TRAFFIC RULES AND REGULATIONS DESCRIBED

Maj. Sylvester, Before Recent Convention of Good Roads Convention at Richmond, Gives Views on Subject of Local Interest.

By RICHARD SYLVESTER.

In these days of strenuous endeavor, expedition, economy, and pleasure are the factors responsible for the increased vehicular energy that is in evidence in the great centers of population and the districts contiguous thereto. It moves about from place to place in the midst of those who pedestrianize, and the combination calls for system, in order that life and property may be secure against loss or injury in the first place, and to the end that promptness, saving and comfort may be afforded in the second place. To these might appropriately be added sightliness, because the systematic arrangement that is free from antiquated features carries with it favorable recognition if not emulation.

Pathways established and maintained by public expenditures constitute the avenues, streets, roads, and highways over which that vehicular energy is expended in the transporting of passengers and commodities, and the laws, regulations, and rules made for the guidance of those engaged in the expenditure have been and are being created looking to the continued improvement of system.

Highways of Ancient Days.

The degree of perfection in the construction of avenues, streets, roads and highways, as well as the degree of excellence in the providing of governing rules usually corresponds to the degree of intelligence and wealth of the country wherein the same exist and are controlled. Historic roads have had their place since the time of the Egyptians and Romans, and capitalists realized on turnpikes before the introductions of railroads. The utilizing of the horse as a motive power suggested the building of ways so graded as to permit of the drawing of three-fourths, halves, or quarter loads, and prompted consideration of the grades over which a horse could trot with safety, but, since the advent of the motor vehicle with its high power these questions have been followed by others, wear and tear of surfaces, and speed and safety becoming principal features for study and skill. These have all the more been made requirements because of the vast increase in the number of such vehicles over the slower horse-moving kind.

While this is true, the animal-propelled method still prevails and it will doubtless be some years before it is entirely eliminated. Such being the case, it makes the work of providing laws and regulations for the guidance and restraint of traffic all the more complicated and arduous. Furthermore, the pedestrian is a prominent factor whose rights must be protected.

Always Turn to Right.

While the well-established rule of the road, to always turn to the right when one vehicle passes another, maintains generally, it is not so true in practice on the part of the pedestrian, though it should equally apply.

It has been held by leading authorities and in some smart municipalities that, for the purpose of effecting a complete system of traffic, equestrians, led horses, and everything on wheels or runners, except street cars and baby carriages, should be regarded as vehicles, and that the word "horses" should include all domestic animals. So far as standard rules are concerned, a community might be so enthusiastic and enterprising as to acquiesce in this procedure, while, if it were left to the opinion of some of the judicial minds, it might be adjudged inconsistent, so far as horses being led are concerned.

It goes without saying that the authority charged with making the laws and regulations for control of vehicular traffic in cities should not lose sight of the fact that there is a gradual elimination of horse-drawn and a rapid increase of the motor vehicles, and this being accepted, conditions will have so changed in a period of time as to warrant a modification in restriction and other respects. The withdrawal of the horse, education of drivers and pedestrians, improvement in machines, skill in handling, and demands for expedition in transit will necessitate it.

Laws Must Be Enforced.

Right here, however, it may be stated that no matter how near model the laws and regulations may be in a given locality, the same will not prevail unless that community has been fully enlightened on the subject and has a police force sufficiently informed and courageous to enforce the same without fear or favor. I do not mean that harshness or persecution should follow, but warnings and prosecutions, to the end that respect for the laws and regulations may be obtained.

Along these lines education should follow, and first, in order to reach those concerned, proper signboards should direct as to the speed limit, where and when to slow down, keep to the right, to the left as near the curb as possible, in plan, bold letters, along roadways and in sections where the display of warnings is important. In prominent positions, attractive to the public, the laws and regulations should be appropriately fixed so as to catch the driver's eye. In addition to this, there should be distributed to pedestrians and drivers, in every city, as well as to all owners and operators of vehicles, through the police, with a surplus at station houses for those who might desire them, printed copies, in pamphlet form, of the laws and regulations as might be adopted. This independent of any similar action automobile clubs or others might take looking to the advice and protection of themselves and the public.

Motormen Also Must Heed.

Street railway motormen should be required to conform to the orders of the constituted authorities at intersecting streets, dangerous corners and turns, at fire-engine crossings, and to all laws relating to speed and the taking on or letting off of passengers. Particularly at intersecting streets should they be compelled to co-operate in facilitating the movement of vehicular traffic so as not to impede or obstruct the passage of vehicles directed by the police officers assigned to such duty. Vehicles should move in line on right and left on congested thoroughfares and not break too far to one side or the other in moving so as to confuse, complicate, or obstruct.

