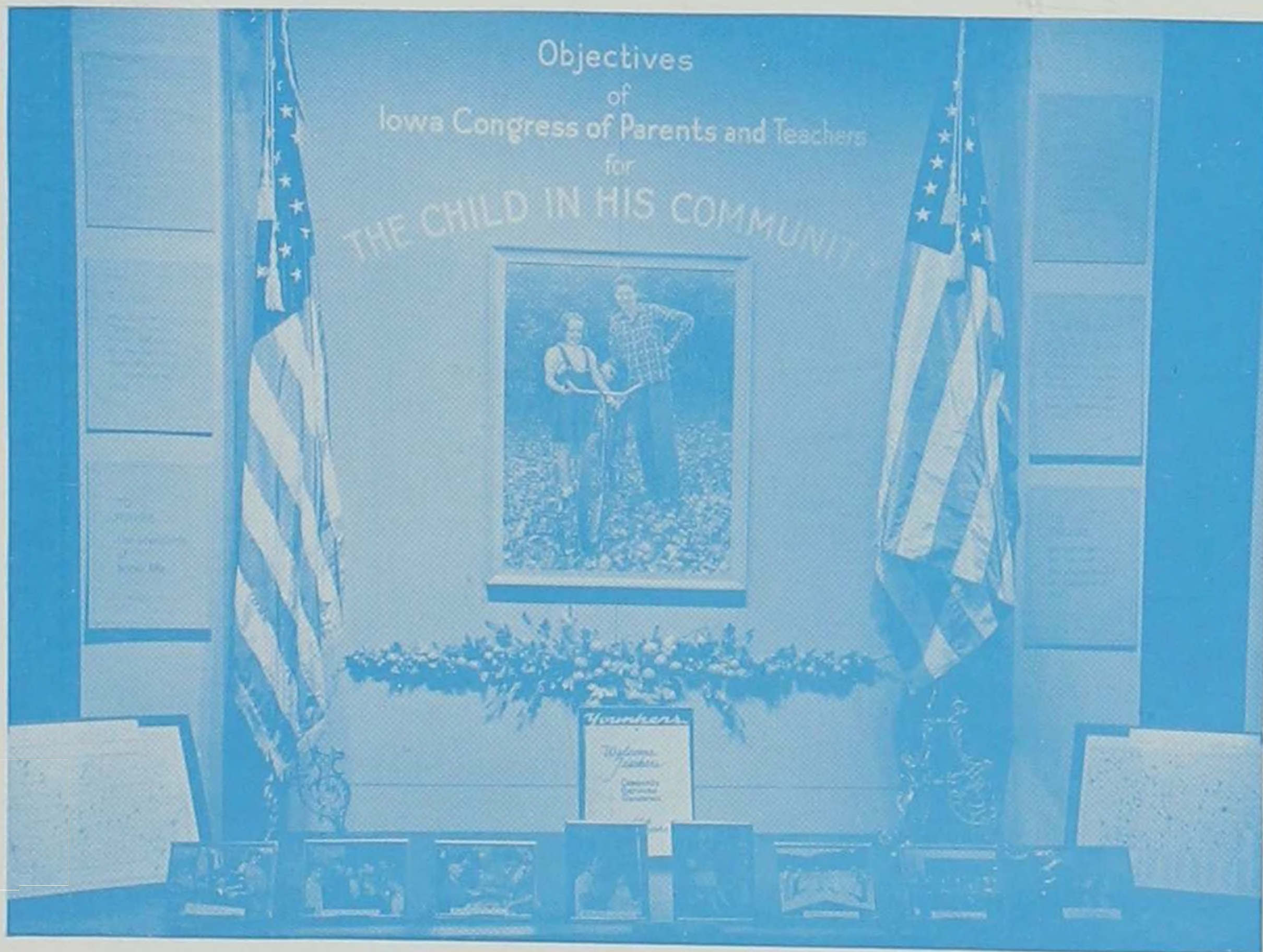
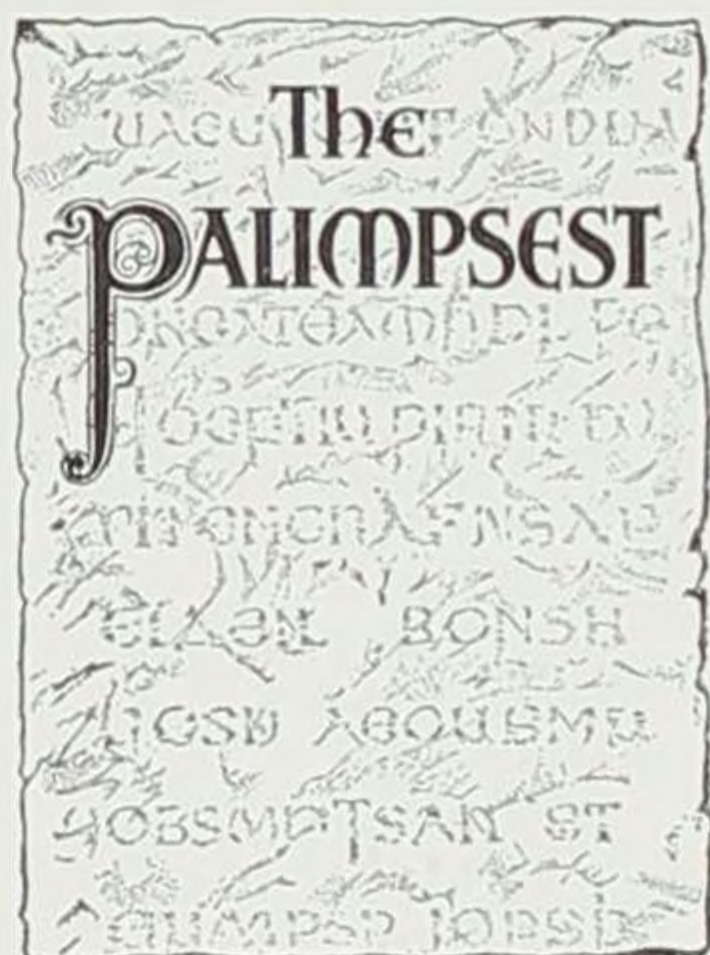


The
PALIMPSEST



Published Monthly by
The State Historical Society of Iowa
Iowa City Iowa

NOVEMBER 1950



The Meaning of Palimpsest

In early times a palimpsest was a parchment or other material from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete; and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the original writings by deciphering the dim fragments of letters partly erased and partly covered by subsequent texts.

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the records of successive generations. To decipher these records of the past, reconstruct them, and tell the stories which they contain is the task of those who write history.

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Cover

Front — Iowa Congress Window Display in Des Moines.

Back — Inside: Fourth National Congress of Mothers in the Auditorium at Des Moines in 1900.

Back — Outside: Opening of Golden Jubilee at Des Moines in 1950.

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THE PALIMPSEST

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No. 11

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Historical Beginnings

During the early part of May, 1900, Des Moines was told in almost every issue of the press that it must push back its pompadour, shine its button shoes, and get ready to put its best foot forward for the distinguished visitors it was about to entertain. These visitors were the officers and delegates to the Fourth National Congress of Mothers, which in 1924 became the National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

As the nineteenth century was waning, such women's organizations as the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Association for the Advancement of Women, and the Women's Christian Temperance Union were reaching the stage of national organization. The strength and popularity of these movements is attested by the fact that in 1895 the National Council of Women of the United States, a federation of eighteen such national groups numbering over 4,000,000 women, held their second triennial session at Washington, D. C.

It was in August of 1895 that Mrs. Theodore W. Birney launched her idea of a National Congress of Mothers before a group of kindergarten teachers assembled at Chautauqua, New York. With Mrs. Birney, to plan was to act. On February 17, 1897, she had the pleasure of seeing the National Congress of Mothers hold their first session at Washington.

In organizing American mothers and fathers, Alice McClellan Birney was serving not only her own but all American children. Born in Georgia in 1858, Mrs. Birney was the mother of three daughters, two of whom were born of her marriage to Theodore Weld Birney, grandson of James Gillespie Birney, the abolitionist leader.

In Washington, Alice Birney met a kindred spirit in Mrs. Phoebe Apperson Hearst, the mother of William Randolph Hearst. A woman of means, Mrs. Hearst founded the National Cathedral School for Girls and gladly helped Mrs. Birney finance the First National Congress of Mothers.

