

EDITORIALS

OPINIONS OF GREAT PAPERS ON IMPORTANT SUBJECTS

SECRET SOCIETIES IN SCHOOLS.

SECRET societies in high schools and other secondary schools are scathingly criticized in a report to the National Educational Association by a committee appointed to investigate their effects. "Factional, and stir up strife and contention," "saccharine," "dissipate energy and proper ambition," "foster a feeling of self-importance," "expensive and foster habits of extravagance," "weaken the efficiency of the school," "detract interest from study," are some of the grave charges made against these organizations.

The indictment is severe, but not too severe. Children from 13 to 14 to 17 or 18 years of age are not mature enough to derive benefit from organizations of any kind which are not supervised by older persons, but are mature enough to receive from them much harm. They are foolish in the conduct of adults, and the only way they can be kept from following this tendency is by restricting their opportunity. School secret societies enlarge the opportunity. This is the main reason why pupils fight so stoutly to prevent their suppression. The teachers, who should know their effects best, are practically unanimous in condemning secret societies, and there is no reason to doubt that in doing so they aim at the good of the schools.

The National Educational Association will not abolish school "fraternities" by hearing reports or adopting resolutions. Children are persevering. They are especially persevering when wrong. They are most persevering when they think they are splitting the teacher. Nothing gives the average boy so much unqualified satisfaction as to think he is making the schoolmaster sit up nights and rack his brain over the subject of school government. As long as boys' fathers have clubs and college young men have "frats," high school boys will want "frats," and probably they will usually have them, no matter how often they may be put down. If teachers could enlist the hearty support of parents in the contest the result might be different. The remedy for secret societies and other follies in secondary schools is for parents to tell children to obey their teachers, and, if they disobey, to punish them.—Chicago Tribune.

SUGGESTIONS ON LIFE INSURANCE.

LIFE insurance in New England has for many years been managed with exceptional efficiency and honesty. In New York that kind of management has too often been lacking. Many persons now far advanced in years can recall the time, some thirty years ago, when a number of New York life insurance companies went to the wall. Some of these had many policies outstanding in all parts of the country, and their failure was so complete that the policy holders did not receive a cent. And the well-founded report that the receivers of the defunct companies fattened on the spoils wrung from widows and orphans did not mitigate the anger with which outsiders looked on that carnival of diabolism in the Empire State. It is because the record of New England is in happy contrast with all this that advice from that quarter on the trouble in the Equitable Life of New York has a special interest. A committee of New England policy holders in the Equitable has spoken words of truth and soberness. This committee declares that no matter what may be the result of the various investigations now in process, the policy of the company should be transformed in the future. It believes—and who will deny?—that the company belongs to the policy holders, and should be managed by them; that the surplus should not accumulate beyond the just needs of the society, but should go to the policy holders in the form of reduced premiums or otherwise; that provision should be made by law, if necessary, to prevent a needless surplus; that the funds of the Equitable should be regarded as those of savings banks, and their investment should be surrounded by the same legal safeguards;

SKILLFUL HUNTING.

Five minutes of thorough, systematic search for a lost object is often more effectual than half an hour of desultory hunting, which, in its excited hurry, often passes in plain sight the article which it seeks. An example of this principle is often seen in the case of the small boy, who, when the family have scrambled vainly about for the dropped trinket, announces that he will look for it "Indian fashion." He lies quietly down on the floor, and bringing his eye on a level with the carpet, soon spies the missing object. In "A Girl in the Karpachians," Miss Dowle gives another instance of letting brains do the work of the muscles.

The party was riding up a steep mountainside when suddenly the searcher discovered that she had lost her gold watch. It was an heirloom and much valued; there was nothing to do but to turn back on the trail. About two miles before she had made the discovery her horse had slipped, and she had rolled off. It must have been then that her watch was dropped.

The little party returned on the path, wildly searching here and there. When they reached the place of the tumble there was a grand hunt, which lasted a long time.