Dealing with the subject of regulations as applicable to municipalities, it occurs to those who have given the same close observation and study that any code which might be adopted should, by way of introduction, contain explicit information as to any of the terms therein employed, to the end that the intent of the makers might be readily understood. The word "drivers" could, for instance, be properly recited to include not only riders and drivers of vehicles, but the riders of bicycles and operators of motor vehicles and street cars, who should at all times comply with the directions of any member of the police force as afforded by voice or hand as to starting, stopping, or approaching any place, and as to taking on and delivering passengers or commodities, and ignorance of the rules should be no excuse for their being disregarded.

It should be required that all drivers of vehicles not only comply with the regulations, but they should be urged to co-operate with the police in instructing others in order to prevent congestion and accidents and to decrease financial loss through nonobservance of the requirements. Complaints against drivers should be made to any police officer or at a police station.

Keep Close to Curb.

That heavily-loaded, slow-moving vehicles should keep as close to the right-hand curb as possible is important, and a vehicle passing another moving in the same direction should always do so to the left.

The turning of corners to the right along the immediate line of the curb has one drawback at least, in this, that if a regulation prevails that all heavy vehicles shall keep as near the right-hand curb as practicable, in so doing it would immediately place the lighter vehicles while proceeding after the turn, in the same category as the heavy, and for this reason, in the District of Columbia, the regulation on the subject makes it obligatory in turning corners to the right to keep to the right center of the street, and police experience in that jurisdiction would justify such regulation; while in turning corners to the left, into an intersecting street, the rule demands that a vehicle shall move so as to leave sufficient clear space between itself and the left-hand curb as to permit the safe passage of another vehicle. In these matters of turns and in crossing from one side of the street to the other, it is in keeping with good policy to illustrate the same in all printed instructions or codifications with diagrams, showing the legal mode of procedure.

While on this subject, it might be advanced that there is no greater unsightliness in a well-regulated city otherwise than that presented by a commingling of all characters of vehicles in the volume of movement that proceeds to the right or approaches to the left. The city of Washington, it is to be regretted, has not advanced to that stage in the matter of traffic where heavy, slow-moving vehicles always proceed along to the right-hand side as near to the curb as possible in single column, as they should, and where lighter horse-drawn vehicles move next in column to the left, and motor-propelled vehicles form a column a distance farther to the left, forming lines of circulation according to the character of conveyance.

Keep Clear of Trucks.

Avenues and streets given up to the retail trade, including the shopping districts particularly, should be clear of large trucks hauling merchandise, wagons transporting hay, garbage, and ashes, and other unsightly loads of refuse. These should be assigned to nearby thoroughfares more suitably adapted to commercial purposes.

Every city having in view a favorable reputation in traffic regulations must today make provision against excessive emission of smoke and gases from automobiles, if not from different sources, that would be offensive to pedestrians and others patronizing its public ways, and should be just as diligent in suppressing unmuffled-for noises from running engines after motor conveyances have stopped and other unnecessary mechanical noises when moving, as well as the rattling of milk cans at early hours of the morning by indifferent drivers of horse-drawn vehicles. Dense and prolonged smoke or noises should be placed under the ban through proper authoritative enactment. Vehicles moving north and south always should be accorded the right of way.

Circles and triangles mark the converging points of avenues and streets in many cities, and the disposition to make short cuts about these places is in evidence and can only be overcome by vehicles being compelled to follow nearest the right side curb. The danger incident to one vehicle following upon another too closely, should the leading one come to a sudden stop through any cause, suggests requiring a distance intervening of at least fifteen feet, including animals where driven, and drivers should always be upon the seats of wagons and carriages or in control of the horse or horses drawing the same. The standing or driving of vehicles of any kind, two abreast, on either side of a public thoroughfare should not be permitted, if there be space for avoidance, and under no circumstances along streets having double lines of railway tracks.

Danger of Backing Up.

Those of you who have had experience in cities have some idea of the difficulties that follow the backing of vehicles to the curb, although trade makes it necessary that such should follow in commercial districts. He this as it may, no vehicles should be permitted to stand backed up to the curb except when actually loading or unloading, and, if horses drawn and having four wheels, the animals should be made to stand so as to face in the direction of traffic, but no vehicle should under these conditions be privileged to interrupt the passage of other vehicles or street cars. Freedom of avenues and streets from obstructions should prompt regulations against any vehicle stopping on the same except in emergency or in order to allow another vehicle or pedestrian to cross the roadway.