In 1899, the National Congress of Mothers held its third annual convention in Washington. Mrs. Birney, in her address of welcome, recalled for the delegates present the "spiritual fervor and enthusiasm" which had pervaded the first convention two years before, and declared the National Congress had "striven to reach the mothers of our land, and, through them, the fathers." Taking as

her theme the importance of character building, Mrs. Birney emphasized "cooperation" as the "watch word" of the times.

Citing the many clubs devoted to child study in America, Mrs. Birney declared: "No cause is greater than that in which we are enlisted. No misrepresentations, no criticisms can daunt us; for we are working for the weak, the helpless, the innocent, trusting ones of earth, the little children." In closing, Mrs. Birney pictured the endeavors of the National Congress as a "glad triumphal march to those who come after us," and likened the work to "warfare as glorious as any man ever waged on a field of battle." It was a "warfare in which the old and feeble as well as the young, may enlist."

The sessions were reported by Mrs. Isaac Lea Hillis of Des Moines, Iowa, a staff contributor of the *Iowa Homestead*, who had been assigned to compile a supplement on the National Congress. Perhaps no one was more thrilled by these words than Mrs. Hillis. A member of the Des Moines Women's Club, she came as a delegate from the Iowa Child Study Society. Four things had drawn her to Washington. Her father lived there, the Congress of Mothers was to be in session, the Daughters of the American Revolution (of which she was a new member) and the National Council of Women were both holding national meetings.

Soon after her arrival in Washington, Mrs. Hillis met Mrs. Birney, the national president,

whom she overheard discussing the advisability of holding the next Congress somewhere else than in Washington. Kansas City, Omaha, Denver, and San Francisco were mentioned. As Mrs. Hillis said later, "That conversation made me think, and I quickly figured out how it could be entertained in Des Moines." She went out at once and, without authority of any kind, dictated the following letter of invitation: "The Des Moines Women's Club extends their most cordial invitation to the National Congress of Mothers to meet in Des Moines in the spring of 1900, and pledges hospitality to 500 delegates."

Born in Bloomfield, Iowa, on August 8, 1858, Cora Bussey Hillis was the daughter of Cyrus and Ellen Kiser Bussey. At the outbreak of the Civil War, her father resigned from the Iowa Senate to become Colonel of the Third Iowa Cavalry. At the close of the war, with the rank of Brevet Major General, he removed his family to New Orleans where it was prominently identified with the business and civic activities of the city. The Bussey home on beautiful St. Charles Avenue was noted for its hospitality.

In 1875 young Cora was graduated from Sylvester Larned Institute in New Orleans. In 1880 she was married to Isaac Lea Hillis, a graduate of the law school of the University of Michigan. To this union were born three children: Isaac, now deceased, and Ellen Hillis Miller and Cyrus B.

Hillis, both residents of Des Moines. In 1884 the Hillis family moved from New Orleans to Des Moines, a thriving city of about 40,000 with a Walnut Street which was often a lake of mud. The city was alive to church and club work, and the Hillis family soon became an important part of it.

No sooner had Mrs. Hillis returned home from Washington than she was informed that the National Congress would come to Des Moines in 1900. The choice of Iowa for the National Congress meeting was unique, there being no state branch of the Congress in the Hawkeye State. Time was short, but luckily all joined to make the meeting a success. Newspapers and businessmen cooperated, mothers' clubs were organized, receptions were held, and programs published. The Savery Hotel was chosen as the convention headquarters; the Grant Club offered its facilities. The Women's Club canvassed Des Moines for families willing to entertain convention guests. Every county in Iowa was now eligible for representation at the Congress, and word of expected delegates was received in every mail.

Finally, the great day arrived. On May 21, 1900, Mrs. Theodore W. Birney opened the Fourth National Congress of Mothers before a large audience in the Des Moines Auditorium. Featuring the meeting was the presentation by Mrs. Hillis of a bouquet of ninety-nine pink roses

to Mrs. Birney — one for each county in the state. The bouquet was tied with blue ribbon, the rose-pink being symbolic of childhood, and the blue signifying motherhood.

So many attended the second-day sessions that policemen had to keep the doors closed, and overflow meetings were held at the adjacent Y.M.C.A. where addresses were repeated. The highlight of the second evening was the reception given by Governor and Mrs. Leslie M. Shaw, said to have been attended by 5,000 Iowans.

On Saturday, May 26, the State Congress of Iowa Women was organized, and Mrs. Hillis was elected president. The constitution was drafted, submitted, and adopted by the seventy-five Iowa women present for the organization meeting. Thus, May 26, 1900, became the birthday of the Iowa Congress of Mothers.

MRS. RAY MILLS

Functions and Finances

The function of a dynamic Parent-Teacher organization is to provide concerted action for the welfare of children and youth in home, school, and community. The National Congress of Mothers was founded with this purpose in mind in 1897. States soon became organized along national lines, each making its own constitution and by-laws to conform with those of the National Congress. Iowa was the third state to organize.

The next step was to set up district organizations to include areas corresponding with those of the Iowa State Teachers Association — seven districts of varying numbers of counties — these being known as the Northeast, Southeast, Northwest, Southwest, North Central, Central, and South Central districts. Some areas were more populous than others, and in the districts with many counties contact was difficult. There was great inequality in the distribution of state monies on a county *pro rata* basis, and county representation itself varied in a distressing manner. But as these problems developed, they resolved themselves into a reorganization program. In 1944 Iowa was reorganized into nine districts each containing eleven counties.

The State Congress is the governing body, and its work, procedure, and policy, adopted from the national program, are administered by its Board of Managers. This body consists of the elected state officers, the district presidents, elected by local unit representatives to the district meetings, and the committee chairmen. According to a recent revision of the by-laws, committee chairmen are nominated by an elected nominating committee and are then elected by a special electing group which meets following the state convention in the year a president is elected. The committee chairmen then take office with the president and serve throughout the three-year term.

From 1900, the year of state organization for Iowa, until 1943, the presidents might serve unlimited terms, but action was taken in 1943 to provide for only one term of three years for state and district officers. Elections were staggered so that some occurred in each of the three years, thus providing for experienced leadership at all times. With this change came a "three-year plan" for state meetings; the formal convention type of meeting comes in the year the president is elected. The first state meeting in the president's term of office is a short-course type of meeting held on the campus of Iowa State College at Ames. The second year a parent education meeting is held at the State University of Iowa in Iowa City. In the third year, the formal meeting, mentioned above,

may be held at any place in the state willing to entertain the convention and having facilities for 600 or more delegates.

The state organization breaks down into nine districts with their corresponding officers and committee chairmen, and, consequently, with their own spring and fall meetings. Districts are made up of councils and local units within their confines. Districts do not interfere with either the councils or local units, but act as channels for the dissemination of the state plans. Councils serve a similar function, with their local unit membership.

A council is set up to strengthen the work of the local units and may be formed when there are three or more such functioning units in a locale, either rural or urban. At present, the Iowa Congress of Parents and Teachers has ten county councils and forty-two city councils.

To organize and aid the local units is of the first importance to the State Congress, and to provide for such expansion a Field Service Fund is budgeted each year from the state portion of the national Founders Day monies contributed by local unit members and friends. Founders Day is given special recognition each year in appreciation of services rendered and with a thought for the challenge to members.

The name of Mary Grinnell (Mrs. David O.) Mears occupies a place of high honor in connection with national Founders Day. The daughter

of J. B. Grinnell of Grinnell, Mrs. Mears attended the First National Congress of Mothers in 1897 and served as vice-president of this organization from 1905 to 1924. The idea of Founders Day on February 17, commemorating the life and services of Mrs. Birney and Mrs. Hearst, was the special contribution of Mrs. Mears to the National Congress in 1910. In 1947 the National Golden Jubilee ceremonies honoring the founders were held at the Alice Birney Memorial at Marietta, Georgia.

The Iowa Congress has outlets through the press and through monthly radio programs for the promotion of its projects, some of which are: Summer Round-Up of Children, Youth Forums, Scholarships, Study Groups for Parent Education, Hot School Lunch program, Safety Projects for School and Home (including Driver Education courses), Recreation in school and community, and the use of films, in many areas, with special emphasis on International Relations and Home and Family Life.

The publication program is extensive, a bibliography by Mrs. B. C. Hopkins reveals. The official publications are *Iowa Parent-Teacher* and *A History of the Iowa Congress of Parents and Teachers*.

The legislative program of the Iowa Congress is in line with that of the Iowa State Education Association, with such National Congress adaptation as may be applicable in Iowa, yet all being

shaped up by the various divisions of the state congress — extension, public welfare, education, home service, health, and publicity. The division of organizations, as its name indicates, sets the pattern for state, district, council, and local units. Thus does the Parent-Teacher Association function in behalf of the objects stated:

To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, church, and community.