Then, tired out and heated, the searchers returned to where the horses were tethered and acknowledged themselves beaten. "I've turned up every fern leaf and grass blade," said one.

"It's no use," exclaimed the author; and she declared she would not look again for all the watches in the world.

A young artist in the party had stayed with the horses while the rest were hunting. Now he announced that it was his turn to try. The others laughed, but they willingly sat down to rest while the young man went off down the hillside. It was not long before they heard a "Hurrah!" and the artist appeared, holding up the watch in triumph.

"I almost always find things," he said. "I search like a dog. I lay down on my face and listened, and I heard the ticking when the watch was a meter away. Then I crawled on my hands and knees until I found it."

INDIA INK IS A SECRET.

Foreigners Unable to Duplicate the Work of the Chinese.

With all their modern improvements and all their science, none of the advanced nations has been able to produce the equals of the Chinese and Japanese lacquers or India inks. Chemists, ink manufacturers and artists have tried for generations to discover the secret that enables the Chinese, with primitive processes, to produce these materials in such perfect form, but the secrets still are secrets.

that the officials should be prevented from engaging in other business and from using the company's funds to further their private interests.

All of those propositions are manifestly just and undeniably expedient.—Washington Post.

THE POST CARD NUISANCE.

A UNITED STATES Judge at Trenton—let us give his name—Judge William M. Lanuing, has charged the United States grand jury to look up the matter of sending "flashy" post cards through the mails.

It is high time that some official took notice of this growing evil. Any Chicagoan who walks State street or other avenues of trade must notice that week by week the mailing cards exposed for sale in shop windows are progressing from mere vulgarity to absolute indecency. Some are of a sort that should promptly bring their seller or the man who sends them through the mails before a criminal court. The matter is one of more than ordinary importance. A society exists for the purpose of stopping the sale of indecent books and pictures. But the purchaser of such articles is usually a degenerate seeking for the gratification of his own vulgar and depraved taste.

Against the evil of the indecent or vulgar post card there is to-day no defense. The purest-minded maiden, the most refined wife, may at any time have delivered to her by the government of the United States a card carrying an indecent suggestion, or a vulgar innuendo, open to all to read, exposing her to the ridicule of all who see it in passing. The Postoffice Department is now doing something to stop this. Let the censorship be rigid.—Chicago Examiner.

THE DECADENCE OF THE DANCE.

DANCING, it seems, is not what it once was and even the waltz has deteriorated. People romp and call it dancing, to the disgust of those whose memories recall the grace and stately dignity of the movements of former times. "To-day," says "Professor" Bowen at the convention of the American Professors of the Dance, "dancing consists mainly of jumps and jerks. Grace and dignity have vanished from it and the two-step is responsible." It is proposed to abolish the odious two-step and bring back the minuet; but this we fear, is as impracticable as it is to bring back the "grace and dignity" that characterized the manners of serious people 100 years ago. The present age is averse to many things that pleased the fathers and grandfathers. It takes life in a hurry and takes its amusements in a touch-and-go spirit. The drama, the poem, the novel—all are said to be decadent. Like manners, they have been abbreviated. The two-step may be sad enough, but it has the merit of being in accord with present tendencies.—Baltimore Sun.

THE HELLO GIRL.

WE have all felt at times that the telephone still lacks a great deal to be a perfect machine, that there is inattention, poor connection, needless delay and sometimes almost impudence in the telephone service, but how few ever feel that it is not an automatic machine that they are using, that the voice they hear answering their impatience is not a part of the machine, that there is a personal equation to be considered, a woman away off somewhere in the unidentified "central," who has feelings and self-respect, just as other women have; a woman who will recognize a cross tone just as quickly as if she were visibly present, and a woman entitled to respectful treatment, just as much as if she were in her own home. The fact that you can stand miles away and talk into her ear does not detract from the right to the kind word and civil treatment.—Jersey City Journal.