The important purpose in traffic regulation being to adjust matters so as to keep vehicles going and coming without friction, the manner of turning around is one that should be defined to be done without interfering with other vehicles even if necessitating the driving around a block for the purpose. This, on the principle that one small item should suffer brief loss in time rather than jeopardize or delay the volume of traffic movement.

There have been involved in the rules of traffic in large cities, beginning with New York, those requiring that a driver shall signal when slowing up, stopping, turning, or backing, by raising the whip or hand, or, otherwise indicating with the hand the direction that is to be taken. While not generally enforced, the rules deserve an emphatic favorable indorsement.

Penalty for Collisions.

One of the most effective and far-reaching regulations is that of the District of Columbia prescribing a penalty for colliding. While in Paris, the individual, under the law, must avoid being struck, and while in many municipalities in this country vehicles are required to stop when the cars do so, in order to avoid possible colliding with passengers alighting therefrom, the District ordinances provide against the driving or operating of a vehicle so as to carelessly or willfully collide with another vehicle of any kind or any person and affords opportunity when violated for criminal and civil action.

Exceptions are made in some cities, and properly so, extending right of way to vehicles of the post-office, police, fire, and health departments, and to physicians in emergency cases, and their running is accompanied by warning by appropriate gong alarm.

While traffice police signals made by the blowing of "police calls" is in effect, as a directing feature for control of traffic, so far as the method is concerned, its adoption might lead to trouble if it is of a character to be compared with the police "call of distress." This feature can be obviated by the use of a dissimilar alarm to those in general use for police purposes.

In cities, all vehicles should be required to carry lights and all business conveyances should be numbered. The need for such regulation is at once obvious. Criticism can also be justly made in this connection against too bright and dazzling headlights on motor vehicles in congested districts as well as against the frequent failure to throw sufficient light upon license numbers of automobiles anywhere and everywhere.

RICHARD SYLVESTER.

Gongs Are Necessary.

Equally necessary are the sound signals on motor conveyances, and they should be of a kind as near in accord as possible, and their use avoided for announcing "the machine is in waiting" and for similar purposes.

Enactment that street cars shall have the right of way upon their respective tracks, except when necessarily interrupted by the vehicles of the post-office, police, fire, health department, and those of funeral processions, should prevail, and there should be provision against any vehicle or street car unnecessarily obstructing the free passageway of any avenue or street, or causing hindrance or delay.

Waiting vehicles should stop with their right wheels at the curb, and not remain there so as to prevent the approach of others to let off occupants, and in congested commercial districts provision should be made for parking of carriages or machines in waiting.

This leads up to the proposition of the establishment of public squares or garages for parking purposes. The providing of fire runs, particularly over certain streets, should make the stopping of street railway cars where their tracks intersect with another street a precaution to be taken while the sounding of fire alarms should bring all cars within hearing to a standstill before making immediate crossing.

Horses Should Be Hitched.

Horses left unhitched or unbitted in the street have not only caused hundreds of accidents, but have cost many lives, and every municipality should prohibit such risk and carelessness, for there are times when the safest horse will surprise its owner.

Repairs to vehicles in the public streets is a dangerous practice, unless the horse attached is first removed from it, and the rules of the road should not only make it unlawful for the motor driver to conduct his charge if he is under the influence of liquor, but all drivers should be compelled by law to have their horses or vehicles under complete control at all times. The clear and unobstructed view to right or left from covered vehicles, condemnation of unsafe and insanitary vehicles, provisions against coasting or use of sleds in the public avenues and streets, unsightly or temporary paper or cloth advertising on vehicles, the protruding of material in transpoftation to a dangerous extent beyond the rear of the axle, the driving of horse-drawn or motor vehicles by children, minors not passengers hanging on street cars or other vehicles, the humane treatment of horses—are subjects for regulation.

Uniformity in movement by all classes of conveyances, is what makes for traffic system. So long as one speed allowance is made for street cars, another for motor vehicles, and still another for horse-drawn vehicles, either by law or by direction under equal privileges extended by law, just so long will there be want of system.

Speed Zones in Cities.

It is believed that the fixing of speed zones in larger cities is the most equitable arrangement. In recognition of the danger that attaches to the train on a railroad track moving through congested localities, its speed is reduced to six and eight miles an hour, while in the heart of congestion and off a track, many motor engines run twenty to thirty miles.

In the trade, theatrical, and hotel centers, motor and other vehicles should move at an average minimum motor speed, in fairness to the horse and pedestrian, while an adjoining zone, free from congestion, could afford greater latitude to the drivers with reduction at intersecting streets, and a zone still beyond offer still greater freedom of movement.