To raise the standards of home life.

To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.

To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the training of the child.

To develop, between educators and the general public, such united efforts as will secure for every child the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education.



The Iowa Congress of Parents and Teachers is financed from three main sources of revenue: (1) dues; (2) Founders Day gifts; (3) the sale of life memberships and distinguished service scrolls.

The principal source is derived from annual membership dues which are all-inclusive for local, state, and national organizations and payable by the members in each association in which membership is held. Membership dues include three portions: a national portion, as provided in the na-

tional by-laws (five cents); a state portion, as provided in the state by-laws (twenty cents); and a local portion, as provided in local by-laws. The allocation of these monies is made through an annual budget plan prepared by the Budget and Finance Committee and approved by the Board of Managers.

The second source of revenue, the Founders Day Fund, is acquired through free will contributions from the 678 local associations in the state. This is a national plan, introduced in 1910 by Mrs. David O. Mears of Grinnell, Iowa, and adopted in commemoration of the founding of the Parent-Teacher Movement in 1897, and the fund is used for an extension program. In 1950 Iowa's gifts were \$2,027.80, one half of which amount was sent to the national office for its extension program. Iowa's half was placed in a cumulative fund to be used for adding a field worker to the staff.

The Student Loan Fund, the third source of revenue, is being established in Iowa this year, through the sale of life memberships (\$25 each), Distinguished Service Member Scrolls (\$5, \$10, or \$15), and "In Memoriam" cards (any amount). Any of the foregoing may be purchased by units desiring to honor present workers or to commemorate the deceased. Individuals may purchase them for themselves or for friends. Loans are currently being made to teacher-training students in Iowa.

MRS. F. R. KENISON — MRS. IRVE CARLSON

Some Contributions to Iowa

During the past half-century the Iowa Congress of Parents and Teachers has exhibited unusual imagination, enthusiasm, and energy. Its leadership at all levels has been stimulating, its program challenging to all who took a part in it. As a consequence its contributions to the state and local scene have been widespread and beneficial to a large cross-section of Iowa citizens.

The dynamic personality of Mrs. Isaac Lea Hillis was in evidence from the start. In order to acquaint the public with the work of the National Congress of Mothers and to lay a foundation for the organization of the Iowa Congress, Mrs. Hillis had promptly set up a headquarters tent at the 1899 State Fair for the exhibition of materials, and where women from all over Iowa could meet. Appointed state regent in April, Mrs. Hillis was authorized by the National Congress to find county regents, who in turn were to find sub-regents in every town to form mothers' clubs and parent-teacher unions.

State Fair Exhibits

After three months of labor in Iowa for the National Congress of Mothers, Mrs. Hillis rallied 200 socially prominent Des Moines women around

her to give out literature at the State Fair, to keep a book of registration, and to welcome out-of-town people interested in the work. In their tent, "beautifully decorated" with the organization's colors of pink and blue, they welcomed hundreds of Iowa women, thus stimulating interest in the Fourth National Congress of Mothers to be held at Des Moines in 1900.

The Iowa Congress maintained an exhibit booth almost annually at the State Fair until the advent of the Baby Health Contest in 1911. The following year Mrs. Walter S. Brown, chairman of the Child Hygiene Committee of the National Congress of Mothers and a past president of the Iowa Congress, arranged for a child welfare exhibit in a big tent next to the cottage where the Baby Health Contest was going on. Mrs. Brown had been inspired to attempt this project by a visit to the Chicago Child Welfare exhibit and had the cooperation of the State Fair Board, the State Board of Health, and the State Department of Public Instruction in carrying out her plans.

The 1912 exhibit was one of the most outstanding in the history of the Iowa Congress. In one booth a demonstration was given of the hygienic care of infants and the sterilization of milk. Another showed a model school with a water jar equipped with a faucet and individual drinking cups; dustless crayons and low blackboards to accommodate small scholars; a newly patented stove

to distribute heat evenly and improve ventilation; and a fireless cooker in which soup was provided for the children at noon. Mrs. H. L. Carrell explained the penny savings association whose work was done under the Iowa Congress; through ten years, children had deposited \$90,000 in savings. Mrs. George Cosson and Mrs. Florence McFarland gave information on Juvenile Courts, and Miss Florence Ward of Iowa State Teachers College gave demonstrations of kindergarten methods.

Through the efforts of Mrs. Charles Brenton and Mrs. H. G. Drake, the exhibits were housed in the Women and Children's Building when that structure was opened in 1914. Spot maps and scrap books showed the progress made. In 1927 an exhibit of the Summer Round-Up — an activity to send beginners to school free from remediable defects — was sent from the national office.

For two years the Iowa Congress, with several other organizations, placed an exhibit in a machinery building to demonstrate the need for one for educational purposes, and which was finally secured. In 1928 the Iowa Congress exhibit took first place in the Adult Education class. In 1950 there were two booths — one showing the schoolroom of fifty years ago and the other, the schoolroom of today.

Juvenile Court Law

Another contribution of the Iowa Congress was

the enactment of the Juvenile Court Law. The detention of delinquent children in one small room, boys with girls, where they slept on cots in cubbyholes, mingled together in the daytime, and shared their diet of black coffee, bread, and molasses, with soup added for dinner, so stirred Mrs. Hillis that she quickly started the promotion of a movement to secure adequate legislation. For some time she had been making a thorough study of Juvenile Court Laws in other states and had assembled a vast amount of material relating to such legislation.

In 1902 Mrs. Hillis began an active campaign and secured support for the Congress in its fight for the bill from many groups including mothers' clubs, women's clubs, civic organizations, reform groups, lawyers, and judges.

The Juvenile Court Bill as originally written was a collaboration by Mrs. Hillis and Judge Chester C. Cole of Des Moines, a former Chief Justice of the Iowa Supreme Court but at that time Dean of the Drake University Law School. This bill, somewhat modified "to make it a more popular measure," was passed by the Iowa legislature on April 8, 1904. In commenting editorially on the measure, a Des Moines newspaper declared "the greatest credit for the passage of the law is due to Mrs. Isaac Lea Hillis, president of the Iowa Congress of Mothers, whose untiring efforts in its behalf have at last been crowned with success."

The Baby Health Contest

As Child Health Chairman for the Iowa Congress, Mrs. Frank S. Watts of Audubon planned and carried out the first Baby Health Contest at the Iowa State Fair in August, 1911. "Why would not scientific care do for babies what it had done for the improvement of hogs and cattle?" When the Extension Department of Iowa State College asked the Iowa Congress to take over the Woman's Hour at the Fair, Mrs. Watts felt the time had come to make her dream a reality.

Six women physicians were secured to help Mrs. Watts. Three gave informal talks and three acted as judges. The score card used was prepared by Dr. Margaret Vaupel Clark of Waterloo. The card was based on a 100-point score, under the headings "Psychological," "Head," and "General Examination," with instructions for the judges and a table of measurements. A brief history of the child and his family was to be filled out on the front of the card. Serving as judges with "Dr. Margaret" were Dr. Lenna Meanes of Des Moines and Dr. Florence Brown Sherbon of Colfax. Informal talks on the proper care and feeding of children were given by Dr. Sophie Hinze Scott of Des Moines, Dr. Kate Harpel of Boone, and Dr. Jennie Ghrist of Ames.

The babies were examined in the "little slate-roofed kitchen" of the Iowa State College building. Statistics made from this first contest list the

entries as fifty, but forty-five were actually scored — twenty-seven boys and eighteen girls. The contest was limited to babies from twelve to thirty-six months.

Financial support was provided by Iowa State College, which furnished the building, and by the Iowa Congress, which gave the sum of \$25 for prizes. The two first prizes were provided by Miss Neale S. Knowles of the College Extension Department, who gave a five dollar gold piece for the best boy, and by Mrs. B. F. Carroll, president of the Iowa Congress and wife of Governor Carroll, who gave a handsome silver mug to the best girl. The total cost for the contest was only \$18.50, as the doctors, nurses, and the Iowa Congress ladies paid their own expenses.

Assisting Mrs. Watts were Mrs. Walter S. Brown of Des Moines, chairman of the Child Health Committee of the National Congress of Mothers; Mrs. A. O. Ruste of Charles City, chairman of the Education Committee of the Iowa Congress; Mrs. A. W. Slaughter of Ottumwa and Mrs. E. E. Sherman of Keosauqua, both the wives of doctors and both of whom later conducted similar contests at county fairs. Miss Catherine Earhart, R. N., and Miss Maude Sutton, R. N., both of Des Moines, assisted the judges with the examination.