SOME BUTTERFLY BEAUTIES.

Rare Specimens from Tropical Countries in Philadelphia Collection. The annual butterfly exhibition has opened with many rare and beautiful specimens. One of the large beauties is a Morpho. Its shades from velvety black to a wondrous light copper, and then to cream. This beauty was caught at Obidos, a long way up the Amazon River. Everybody knows the Morpho's famous relative, the King butterfly (Morpho cypris), whose glorious iridescence runs the color gamut of peacock blue and green at their most dazzling. Indeed, prodigal nature, not content with this enriching him, has thrown in a bewildering assortment of warm tones which glance from plum and deep wine shades to a shimmering pink. Naturally the queen is near by, and also, naturally, she shines in a sort of reflected beauty, as if she were a queen consort, instead of a free lance of Queendom. This beauty in opalescent colorings succumbed to the skilled butterfly hunter on the lofty table lands of the Andes in Colombia, near both the city of Bogota and the head waters of the Magdalena. One of the largest butterflies in the world, and exhibited here for the first time, is the papilio homerus. Though large, its range is surprisingly small, it being found only in Jamaica. It is brilliantly marked in black and orange hues, with scintillating traces of blue. Its lower wings are fitted with swallow tails.

A new papilio, too, is the rare gund-lachi-annum from Cuba. This grandee from the interesting island is dressed in black chiffon velvet, with carmine splashes on his lower wings, and metallic green ones on his "uppers." Each lower wing is picturesquely tailed. All the way from New Guinea, just north of Australia, have come a handsome pair. Mr. Butterfly is a changeable fellow, now black, now gold and now green—you never catch just the same shades twice. His lower wings are mostly gold, small, peculiarly tailed, with the scales elongated into a fringe of hair along the inner sides. The lady in the case is big and brown, better suited to domestic duties than standing out in the full glare of the limelight.

One never loses interest in the Kalina machis from India. This "dead leaf butterfly" is beautiful as a butterfly, but, folded up and perched on a twig, he is more—he is a lesson in the laws of Nature for preservation. He is even veined like a dead leaf.—Philadelphia Record.

Both Earned It. "What did you get for your mother-in-law joke?" "A dollar from the editor and a six weeks' visit from my mother-in-law."—Meggendorfer Blätter.

It seems that when a boy hurts himself, everybody in the family and the whole neighborhood, has been expected to...

It isn't what your grandfather was, but what you are, that really counts.

THE LETTER FROM THE FARM.

After the day with its work and worry, After the restless rush and rattle, The mad gold chase, the pitiless hurry, The killing blows of endless battle; After it all there comes a pause, A peaceful hour of calm, When he sits alone, and smiling reads The letter from the farm.—

How the old brown hen has set at last; How little Joe is growing fast; How Ben and Mary spent the day, And Jean's the "best yet" at croquet; Oh, what a homely, hearty charm About that letter on the farm.

After the play with its jests and laughter, And printed smiles, hiding God knows what; And the reckless revelry coming after, When the fever cools and the joy stays out;

After it all there comes a pause, An hour of bitter calm, When he sits alone, and tears fall wet On the letter from the farm; How the mother's heart yearns for her son,

Can't he come home for a day, just one? How Tom has paid the mortgage off; And Joe is well of the whooping cough, Oh, what a note of vague alarm, Runs through that letter from the farm.

After the Service all uplifting, Mid deep new throbs of a contrite soul; The crimson light through rich glass sifting, And solemn tones of the organ's roll; After it all hides with him still A blessed hour of calm; When he sits alone and prayerful reads The letter from the farm.—

To hear the all young brother speak, To hear the new young preacher preach; How his words were good and pure and true, With hope for all and comfort, too, Oh, what a tender, healing balm Runs through that letter from the farm.—Agricultural Epitome.

Maria's Portrait.

WHAT are you going to do with that, pa? Why do you take it down?"