The day has not arrived, unfortunately, when operators of motor vehicles in cities will fully co-operate with the authorities in support of laws and regulations governing the conduct of their machines, and, so long as they make no effort to show that existing laws are unjust, they accept them as just by acquiescence and should support them. They should co-operate in securing reasonable laws and regulations, and in all such endeavor there must be some sacrifices on both sides. So should those who drive and ride horses and walk join not only in the adoption of sufficient laws and regulations, but they should aid in their enforcement. Under such co-operation the least differences and most satisfaction will follow.

Regulating Street Cars.

Before considering the management of traffic by the police, or other authority, it might be in place briefly to summarize subjects concerning the conducting of street railway cars in cities in the interest of the public. They should be regulated to the end that warnings should be sounded at all crossings, and the standing or storage of cars on well patronized streets, except for the moving of unusual demands for passage, should be prohibited. The crossing of a car in one direction before the car crossing in an opposite direction at the same intersection has cleared is dangerous, in that unobscured observation is prevented, and a car following immediately upon the preceding car is obstructional and illtimed. The failure of motormen to stop their cars for waiting patrons is too frequently a practice without good grounds for excuse, and should be lawfully discouraged. The calling of streets and stops by conductors should never be neglected, and the continuous overloading of street cars is dangerous, insanitary, and unjust. Dangling chains, squeaking brakes, and flat wheels are conditions that should not be allowed to exist in a well-regulated city.

After making observations in London, Paris, and in other European cities, Capt. Alexander R. Piper, U. S. A., retired, former police commissioner in charge of street traffic in New York, instituted a work in that great city, in which the foot and mounted police were utilized, which has received the highest commendation from all interested sources. The undertaking consisted in the adoption of what is known as the block system, which did away with former indiscriminate methods, and which was followed by greater regularity in movements and alternate crossings at intersections by vehicles.

Eno's Suggestions Followed.

The education of owners and drivers in conformity with the innovation called for rules and their dissemination, and the commissioner was afforded support in their formation, under adverse circumstances, by William Phelps Eno, a gentleman of culture and means, and an enthusiast on the subject of street traffic. This was in 1900-1903. The splendid beginning had in the busy metropolis steadily advanced under the guidance of Commissioner Bugher, of the same department, and that great whirlpool of social life and commercialism to-day is said to excel the original standard, London, in respect to traffic control.

The action of the New York authorities prompted renewed activity on the part of other municipalities in the matter of systematic conduct of moving vehicles, and Washington, St. Louis, Chicago, Detroit, Louisville, and cities of lesser population were forward in making endeavor to improve upon inferior methods. Not only were modern rules of the road authorized, and the police and public informed in accordance with them, but specially selected members of the police forces were assigned to these important duties. In many jurisdictions the effectiveness of the control is somewhat lessened by the inadequacy of the police forces numerically. Where the area of jurisdiction is extensive and the demands for general purposes are such as to require an elaborate disposal of the units of protection, there necessarily follows a minimum detail for traffic duty.

Police Must Be Alert.

Where ignorance and indifference on the part of drivers is extant and the police deficiency exists, there will follow not only a want of education as to the laws and regulations, but a consequent nonobservance of them on the principle that a policeman out of sight is out of mind. Inadequacy in police numbers is, in a measure, overcome by the employment of bicycle and motorcycle mounts, although the ability of an officer to exercise full directing capacity is largely diminished if he must at the same time care for his wheel.

No city, perhaps, presents the extensive area of surface for travel and control as does that of Washington, where avenues 160 feet in width converge or intersect with streets 80 feet in width. Such convergings call for the service of three officers to creditably protect and direct at congested places, and with a limited police force protecting nearly seven square miles of settled territory the difficulties to be encountered are at once apparent.

The speed law is strictly enforced by a bicycle corps of sixty policemen, divided into two divisions for service in a period of sixteen hours, except that ten of these are held at station houses as reserves for emergency calls. These men are mounted on bicycles of uniform design and attached thereto are speedometers, which are tested as to their accuracy once a month. On the reading of these instruments the courts base their decisions as to speed law violations. Some idea of the accomplishments of this magnificent body of civic guardians may be had when it is known that the fines in court, the result of their efforts, aggregate from $30,000 to $40,000 a year in a jurisdiction including about 350,000 people.