Publicity of the Iowa baby health contest was nation-wide. The Philadelphia *North American*

for March 10, 1912, said: "One thing is certain, the Iowa Congress of Mothers is planning to besiege the Iowa legislature next winter to secure a substantial appropriation for the creation of a magnificent 'Baby Hall' which shall be a monument to the state's appreciation of motherhood and its interest in the development of its people."

The contest idea spread like wildfire. A Baby Contest Association was formed, with Mrs. Watts as president, and the Iowa Congress continued promoting it in county fairs and elsewhere. Mrs. Charles Brenton and Mrs. A. O. Ruste were especially active in this work.

The Iowa State Fair Board, which had previously refused to support the Baby Health Contest, appropriated \$280 for it in 1912 and offered a sweepstakes prize of \$50 each to the healthiest boy and girl. Mrs. Watts was superintendent of the contest. In 1914, when the contest was housed in the new Women and Children's Building, the Fair Board discontinued cash prizes and gave medals and trophies instead. During Mrs. Watts' administration, champion winners were driven in an open car along with the grand stock parade before the grandstand amphitheater.

About 1913 the interest of the American Medical Association was gained for the score card. In time, a more scientific card was prepared and copyrighted, also a book of instructions for the judges. The card used today has been revised to

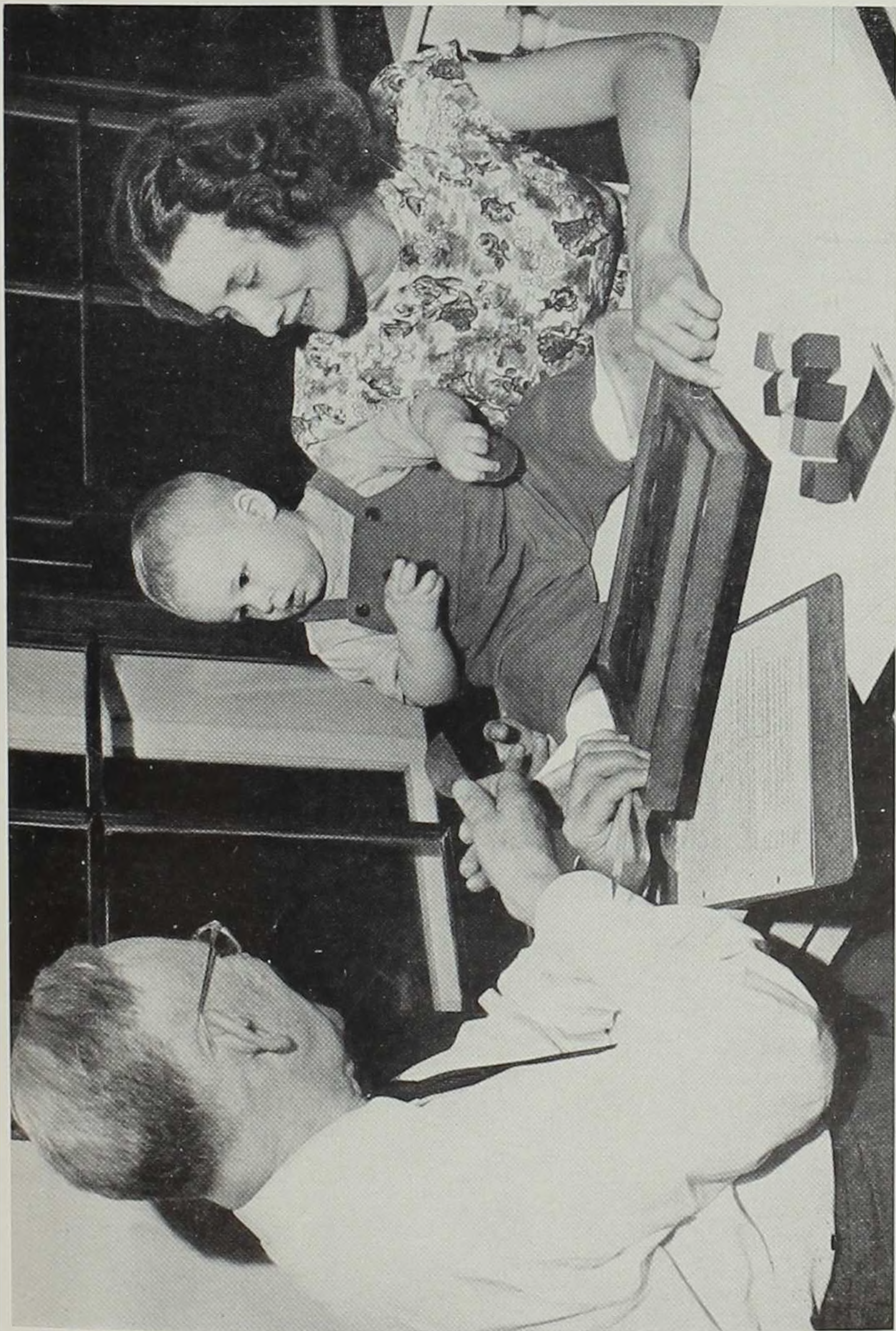
meet present day medical and psychological standards. The State Fair Board continues to appoint, as superintendent of the contest, a woman who is a leader in the work of the Iowa Congress.

The Women and Children's Building

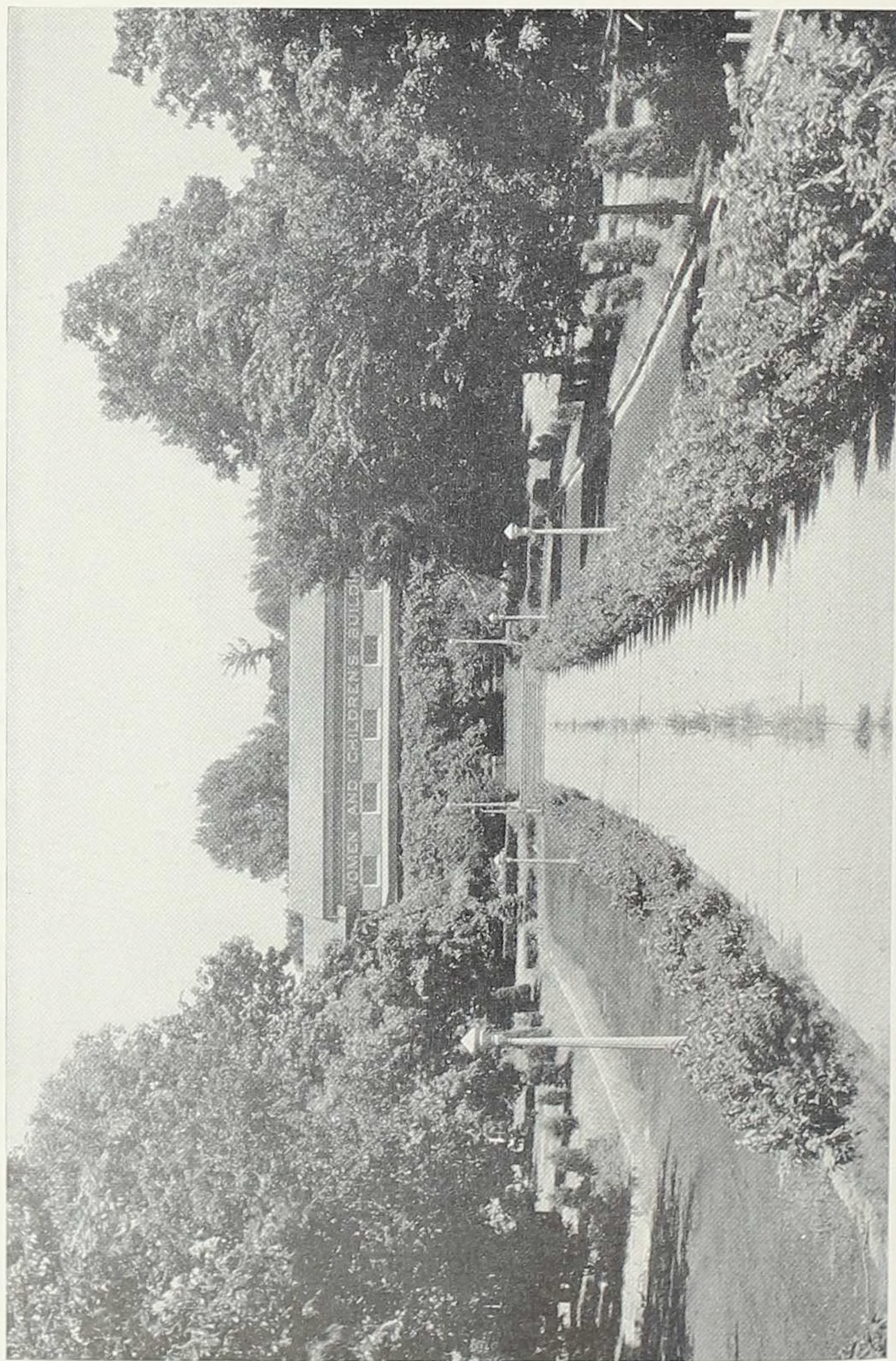
Among the women who had worked for long years in the Iowa Congress was Mrs. Charles Brenton of Dallas Center. After serving four years as recording secretary, she was elected president in 1912. While distributing literature from the booth or from flapping tents at the State Fair, sometimes in cold, rainy weather, Mrs. Brenton envisioned a building where women and children might rest while attending the Fair. Such a building, she thought, should house the Baby Health Contest and other child welfare activities and should afford not only a place to demonstrate home economics and art works, but also provide clean rest rooms and wide verandas for all.