Mr. Bretman did not answer. For the first time in his life he pushed his child from him and called harshly for the nurse to take him away. Little Fred made no resistance, but his grief-lip and quivering chin told that he felt hurt and injured. And, up in the nursery, he appealed to Maggie, the maid.

"Maggie, why did papa look so cross? Why didn't he tell me what he was doing with mamma's picture?" "Oh, I don't know," said Maggie. "He was ashamed, darlin'." "But why?" "Well, you are not to blame."

And she took the widower's little boy upon her knee and patted his round head.

"Why ought he be ashamed?" asked Fred.

"You mustn't say I said so," cried the woman. "Mamma has the right to do his own will. It's none of my business."

"But why did he take the picture down?" asked Fred again.

"There's somebody coming that wouldn't like to see the face of the lady that was mistress here but a year ago," said Maggie. "Your pa is after givin' ye a step-mother, Freddie."

"What's that?" asked Fred. "A new mother," said Maggie. "Ah, don't be speakin' of what I've said, or she'll send me away, and there'll be none to love ye. She'll turn your pa's heart, and have it all her own. It's always so, poor bairn!"

And the old nurse wept over the child and with him.

Mr. Bretman carried his first wife's picture up to the great garret, where, truth to tell, he shed a few tears over it before he deposited it in its corner.

It was impossible for him to have those sweet eyes looking down upon him while living ones shone from her cheek and her placid and angry. He loved the dead woman still, though he also loved a living one.

Maggie did not know this. She thought as she said that "the mistress was forgotten quite." What she thought she taught the child; and the young lady who came smiling into the parlor one bright morning and knelt down when her husband said, "Come, kiss your new mamma, Freddie" looking so sweet and gentle and pretty that, left to himself, the boy would have liked her, was surprised by an earnest slap on the face and the angry words, "Go away. You made papa put dead mamma's picture up garret. I won't have you. Go away."

And at that the bride, almost a child herself, started up, flushed and angry, and returned to her husband's protesting arms, quite overcome by this greeting, and the face of the old nurse, in which she saw no pleasant greeting, but defiance and anger instead.

The father, stung by the child's words, seized him, for the first time in his life, roughly by the shoulder and turned him from the room.

"Go, sir," he said, "and do not come back until you can behave decently. It is that ignorant woman's fault; he said to his young wife, and led the way to the dining-room.

But the shock of the bride's reception had robbed both of any appearance of an errand. She had seen the sturdy old figure trot down the street before she left her room, else she had not come hither. But where was the child? A far she seemed to hear a sound of sobbing—soft, heavy sobbing, like that of a grown person. Her heart beat faster. The little stair door leading to the attic stood open. She followed the sounds, and climbed the stairs.

There she saw a scene that seemed to take away her strength. The winter sunlight fell through the skylight in a broad, slanting stream. In the flood of gold stood a picture—the portrait of a woman, fair and young, with soft blue eyes and a dimple in her cheek, with coquettish curls falling about her neck and diamonds in her dainty ears—and upon the floor, his cheek against the lace-veiled bosom of this exquisite picture, sat Freddie, weeping as children weep, and sobbing, "Mamma! mamma!"

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"Paul," said she to the father, "is that Maria? Is it Freddie's mother?" "Yes, love," he answered. "The mark where that picture hung is on the wall still," she said. "Let it fill its place once more. Am I so meanly jealous as to forbid you even a memory of that sweet, dead woman? Let me see her smiling down on me, and fancy that she knows that I love her boy as I do my own. For I do, Paul. And God forgive me for the past, for which the future shall atone."

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man, gravely; "but remember, no more of this underhand work. You must teach the child to love his new mother and to obey her."

"Obey her may," said Maggie, "but love can't be taught; and we've but one mother in the world, however many wives an' husbands we may have."