These bicycle men are instructed to enforce the laws and regulations against the horse-drawn and motor vehicle alike and rarely is complaint made as to their methods or conduct. Where warnings are given to drivers by members of this corps or arrests are made, the officers are required to fill out cards for file at their reepective stations whereon is noted the name of the driver, license number, number of vehicle, date and time, location, disposition of the case, kind of vehicle, and name of owner. These cards are forwarded to police headquarters, and there they are preserved. The record of any driver may in this wise be consulted at any time, and, if shown guilty of two or more offenses in one year, a jail sentence may follow under the law.

In this connection it might be stated that motorcycles and bicycles builded for one may not be ridden by two.

Besides the bicycle corps, six members of the force are detailed on motorcycles for duty over the improved outlying roadways.

Police orders to the force employed are regarded as reasonable and read, in part, as follows:

"A respectful, calm, courteous demeanor should mark the attention of the members of the force in all cases, and an avoidance be had of anything having the appearance of persecution. The same close attention should be accorded to vehicles moved by animals as is given to vehicles moved by other power. Careless, reckless, inattentive drivers are causes for complaint and are frequently responsible for accidents and injuries.

Reasonable Regulation Urged.

"It was the expression of Congress that reasonable regulations should be enacted for the government and control of all kinds of vehicular traffic in the District of Columbia, and it is believed that the laws relating to the movement of vehicles were not intended to make travel a hardship, except so far as indifferent or irresponsible persons might make it so for themselves. But to insure a proper enforcement of all requirements, as heretofore directed, and in order to insure uniformity of action, members of the force will observe that the laws relating to turning of corners, crossing at intersecting streets, at certain prescribed locations where pedestrians congregate, in the parks, on the streets within the fire limits, and in the suburbs beyond, for all of which places distinct rates of speed are prescribed, are enforced. There are times when the good and law-abiding citizen may, through inability to control to a fraction, place himself at the mercy of the police technically, when discretion would prompt a warning, and when the rear light, unobserved, would be jolted out and the warm lamp would indicate that it had been burning, and where warning against repetition would serve a good purpose.

"At times there is possibility of a few drops of oil escaping, when a suggestion might remedy the situation; but where layers, pools, or puddles of oil are allowed to waste on the streets the regulation should be invoked. In the vicinity of hotels and other public places motor vehicle stands should be kept free from leaking oil at all times, because it is a special privilege and there follows accumulation. Excess of grease on car curves should be regarded as a clear violation of the regulations, and appropriate action should be taken.

Number of Accidents.

"It might be interesting to note the number of vehicle accidents of all kinds, big and little, important and unimportant, that occurred in the District of Columbia for the year that ended June 30, 1911:

Accidents.	Deaths.	Serious.	Minor.	Injured.	Property injury only.	No damage.	Total.
Bicycle	1	30	119	151	25	21	206
Motor vehicle	7	64	171	262	302	55	600
Steam railway	5	13	10	23	4	...	36
Street railway	18	96	272	391	256	167	910
Other kinds	3	65	296	287	324	63	661
Totals	38	268	879	1,234	922	306	2,413

In the shopping districts of commercial cities, and Washington is not classified as a manufacturing or wholesale center, there is necessity for street traffic regulations at intersecting streets during all daylight hours, and a police officer of intelligence, properly instructed, can control an informed driving public. During rush hours, it is important to increase the detail at such points to two, three, or even four men in the larger cities, their work to be supplemented by mounted officers, who can readily be observed at a distance, and who, should patrol and arrange vehicles in lines. A section of north and south lines of vehicles may be allowed to cross intersections, to be followed by their blocking when the east and west lines may be directed to move, they in turn to be blocked. Thus alternating confusion will be avoided and pedestrians afforded intervals to proceed. These crossing movements should be made at minimum or cautious speed.

Special Favor Shown.

The law has held that hotel owners have the right to maintain their private vehicles at stands contiguous to their property, not to be employed, however, by the general public, but by the hotel guests, through the hotel agencies. Drivers of public vehicles should be granted licenses after their application for such has had the approval of the police authorities, such licenses to be revoked for any wanton violation of the laws and regulations. Rates of charges for patrons should be under the observation of the patron by night or day, and the number of the vehicle should be plainly set forth at all times. Taximeters on cabs should be tested at intervals and sealed under signature and for all kinds of public vehicles, including "sight-seeing" automobiles, public stands should be established. The sanitary and secure condition of public vehicles should be inspected at intervals, and condemnation follow when warranted. The soliciting of trade and needless perambulating of these vehicles should be a violation of the law and respectful conduct on the part of drivers be a prime requisite. Severe penalty should follow failure to return articles lost or mislaid by passengers.