Under Mrs. Brenton's direction, Mrs. A. E. Kepford, chairman of the hygiene committee, and Mrs. Walter S. Brown, legislative chairman, had architectural plans of the prospective Women and Children's Building drawn by Oliver O. Smith, senior member of Smith and Keffer, Des Moines architects. A profile picture was also prepared and printed on letterheads with an appeal to all women's clubs and other organizations in the state to work for this building on the State Fairgrounds.

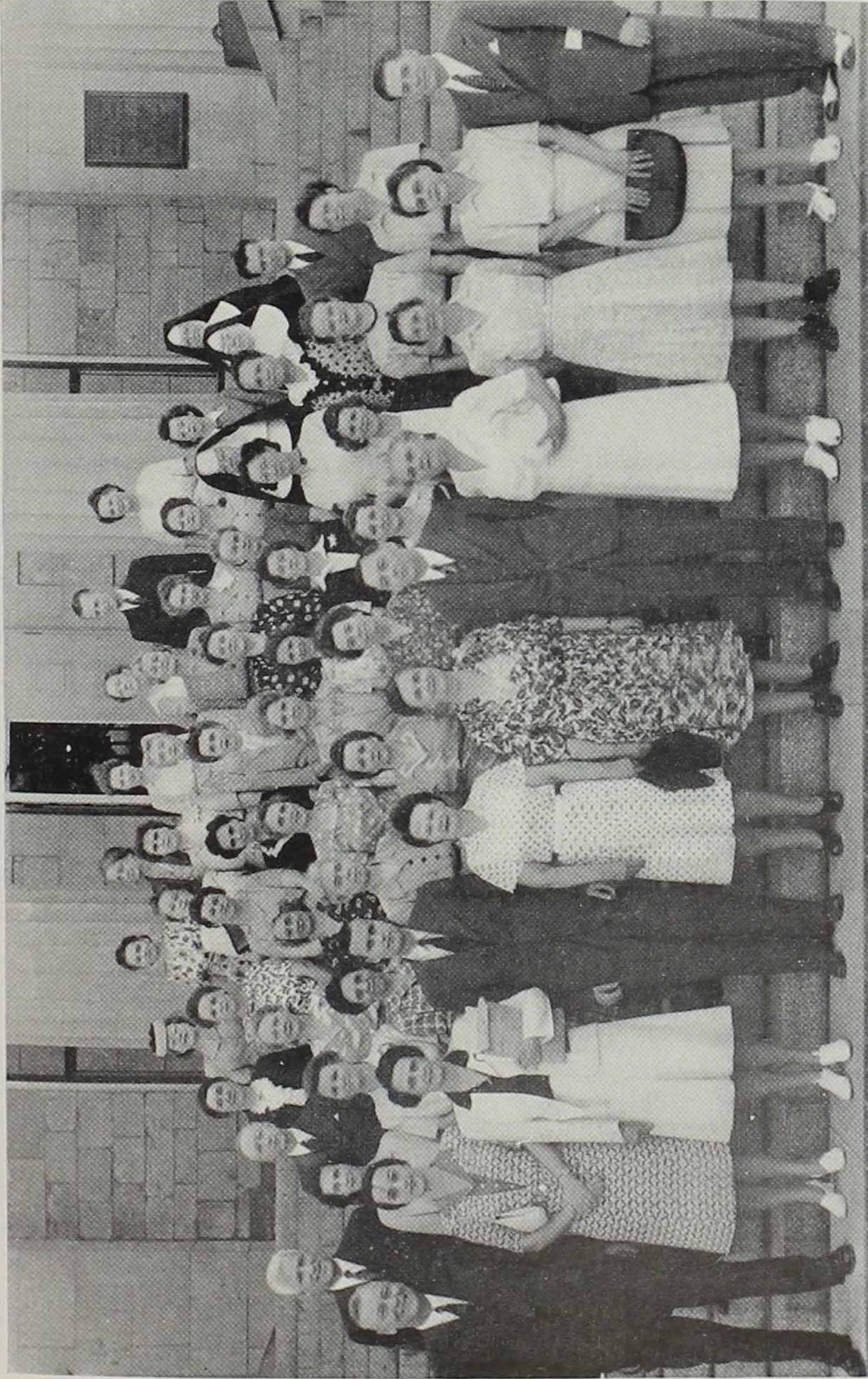
It should be recalled that the Iowa Congress



First "Man" Up in Baby Health Contest at State Fair — 1948.



Women and Children's Building on State Fair Grounds.



Summer Workshop on Home-School Cooperation at State University in 1945.

PRESIDENTS, IOWA CONGRESS OF PARENTS
AND TEACHERS, 1900-25



Mrs. I. L. Hillis
Des Moines, 1900-06



Mrs. W. S. Brown
Des Moines, 1906-08



Mrs. F. S. Watts
Audubon, 1908-10



Mrs. B. F. Carroll
Des Moines, 1910-12



Mrs. C. R. Brenton
Dallas Center, 1912-15



Mrs. A. O. Ruste
Charles City, 1915-19



Miss C. E. Forgrave
Perry, 1919-23



Mrs. F. W. Beckman
Ames, 1923-25

MRS. C. R. BRENTON
Dallas Center, 1912-15
MRS. A. KUSIE
Charles City, 1915-19
MISS C. E. FORBANE
Perry, 1919-23
MRS. F. WALKERMAN
Ames, 1923-25

PRESIDENTS, IOWA CONGRESS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS, 1925-50



