The Geneva Political Equality Club

By request presents this

Outline of Work for 1909

Suggested by Mrs. Wm. Smith O'Brien for

The Elizabeth Smith Miller Study Class

President, Miss Susanna Moore

Vice-President, Mr. Robert Patterson

Secretary, Miss Jessie Sperry

PROGRAM COMMITTEE
Mrs. Wm. Smith O'Brien, Chairman
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Mrs. A. T. Stark
Mrs. Robert Henson
Mrs. R. H. Robinson

MUSIC COMMITTEE
Mrs. O. J. C. Rose Chairman
Mrs. J. A. Spengler
Miss Paula Young,
Miss Elizabeth Giddings
Miss Laura Cassler

Meetings Will be Held on the First and Third Mondays in Each Month from January to June as follows

January	1st.	Mr. and Mrs. A. T. Stark, 48 Hamilton St.
January	18th.	Dr. and Mrs. Young, 97 Genesee St.
February	1st.	Mrs. Joel Page, 8 Park Place.
February	15th.	Mrs. A. E. Hemiup 2 Park Place.
March	1st.	Mrs. Robert Henson, 165 Pulteney St.
March	15th.	Mrs. Nelson Smith, 94 North St.
April	5th.	Mrs. George Schell, 74 Main St.
April	19th.	Mr. and Mrs. J. E. P. Butts, 746 Main St.
May	3rd.	Mr. and Mrs. George Fairfax, 277 Lewis St.
May	17th.	Mr. and Mrs. W. Smith O'Brien, 28 Genesee St.

The subjects already arranged are: Jan. 1st—Alfred Tennyson, Jane Addams; Jan. 18th—Darwin, Martha Berry; Feb. 1st—Felix Mendelssohn; Feb. 15th—Abraham Lincoln, Susan B. Anthony.

Dr. W. W. Skinner, Prof. Williams, Mrs. P. N. Nicholas, Mr. Wm. Smith O'Brien, Prof. Robert Beach, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Graves, Prof. Mc Daniels, Dr. Hubbs and others will assist the members of the club.

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THE committee has submitted and the officers and members of the club have adopted a program for the season which, in addition to music and readings, includes the three following lines of study:

I. *Centennial Celebrations.*

II. *American Women.*

III. *National Problems and Ideals.*

This leads to a practical consideration of these three subjects.

Dr. Harper, the late president of Chicago University, thus estimates the value of the study of famous men—"Through the study of great lives we come to realize how large a place the individual has occupied in the history of mankind. It gives us increased self-respect; it helps us to believe that after all we may have some genuine service however small, to perform for our fellow-men. We admire and love these great men because we see in them the possibilities that lie hidden within ourselves. In them we recognize ourselves at our best. Through the perusal of a well written biography we can place ourselves in very real contact with the best and noblest of earth. We learn that character is the first essential to greatness in the modern man. We esteem him highest who performs the greatest service to his fellows. The qualities that inspire pure living and high thinking, that express themselves in acts of helpfulness and brotherliness are, for us, the crowning virtues. He who has the most of these to give, and gives of his store the most ungrudgingly is, for us, the greatest of men. Judged by these standards, how much greater is a Lincoln than an Alexander the Great! How much nobler a Gladstone than a Napoleon!"

What an eventful year was 1809! It has well been said, "Nature was active that year, like a stirred volcano, casting upon the world Lincoln, Gladstone, Darwin, Tennyson, Holmes, Poe, Mendelssohn, Chopin and Haydn. J. Calvin, 1509, S. Johnson 1709.

Lincoln who, as Mabie beautifully puts it, "held the key of the life of his people, and through him that life found a voice thrilling, pathetic, vibrating."

Gladstone—"The Grand Old Man," who according to Justin McCarty ranks as "one of the greatest orators and the very greatest debator of the House of Commons."

Darwin, whom Arch. Geikie ranks as "one of the great ones of the earth, whose removal from the living world leaves mankind poorer in moral worth as well as in intellect."