One more subject suggests itself for discussion, and I have done. Vehicles on attendance at theaters and public assemblages should be parked so as to approach to the right as called, and in these days of improved mechanical devices the electric call and megaphone, even if attended by relay calls, should operate against confusion. Vehicles should not be parked to the left, necessitating the crossing of the street to the right in response to calls, and they should not approach in double line. This is very important upon roadways which have railway tracks.

Permits to Parades.

As to the conduct of large parades, the city of Washington, at the suggestion of the police department, some years ago, adopted a permanent roping device for guarding against encroachment by the pedestrian crowds upon the parade grounds. Iron sockets were placed beneath the surface at intervals of fifty feet along the curb, in upright position, with lids for covering when not in use. Into these two or three inch sockets, close fitting iron pipes, a degree less in diamter, are inserted so as to stand about four feet higher than the curb, and on the upper end of these upright pipings is an iron loop through which a wire cable is passed, extending from intersecting to intersecting street. At the intersecting streets manila rope loops are maintained during the time of parade, and all traffic is thus diverted to other thoroughfares, while behind the cable the crowds are held upon the sidewalks. This simple contrivance is worth hundreds of policemen on occasions, and the silent cable cannot argue or talk back—thus saving the lodgment of charges against members of the force.

The arranging of regulations for traffic in cities is an undertaking calling for knowledge and consideration of existing and continually arising questions, and in one community there are conditions which do not belong to another, so that so far as setting forth suggestions on this important subject is concerned the many different ones cannot well be presented. I have endeavored to discuss those prominent most anywhere in as concrete form as possible.

Preparing the Salad.

Expert advice on the making of salads was given by Hermann Senn, described as a "master of his subject," at the Horticultural Hall yesterday.

According to this authority all salad plants must be thoroughly washed, but not soaked. Then they must be drained and torn, not cut, into shreds. Above all, he urged, never cut up the materials with a steel knife. When the shredding is accomplished, put the whole into a salad basket, or into a cloth, and swing thoroughly to remove the superfluous moisture. Dressing should be done as near as possible to the time when the salad is required for the table.

Mr. Senn added: "A good way to flavor with garlic is to place a piece of toasted bread in the salad bowl, cut a piece of garlic, and rub the toast with it. That is all. You then place the salad on top of the bread, and it acquires just the delicate soupcon of garlic which is desired."

Nature's Parachutes.

Careful examination has been made of the heads of Canada thistledowns in order to determine their effectiveness as parachutes carrying the seeds of the plant to great distances through the air. The results of this examination are quite remarkable.

Calculation shows that a thistledown starting from an elevation of twenty feet in still air would require two-thirds of a minute to reach the ground. With a wind blowing twenty miles an hour it would be carried on the average about a fifth of a mile. The total surface exposed to the air in an average thistledown is, on account of the great number of hairlets, a little more than one-third of a square foot.

Another well known and very beautiful example of nature's parachutes is furnished by the light silken threads with the aid of which the little gossamer spider makes long aerial voyages.

Plenty of Nuts This Fall.

The supply of nuts this year is unusually large and thus a long cold winter is indicated as nature is providing a plentiful abundance of food for the squirrels and other wild things of the woods. Sometimes the thick fur on the foxes indicates a coming season of severity; sometimes it's the thick husks on the corn; sometimes it's the goosebone! This year it's the nuts.

They are plentiful everywhere. The hickory nuts are fairly breaking the limbs off the trees. The walnuts are thicker than ever before, and the butternuts are being brought to town by the wagon load.

"FRATS" ENTIRELY BANISHED FROM CHICAGO HIGH SCHOOLS

Drastic Action by the Board of Education Has Eliminated Secret Socities in the Western Metropolis.

Chicago, Nov. 25.—Just when sororities and fraternities had their beginning in the high schools of Chicago doesn't seem to be a matter of record—at least in so far as the records of the board of education are concerned.

It is known that they were flourishing ten years ago, and perhaps a few were in existence as far back as the late '80's. But it was not until 1904 that their influence became so great as to cause official action to be taken against them. In that year, after various investigations had been made, it was decided unanimously by the members of the school board that the sorority and the fraternity operated against the best interests of the pupils, and a rule was passed to the effect that no member of a fraternity or sorority should be eligible to compete in any regular high school organization, such as baseball, football, and debating teams.

Not Sufficient Curb.