MRS. B. C. HOPKINS
Des Moines, 1925-29



MRS. M. P. SUMMERS
Sioux City, 1929-33



MRS. C. F. PYE
Des Moines, 1933-37



MRS. C. C. COLLESTER
Spencer, 1937-39



MRS. S. E. LINCOLN
Des Moines, 1939-41



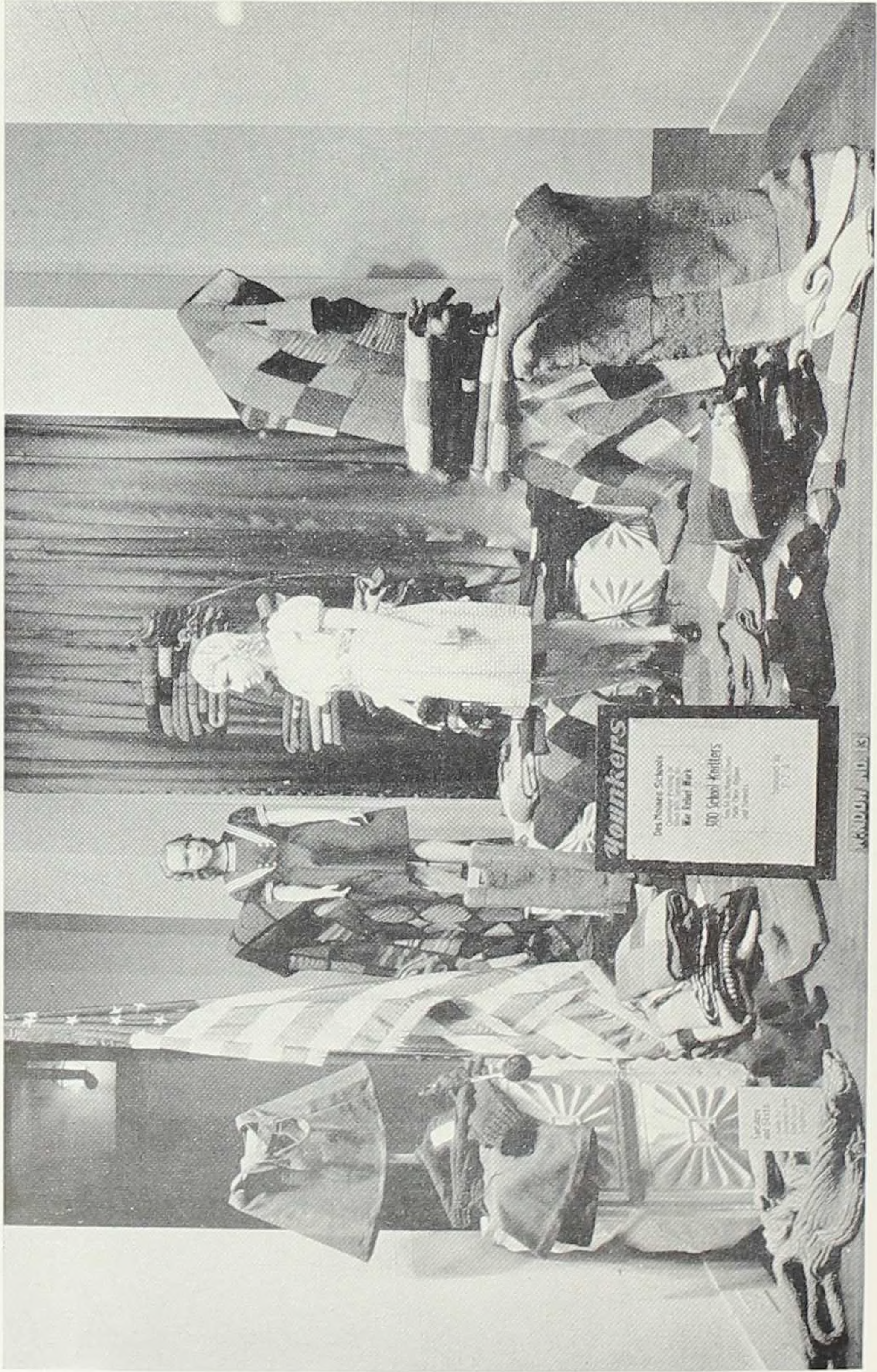
MRS. F. R. KENISON
Madrid, 1941-44



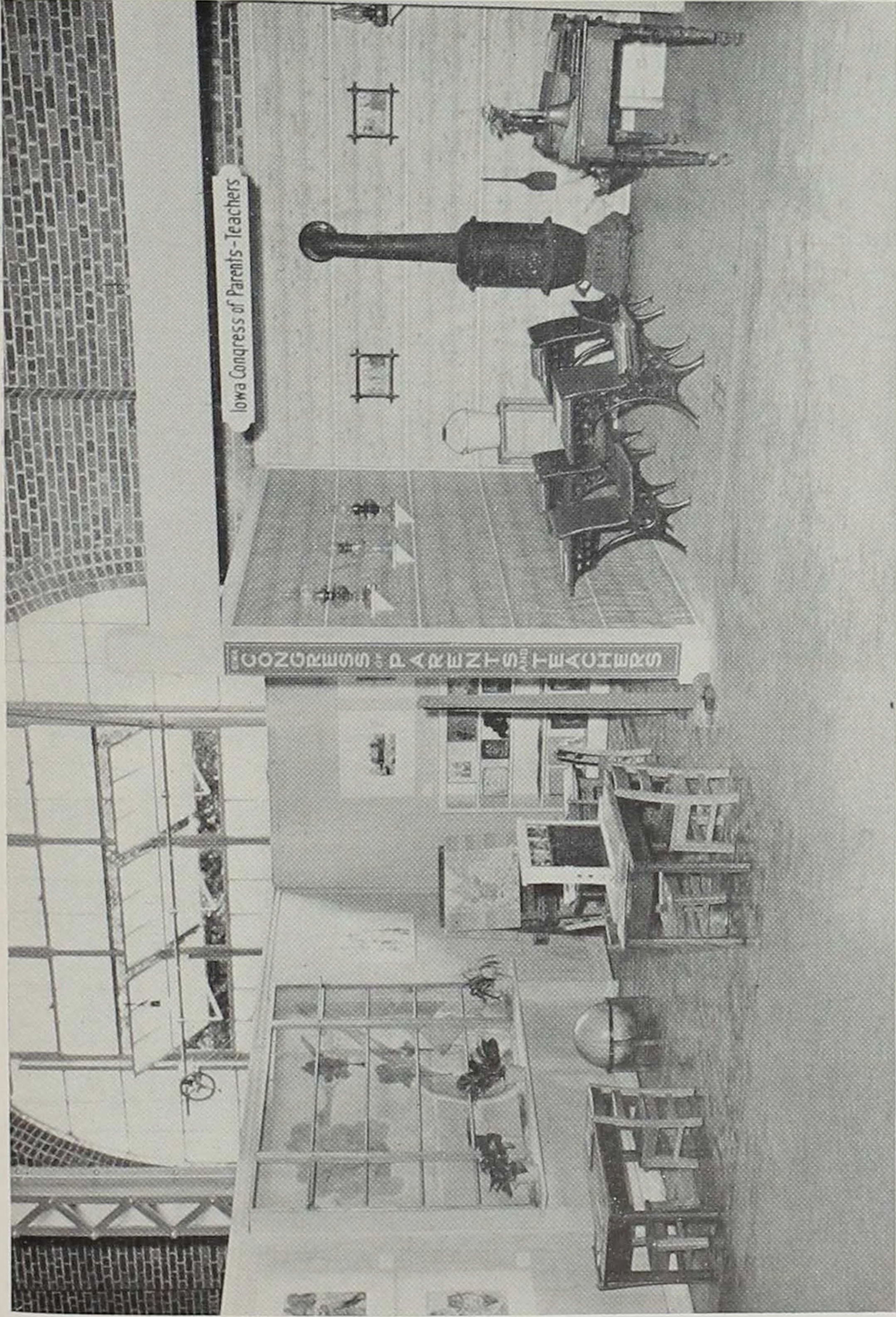
MRS. L. S. MUMFORD
Council Bluffs, 1944-47



MRS. H. C. BRECKENRIDGE
Charles City, 1947-50



Des Moines Schools Display of Relief Work.



Schoolrooms of 1900 and 1950 Exhibited at State Fair.



Osceola PTA Father Singers.



Des Moines PTA Mother Singers.

was still a women's organization, and that many of its associations paid dues to the State Federation of Women's Clubs. It took some years for it to evolve into the organization it is today.

The Iowa Congress drew up a bill for the new building, to be presented to the General Assembly. As Mrs. Brenton lived in Dallas Center, she was able to discuss it with Senator A. B. McCall and Representative Henry Brady, both of Dallas County. When the bill, which called for an appropriation of \$75,000 for this building, was up for consideration, a letter was prepared by the Iowa Congress setting forth the need for such a building and a copy placed on the desk of each legislator. The increase in entries in the Baby Health Contest from 50 in 1911 to 275 in 1912 was a powerful argument. Mrs. Brenton was encouraged in working for the building by her husband, Charles R. Brenton, then a member of the State Board of Education. As Mrs. Z. C. Thornburg said, in her memorial to Mrs. Brenton: "Hers was the hard pioneering, the moulding of public sentiment, a task far harder than the laying of brick and stone. It is true that after the fallow ground was broken by Mrs. Brenton, many other women helped and worked; but the dream child came to her, first, as well as the first discouraging work. To me, the Women and Children's Building is but the lengthened shadow of Mrs. Brenton."

Original bids were double the appropriation of \$75,000, as made by the legislature in 1913, but the plans were modified and new bids sought. The contract was finally let to J. E. Lovejoy of Des Moines. It was formally opened on August 28, 1914, by Mrs. Charles Brenton of Dallas Center, president of the Iowa Congress of Mothers. According to the Des Moines *Register and Leader*, the new Women and Children's Building was "erected and furnished at a cost of \$80,000." The speaker representing the women of Iowa was Mrs. George W. Clarke, wife of the governor. As designed, the building had spacious porches on all sides and an auditorium centrally located on the main floor. The Baby Contest was housed in the southeast wing on the main floor where a sloping amphitheater, seating 350, enabled the public to watch the judging. There were day-nursery rooms, rest rooms, and rooms for domestic science demonstrations for Iowa State College.

Dr. M. N. Voldeng of Cherokee was the first superintendent. Mrs. F. S. Watts was superintendent of the Baby Health Contest, and Mrs. A. M. Deyoe, wife of the state superintendent of public instruction, was in charge of the rural school department. Mrs. Charles Brenton was in charge of the child welfare exhibit.