The man looked at her sharply, but there was no insolence in her face; and he left the room and returned to his new wife, and saw no more of Freddie for that day. Indeed, the child did not seek him. Never before had he been harshly used, and the shake his father had given him had been a terrible thing to him—the very confirmation of Maggie's prophecy. More and more he clung to the old nurse, and, though Mrs. Bretman tried to make friends with both, the old woman's grim face and cold monosyllables and the child's passionate repulses were too much for her. She abandoned the effort. And the boy took his meals in the nursery, walked with the nurse and brooded in silence, as very little children do, over his wrongs.

It was easy enough to forget him in the honeymoon billing and cooing, and the father was careful to give Maggie all she asked for—new shoes and caps and toys and books. That was his duty; as he often said, "the never forget his duty to Maria's child." But what his father had to do with his comforts or pleasures, Freddie did not know; he laid all to the kindness of old Maggie. "Papa never kissed him, or had him in to dessert, or took him out to ride. The lady with the pretty hair was his worst enemy. He grew used to this state of things in time, and used to kiss the picture in the attic before retiring, and saying to that, "Good night, mamma," but he was as wretched as a child could be, and no one knew it. Even old Maggie did not guess at the depth of loneliness within the little breast.

Young girls do not, as a general thing, really love children; and the girl who was Freddie's step-mother, though she had intended to pet her husband's boy, had felt him the stumbling block to her happiness, even before she met him. She was very glad that Maggie made him her very own, and shunned both carefully.

The weeks rolled by, and the months followed them. If Maria's spirit had ever wandered through the home where she had once been so happy it must have flown weeping away—not

so much that she found another resting upon her husband's bosom, for, in pity of human weakness and human longing for living love, this might well be forgiven by the angels—not that her fair picture stood, with the cobwebs clinging to its frame, in the cold garret; but that the lonely boy, as fatherless as he was motherless, dwelt alone, save for the old servant's faithful love, in the very room where his birth had been hailed with much rejoicing. "It's the new lady does it," said Maggie, honestly believing it, and never guessing that she herself had caused this unnatural estrangement by her unwise chatter. She had thought the boy that his step-mother came as enemy, else he would have greeted her with a kiss and been petted until she came to love him as her own; else he would not have been utterly forgotten when one bright winter-morning the sun arose upon a little face that its setting had not shone upon, and Helen Bertram kissed the unconscious lips of her first-born.

And somehow, as this breath floated over her cheek, the remembrance of another child came to her, whose mother slept in the cold grave—whose sulky mouth and angry eyes when she met her in the garden path had made her loathe him. So might some other woman feel toward her babe some day, if she also slept beneath the churchyard sod and another filled her place.

Dead Maria arose before living Helen's memory; dead Maria's child found a place in her thoughts. She pined him from her heart, and for the first time since she wore his father's wedding ring.

But old Maggie did not come near her, and she would not send for the old woman. She had been hurt by her grim face and cold voice and was now hurt by neglect. No, she could not call Maggie. But one day, when she was able to leave her room, she made her way to the nursery and peeped in. There was no one there; only a broken toy upon the floor told of the boy's existence. Maggie had gone out upon an errand. She had seen the sturdy old figure trot down the street before she left her room, else she had not come hither. But where was the child? A far she seemed to hear a sound of sobbing—soft, heavy sobbing, like that of a grown person. Her heart beat faster. The little stair door leading to the attic stood open. She followed the sounds, and climbed the stairs.

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"Paul," said she to the father, "is that Maria? Is it Freddie's mother?" "Yes, love," he answered. "The mark where that picture hung is on the wall still," she said. "Let it fill its place once more. Am I so meanly jealous as to forbid you even a memory of that sweet, dead woman? Let me see her smiling down on me, and fancy that she knows that I love her boy as I do my own. For I do, Paul. And God forgive me for the past, for which the future shall atone."

Then she took Freddie by the hand, and his blue eyes looked no longer angrily upon her, nor did his tiny hand essay to push her from him as of yore. And she led him down to the little crib where the new-born child lay smiling, and laid him beside the little creature.

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