It was hoped that by enforcing this rule a sufficient curb would be put on the secret societies that in a few years they would cease to exist without the necessity of more drastic action. The expectations of the school board, however, were not fulfilled. Instead of dying out, the secret societies continued to increase in membership. In many instances pupils who were promising candidates for athletic teams resorted to lies, and their "brothers" and "sisters" in the secret societies lied to shield them.

This state of affairs existed until 1907, by which time the fraternities and sororities had grown to such an extent that a sweeping investigation was decided upon by President Otto Schneider, of the board of education. The result of this investigation was proof, backed by indisputable figures, that the secret societies worked no good to the pupils, but, on the other hand, that they destroy scholarship and disrupt the student body.

Figures were obtained showing the effects of the secret societies on their members in all the schools. The following table, compiled at the largest high school on the South Side, Hyde Park, is representative:

A Comparative Study.

For the semester ended February, 1907:

Sorority.	Members.	Average standing.	No. below passing mark.
GIRLS.			
Kappa Theta	4	79.3	2
Kappa Pal	15	77.85	4
Pi Delta Psi	4	76.9	1
Phi Epsilon Psi	9	76.55	2
Iota Beta Kappa	22	76.53	9
Zeta Beta Psi	17	76.32	4
Beta Tau Delta	3	74.6	2
Phi Sigma Psi	2	72.12	1
Gamma Beta Sigma	2	68.7	1
Beta Kappa Psi	4	68.5	3
Tau Beta Epsilon	1	61.9	1
Totals	87	73.8	30
BOYS.			
Alpha Omega Mu	1	78	..
Psi Sigma	12	75.65	4
Beta Zeta	9	72.1	5
Gamma Delta Psi	5	71.7	3
Delta Sigma Chi	7	69.5	5
Totals	34	72.9	19

Out of a total of 121 boys and girls, cited above, the average mark of all was 74.9, and only one out of the whole number attained a mark above 90, according to the official report made to the school board.

The report then went on to show how the secret societies had disrupted the student bodies by promoting "class distinctions." Numerous instances were cited to show that girls had frequently appeared in borrowed finery to make a "good impression" on their mates that they might be selected for membership in sororities. It was shown that the regular school lunches had been spurned by members of different secret societies that they might congregate in "exclusiveness" at the noon hour; and instead of the nourishing food provided at the school lunch counter, partake of perhaps a little fruit, ice cream, soda, and a cigarette.

Their Social Pretensions.

The pupils who, from one necessity or another, were compelled to bring their lunches to school with them, were looked down upon by the "frat" and sorority members as "inferiors." No chance for them to gain the coveted membership, and as a result it was shown that many pupils went hungry during the whole afternoon that they might "keep up appearances" and thus be asked to join some Mu Mu Mu.

These were only a few of the ways in which the secret societies were held to disrupt the student body. The influence of the Mus and Gammas on athletics was shown to be great—one fraternity would have surreptitiously a majority of its members on the football team. Result: None but fraternity members would be allowed to play. Then too, it was shown, the numerous parties and other social diversions consumed much of the pupils' time that should have been devoted to study; also the social activities strained the purses of many parents who wished their sons and daughters to be "in the swim" and could ill afford to spend as lavishly as could the parents of some of the others. But once a member of a secret society, he or she was expected to do his or her equal part in entertaining.

Another phase taken up by the report was prefaced by this paragraph:

"It is curious now, when one is very young, exclusiveness runs not only to sportiness, but to willful ignorance. Curious—but it always has been so and always will be."

Then, it is asserted that during a personal investigation of high school fraternity houses President Schneider found that in six instances at least they had been used to entertain women from the red-light district.

Strong Step Against "Frats."

After the report showing these conditions had been presented and considered carefully by the board of education, a rule was passed in 1908 to the effect that any high school pupil belonging to a fraternity or sorority should be suspended until he or she resigned membership in the secret society.

Then it was that cries of protest were heard from every quarter, where a high school was situated. Father tapped his barrel for lawyer's fees and began to buy petitions for injunctions, mandamusses, writs of certiorari, answers, rejoinders, writs of error, appeals, demurrers, and other such grown-up toys to which the sons and daughters had now taken a fancy. Moreover, in the case of the Hyde Park School, father assured the school authorities that boys and girls who were descendants (at any rate hypothetically) of "the men of 1776" would never permit themselves to be dictated to. Father also cited the fourteenth amendment to the Constitution: But the Chicago and Illinois judges were indignant and unanimously have upheld the rights of boards of education to control the school social activities of their pupils.

From this time on until the present the secret societies have gradually been eliminated. Occasionally, however, it becomes known that some fraternity or sorority exists in secret. But as soon as the secret becomes known prompt action is taken.