The crowds found in the Women and Children's Building at all hours of the day are evidence of public appreciation. At the 1914 Fair, it was

the most popular building on the Fairgrounds.

Pioneering in Child Welfare

Iowa truly was the state that pioneered in child welfare. It was the first to establish a station for research in the problems of the normal child. This program was the vision of Mrs. Isaac Lea Hillis, who interested Iowa parents in it.

Mrs. Hillis labored for sixteen years to convince political and educational leaders of the need for such a program. Between 1901 and 1914 she discussed her idea with administrative officers of the Iowa State College and the State University of Iowa. No concrete steps were taken until 1914 when President Thomas H. Macbride, believing something could and should be done at the State University, called in his professors to talk things over. Dean Carl E. Seashore of the Graduate College became interested, and President Macbride appointed a faculty child welfare committee.

A state committee formed of heads of women's organizations became, on January 5, 1915, the nucleus of the Iowa Child Welfare Association to promote the establishment of a Child Welfare Research Station. A bill was drawn up, but this failed to pass the House in 1915 by seven votes. A great deal of criticism was reflected in the press inasmuch as the General Assembly appropriated \$25,000 (the amount sought by the Welfare bill) to build a sheep barn on the Iowa Fairgrounds.

Efforts were renewed to secure the bill's pas-

sage at the next General Assembly in 1917. World War I was then in progress, and when the health record of Iowa's enlisted men was made public, the supporters of the bill, 300,000 strong, immediately used it as an argument in their favor. On April 21, 1917, the bill authorizing the establishment and maintenance of the station — the first in the nation — was signed by the Governor.

The act established the Child Welfare Research Station as an integral part of the State University, "having as its objects the investigation of the best scientific methods of conserving and developing the normal child, the dissemination of the information acquired by such investigation, and the training of students for work in such fields."

President Walter A. Jessup appointed the first University advisory board as specified in the act. Dr. Bird T. Baldwin was chosen as the first director, serving until his death in 1928. Dr. Baldwin, a pioneer in many aspects of child development, became the outstanding national leader in the application of modern science to child welfare. Dr. George D. Stoddard followed Dr. Baldwin.

In the first ten years of its history the Research Station was undertaking extensive investigations in the fields of nutrition, physical growth, child behavior, and childhood education, with emphasis on the normal child. At the beginning of the second decade, it received the first installment of a large ten-year grant from the Laura Spellman

Rockefeller Memorial in addition to the regular state support, making steady expansion possible.

Under the direction of Dr. Ralph H. Ojemann and his colleagues, the Research Station developed new services in the field of parent education. One of these was the organization of child study groups in 1924, with nineteen groups formed throughout the state under the direction of Mrs. May Pardee Youtz.

In 1926 the Iowa Council for Child Study and Parent Education was organized, with the Iowa Congress of Parents and Teachers as one of the members. The first Iowa Conference on Child Development and Parent Education was held in Iowa City in 1927. It has since met annually.

Radio was first used by the Research Station in 1925—1926. The Radio Child Study Club, sponsored by the Child Welfare Station, was the first of its kind in the United States. Since 1932, this feature has been carried on jointly with the Child Development Department of Iowa State College at Ames and is broadcast over WOI and WSUI. From its beginnings the Station has made an invaluable contribution to Iowa and the nation.

Establishment of Headquarters

Early in the 1920's the state executive committee of the Iowa Congress began to think about and plan for a state headquarters office. During this period membership had grown from 3,000 to nearly 20,000, under the leadership of Mrs. W. L.

Horter of Ames. Near the close of the second biennium of Miss Carolyn Forgrave's term of office (1921-1923), Mrs. H. G. Drake, finance chairman, recommended that a state headquarters be established with a part-time secretary in charge.

It was Mrs. Z. C. Thornburg who suggested that the Iowa State Teachers Association might have space available. Later, she and Miss Forgrave put the question to Charles F. Pye, executive secretary, and Miss Lucy Hobbs, president of the Iowa State Teachers Association, whose Executive Board voted that space be given the Iowa Congress in their offices at 504 Youngerman Building, Des Moines. With the funds saved through Miss Forgrave's efforts (she had paid expenses from her own pocket), it became possible to employ a part-time secretary, Mrs. Charles Pye. In 1926 the Iowa State Teachers Association moved to 415 Shops Building where the Iowa Parent-Teachers Association transferred its office. Mrs. Charles Pye was elected executive secretary of the Iowa Congress and served ten years. In 1941 headquarters were established at 317 Shops Building. A full-time secretary and part-time assistants now handle the various duties of a statewide organization serving 92,721 members and 678 Parent-Teacher Association units in 1950.

MRS. S. E. LINCOLN — MRS. CHARLES F. PYE

School, Family, and Recreation

Iowa schools and Iowa children have been of primary concern to the Iowa Congress of Parents and Teachers. The welfare of the children had been uppermost in the minds of such women as Mrs. Birney and Mrs. Hillis as they plotted the course of the national and state organizations. Measured over the span of a half century, the PTA has made substantial contributions to the welfare of Iowa's most important crop — her children.

School Lunch Program

Time was when the schools carried the school lunch project through alone, but now it has been taken over almost completely by the National School Lunch Program. Approximately one-fourth of the nation's school children were fed under this program last year. (Iowa's allotment from Federal funds was \$937,746 in 1948-1949 and \$1,163,762 in 1949-1950.) More than 100,000 Iowa children are receiving a nutritious lunch at school every day. Since 1946, the lunch program, at the state level, has been directed by the Department of Public Instruction.

Iowa Family Life Conference

The National Conference on Family Life, meet-

ing at Washington, D. C., May 5-8, 1948, had two representatives from Iowa — Mrs. H. C. Breckenridge of Charles City, president of the ICPT, and Mrs. O. S. Fatland of Colfax, fifth vice-president and director of Home Service. A follow-up conference was held in Iowa, where by means of workshops, discussion groups, and lectures, ways were considered in which Iowa groups could contribute to each other's understanding of family problems. It was discovered that one could benefit another in planning cooperative efforts to improve all human relations. Specific recommendations emerged as to Education for Family Living, Health, Home Management, Social Welfare, and Family Counseling. Forty-nine of the fifty groups polled reported benefits.

Safety

Various safety measures have been recommended and sponsored. Some of these are — city ordinances governing the licensing and use of bicycles; extensive use of Scotch-lite, a luminous tape applied to frame of bicycle and to rider's jacket or sweater; programs and films on safety and on traffic problems; education of youth in "motor manners"; driver-training courses in high schools; representation in the State Safety Congress; special traffic signs and school stops erected on highways; school patrols attending bad crossings near schools; home safety checks by youth, "Clean-Up Week," and fire-prevention education.

Recreation

In the area of community planning, the PTA studies a community's resources, services, problems, and needs. This is followed up with a Community Council organization plan for utilizing the existing facilities and for meeting the needs in an improved community program. For example, in the Dubuque Youth Council the following projects were carried out: Anti-Fly campaign, School Community Chest drive, Tuberculosis Fund drive, Adult Education Forum membership campaign, Children's Film Library (goal of one approved film every Saturday night), and an Anti-Immoral Comic Book campaign. The Dubuque Youth Council also works with the local Kiwanis Club to plan various worth-while youth activities, among them dancing, clothing drives for overseas, CROP drives, pen pals overseas, better movies, and the Community Chest.

Summer Round-Up

Among the health projects of the Iowa Congress of Parents and Teachers the Summer Round-Up leads all others. The program of a physical check of all pre-school children and those entering school very nearly meets the Congress goal that *every* child should go to school as free as possible from remediable defects. Clinics for immunization as set up in various communities have had untold results in decreasing communicable disease. Many units have sponsored the fluorine

treatment for children's teeth, and for many years state-wide dental programs have been carried on.

Not only has the young child been considered in this program, but X-rays of the chest for high school pupils and teachers have served the objective of continuing good health throughout the school period. Community health problems have also been studied. Health information has been given through various publications, participation in district and state health programs, and educational films.

MRS. O. S. FATLAND

College Aid in Parent Education

Parent education and cooperation with schools are the two fundamental projects of the Iowa Congress. Professional leaders have given the finest help for both.

From the beginning, a better understanding of the emotional, physical, and spiritual needs of children has been encouraged. Since the establishment of the Child Welfare Research Station, more expert help has been available. Annual conferences on Child Development and Parent Education have been regularly attended by large numbers of PTA members. All kinds of materials, as well as many speakers, have been provided by the State University of Iowa and Iowa State College.