Tennyson, of whom H. Van Dyke writes "His influence upon the thought and feeling of the age has been far-reaching and potent." "When he passed away from his quiet home, the world mourned for him as a mighty prophet, and rejoiced for him as a poet who had finished his course and kept the faith."

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Holmes—"Freshening and sweetening every subject he touched." (A. Fields.)

Mendelssohn—whose life meant delightful incessant labor—whose wonderful compositions will long retain their hold on the finer public ear, and the more sensitive musical ear.

Another topic suggested is "*American Women.*" It is a great privilege to be an American woman, and especially a young American woman.

That distinguished professor of Oxford, James Bryce, writes of American women: "In no country are women, and especially young women, made so much of. The world is at their feet. Society seems organized for the purpose of providing enjoyment for them. The educational facilities they enjoy the recognition of the equality of sexes in the whole social and intellectual sphere, the leisure they possess as compared with men combine to create among American women an average of literary taste and influence higher than that of women in any European country. They have opened to them a wide life and variety of career, not merely in the way of employment, but for the occupation of their minds and tastes. If women have on the whole gained, it is clear that the nation gains with them. The function of forming the habits of society, and determining its moral tone rests greatly in their hands. The nation as a whole is greatly indebted to the active benevolence of its women and their zeal in promoting social reforms. Those who know the work they have done and are doing in many a noble cause will admire still more their energy, their courage, their self-devotion. No country owes more to its women than America, nor owes to them as much of what is best in social institutions and in the beliefs that govern conduct." Is not the study of some American women "who have made good" truly worth while?

The third and last topic is our "*National Problems and Ideals.*"

Are the American young man and woman ready to take their places as citizens? What do we really know about the government under which we live? What responsibility do we feel for its character?

Felix Adler says that "The true citizen embraces the interests of the state as if they were his own. That increased breadth of view and elevation of purpose are the moral benefits which accrue to every one who even honestly attemps to be a citizen of this sort."

There are virtues which our times demand and which it is hard to cultivate—a high ideal of commercial honor, a passion for truth and tolerance, an admiration for political integrity—a deep sense of civic duty. It is time that the calling and work of the skilled workman be raised to the dignity of the professional man. That *positive constructive* thought be encouraged and *negative destructive* thought be discouraged. Any one can criticise The ill-informed citizen is a dangerous element in the community. Intelligent citizenship involves a high standard of intelligence and a broad comprehension

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of public affairs. A study of the affairs of modern life has a double claim upon us, for besides affording an opportunity for mental training, it furnishes preparation for useful citizenship, it helps us to form rational judgments, to think right and vote straight upon economic propositions which are an ever-increasing proportion of the political issues of modern democracy. Upon the young men and women of today rests the future of this great country and the greater our advantages the greater our responsibility.

Women are not yet taken into full political partnership, nevertheless, they have just as much at stake in the Government as men. They share equally the advantages of a good government and suffer as much from the disadvantages of a bad one. Women should take an active part in all matters pertaining to the sanitation of cities, condition of streets, schools, labor, child-labor, wages, pure foods, home economies, charities, reforms in restraining monopolies from adding unduly to the cost of general living. Women should be a power in every line of improvement and progress.

Jethro says, " It is not the presence of an ideal in a nation that saves it, but the fearless strong-hearted devotion to an ideal; but let that ideal be so large that it shall tempt you ever onward to greater things."

Let the daily prayer of G. Stanley Hall be our prayer, "That we may may contribute something to bring the race to the higher maturity of the superman that is to be, to effectiveness in developing which is the highest and final test of literature, art, religion, home, state and every human institution.

Let us be the human beings, both women and men, described in that brave little poem of J. G. Holland:

WANTED

God give us men! A time like this demands
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith and ready hands;
Men whom lust of office does not kill;
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;
Men who possess an opinion and a will;
Men who have honor, men who will not lie;
Men who can stand before a demagogue
And damn his treacherous flatteries without winking;
Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog
In public duty and private thinking.

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