The "Anti-frat" Pledge.

On May 3 of this year, with the idea of stamping out the secret societies altogether, it was decided by the school board to require all pupils on being admitted to the Chicago high schools to sign the following pledge:

"I (——) hereby declare that I am not a member of any fraternity, sorority, or other secret society, the activities of which work back and have an effect upon the discipline and scholarship of the schools; and I further state that I am not pledged to any such society; and I promise that, so long as I shall be a member of the public schools of Chicago I will not join any such secret society, and that I will have no connection whatever with any such secret society, nor be present at any meeting of such secret society in this school or elsewhere."

Present Chicago Rule.

At the same time this rule was put in effect:

"Whereas the present rule of the board of education, which has been in effect but a short time, has made more certain that secret societies are absolutely injurious to the public school system by reason of the controversies which have arisen under its operation through the actions of secret society pupils, and

"Whereas this board has had it redemonstrated that secret societies, otherwise known as, or in the nature of, fraternities and sororities, are inimical to good scholarship and discipline within the public school system,

"Now therefore be it resolved, That section 175 of the rules of the board be repealed and that the following be enacted in lieu thereof:

"No pupil in the public schools of Chicago shall be a member of any fraternity, sorority, or secret society in the nature thereof, existing wholly or in part within this public school system, or whose activities work back and have an injurious effect upon the discipline or scholarship within the system. Any pupil who is a member of such organization shall be forthwith suspended, and after three days' notice if said pupil refuses and fails to relinquish membership in any of said organizations, he or she shall be expelled.

"A secret society is a society whose name, constitution, by-laws, ritual, initiation, membership, qualification for membership, insignia of membership, meetings, activities are, or any one of which is, secret or within the knowledge of the members only or intended to be so."

"Has this rule, with the pledge required of pupils entering the high schools, been effectual in stamping out the secret societies?" was asked of Mrs. Ella Flagg Young, present head of the Chicago schools.

"In so far as we know it has," she answered. "Of course, I would not like to say that there might not be some members of secret societies still registered as pupils in our high schools, but summary action is taken instantly when they are discovered. And the fraternity and sorority members, if there are any, are few and far between."

ALL MONEY KINGS BELIEVE IN "LUCK"

Men of Power Have Their Superstitions.

It is not often that the man who has a pet superstition that has become a part of himself can be induced to talk about it. As a general thing, there is nothing that the important figure in active business life regards more as a part of his inner soul than this. Probably there are thousands of strange, quaint, and really marvelous business superstitions held by eminent financiers, kings of commerce, and masters of affairs that never have been and never will be revealed. If suspected, in many cases their existence would be steadfastly denied. Men are not ashamed of them, but often they are apt to fear that those whose high regard they earnestly wish to have might think such opinions a weakness.

Thus one of the richest men in the world would probably turn aside the question, if it were put to him, as to how much of his great success, how many of his millions, were due to his eagle stone. Yet for a quarter of a century, perhaps even more, that eagle stone has reposed in a pocket of his trousers each business day. When pondering over propositions that have needed immediate decision, this magnate has been seen to take out this stone and pass it from one hand to the other. It is a genuine "charm" that will keep away disaster, it is said, and gets its name from the fact that it was found in an eagle's nest.

Then there are the business men who cannot be persuaded from believing that certain days of the month are especially fortunate for them. A noted American lawyer carries with him a tiny bust of a distinguished American statesman. Often in the midst of an argument where extreme skill and concentration are needed his fingers can be seen stealing automatically over to his waistcoat, merely to touch the accustomed object. One morning he sat calmly at his desk, dictating his mail. He was soon to go into court. The next moment his face changed. A few words to his stenographer, a snatch at a bundle of papers, and he was off, to speed to his house as quickly as the subway and a taxicab would take him. The little bust had been left behind while he was dressing. He feared he would lose his case without it.

Elixir of Life for Steel.

For mankind, as yet, the elixir of life remains undiscovered; but for steel it has been found. The element vanadium, when added in certain predetermined and small proportions, gives to a steel the combined properties of increased tensile strength, higher elastic limit, and greater ductility. Strength, toughness, elasticity, united with freedom from crystallization—these are the life-giving properties which vanadium imparts to steel, properties which raise its endurance to meet the burdens which are daily increasing upon it.

Business Will Tell.

De Style—How did the Turks defeat the Italian regiment recruited in America?

Gunbusta—Why, just as the Italians were boldly advancing a shrewd Turk shouted: "Shine!" and the absent-minded dagos fell to their knees and felt for their brushes.