The Iowa Congress has made every effort to improve the quality of leadership training. For several years two scholarships were given to teachers, principals, and selected lay leaders for summer-session work in parent education. These were called the "Bird T. Baldwin" and "Cora Bussey Hillis" scholarships, named, respectively, for the first Director of the Station and for the founder of the Iowa Congress. With the growth of the program, the funds were channeled out over the state to reach more people through the work of

the state chairman of Parent Education. The Child Welfare Station, through the University Extension Division, has given a great deal of help in training leaders by sending professional men and women into many Iowa communities. In 1950, the first week-long Workshop in Leadership Training for Parent Education was carried out at the State University of Iowa. There is now in every district of the state a nucleus of enthusiastic people ready to help in organizing better study groups. The workshop has also been the forerunner of two year-long leadership training courses at Drake University and Morningside College. Nearly all local units have reported some type of study program, with well over 10,000 Iowans enrolled.

The program of the annual meeting at the State University of Iowa in September, 1949, was devoted to the subject of child psychology and parent education. State PTA leaders have taken advantage of all opportunities offered for training in better understanding by attending National Congress conventions. In the last two years, three members of the state board attended, at National Congress expense, a workshop at the University of Chicago in Parent and Family Life Education. This year a member of the staff of the Child Welfare Research Station attended this workshop.

A second important area of interest centers in the school. Consequently, efforts have been made

to bring professional educators and parents together in the discussion type of program. Various types of college contacts have also been made with the purpose of explaining to teachers-in-training the fundamental projects of the Congress, and to prepare them to meet the parents in the communities where they would later teach.

The Iowa Congress of Parents and Teachers and the State University of Iowa jointly held the first Workshop on Home and School Cooperation sponsored by the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, in June, 1945. Teachers, administrators, supervisors, college faculty, members of state departments of education, PTA workers, and community leaders from twenty-two states and from Canada spent a busy week in considering procedures revolving about home-school relationships. For those desiring it, credit was given. The National Congress now supports a year-round course on Parent-Teacher relationships in cooperation with Northwestern University.

The Iowa State Teachers College and the Iowa Congress are mutually interested in better teacher training, salaries, and selective recruitment. Early in the history of the Iowa PTA, the College enlarged its extension program by assigning a staff member to help organize new units. For the last decade or more an annual Parent-Teacher Institute has been held at Cedar Falls during the summer session, with an outstanding member of the

National Board as the speaker. At various times also, members of the State Board of Managers have discussed the Parent-Teacher movement with education classes.

Similar contacts are made with such institutions as Coe, Cornell, Drake, Morningside, Simpson, Iowa State College, and the State University. During 1949-1950, nearly all junior colleges in the state have been contacted in this way.

MRS. LLOYD S. MUMFORD

As of Now

As the Golden Anniversary is observed, the best way to depict the maturity of the Iowa Congress is to point to its growth. Present membership is 92,670 members in 668 local units.

"Leadership" has been the watchword of the present administration. Efforts have been made to develop in local units, councils, districts, and in the entire state an interested, informed, and capable type of leader. To accomplish this, the "three-year plan" was put in operation. Leadership was needed, for instance, in the area of Home and Family Life. The president, Mrs. H. C. Breckenridge, and the chairman of the Home Service Department, Mrs. O. S. Fatland, were sent to the National Conference on Home and Family Life called by the President of the United States, in March, 1948. The Iowa Congress then reproduced a State Family Life Conference attended by 250 delegates at Des Moines, in January, 1949.

At the same time, another type of leadership training was being inaugurated — the recruitment of teachers. Realizing the need for more young people to enter the teaching profession, the State Board voted to set up a Student Loan Fund, available only to those applicants who were entering

the teaching profession. This fund, totaling over \$3,700 today, has been amassed through the sale of State Life Memberships, Distinguished Service Scrolls, and "In Memoriam" cards. Three loans have already been made from this fund, and a number of applications are on file.

Other forms of leadership training such as schools of instruction for district and council officers have been set up. Throughout the summer months information meetings have been held and district presidents given the opportunity of attending special two-day conferences. The outstanding endeavor in this field was the week-long Parent Education Workshop held at the State University of Iowa during the summer of 1950.

For twelve years college cooperation has been the means of bringing the philosophy of the Parent-Teacher Congress to the attention of administrators, teachers, and education students. This program has been expanded from summer participation at the three state schools, at Drake University, and at Morningside College, to twenty other Iowa schools where the story of PTA has been told to more than 5,000 future teachers.

The Mid-Century White House Conference has held a major place in the thought of many members, especially those serving on county, state, and national committees. The needs of Iowa children stand uppermost in these deliberations.

MRS. H. C. BRECKENRIDGE

Golden Jubilee Convention

The first fifty years of the Iowa Congress were brought to a colorful close with the Golden Jubilee Convention held in Des Moines, November 16-18, 1950. Speakers of national renown, special features, beautiful decorations, and the festive spirit of a thousand delegates from the local units combined to make this convention a real celebration, one to be remembered for many years.

While the general program was built around the idea of celebrating the Fiftieth Anniversary, the past was dwelt on only as inspiration for the future. The program theme "The Citizen Child — His Destiny, A Free World," which is the theme chosen for study during the three years of the present administration of the National Congress, was a very forward-looking and challenging one.

"A Backward Look" was taken by Mrs. B. C. Hopkins, Des Moines, who as a girl attended the meeting of the National Mothers Congress in Des Moines in 1900. Other special features emphasizing the Jubilee were planned, including a pageant entitled "Through the Years" staged by the Des Moines Council of Parent-Teacher Associations. Square dancing in the recreation hour also brought back thoughts of past years.

At the opening session on Thursday afternoon, President Virgil M. Hancher, of the State University of Iowa, definitely placed the thinking of the convention on future problems with the challenging address "Tomorrow Belongs to You." This was followed by a group discussion of the Citizen Child in his home, his school, and his community, led by Dr. Guy Wagner, Director of the Curriculum Laboratory of Iowa State Teachers College.

One of the convention highlights was an address on "Children and Freedom," by President Harold Stassen of the University of Pennsylvania, on Thursday evening at KRNT Radio Theater. This meeting was co-sponsored by the Iowa State Education Association. Appearing as platform guests were the Governor of Iowa, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, a representative from the Iowa State Board of Education and the Iowa Education Association, and the presidents of our three state institutions of higher learning.

Another timely phase of the Citizen Child's life was considered Friday morning when Dr. Wayne Hughes, Director of the School and College Education Division of the National Safety Council, discussed the driving problems of young America. The discussion that followed was presented by high school students and revealed the modern viewpoint of youth.

A further discussion of the Citizen Child centered around his health, his safety, and his education. It was presented Friday afternoon by a panel of state leaders under the chairmanship of Mr. Carl Gernetsky of the Iowa State Board of Education.

The consideration of the Citizen Child was brought to a climax at the Golden Jubilee banquet when Mrs. John E. Hayes of Twin Falls, Idaho, President of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, discussed the convention theme in its entirety. Dean Bruce E. Mahan of the State University of Iowa Extension Division was master of ceremonies.

The banquet appointments, the flower girls in their authentic old costumes, the introduction of the members of Mrs. Isaac Lea Hillis' family and of the past presidents of the Iowa Congress, and the presentation of fifty golden roses, symbols of fifty golden years, to Mrs. Hayes by Mrs. S. E. Lincoln, a past president of the State Congress, brought the Golden Jubilee theme of the convention to a dramatic close.

The State Life Membership Luncheon was held Friday noon, at which time many life memberships were presented to leaders who had given service to the organization. Dr. Agnes Samuelson, assistant editor of the *NEA Journal*, Washington, gave an inspiring address on "Hold High the Torch."

The final session on Saturday morning was concerned with modern trends, the use of visual aids and of radio in education. Contributing to this program were several leaders in their respective fields, including Thomas D. Rishworth of Austin, Texas, Chairman of Radio and Television for the National Congress, and Dean Bruce E. Mahan and John Hedges of the State University of Iowa.

"Forward to the Future" was the theme of the luncheon following, with an address on "Television in Education" by President Charles E. Friley of Iowa State College, and some scenes from the Golden Jubilee on TV, through the courtesy of WOI-TV.

The first fifty years of the Iowa Congress were brought to a close with the installation of the newly elected officers by Mrs. John E. Hayes, national president. To these new officers comes the privilege and challenge of starting the history of the next fifty years of the Iowa Congress.

MRS. FRANK S. ROOT

