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A CRITICISM OF BABY SHOWS

The old-fashioned "baby show" which was somewhat on a par with the occasional rural "beauty show," with a trip to New York as the prize, has recently been rehabilitated and placed on a pseudoscientific basis, by substituting certain measurements and tests for the mere critical estimate or more or less incompetent judges, says the Literary Digest. This kind of show, which purports to be of value by exciting interest in the preservation of infant life, has been particularly popular in Great Britain, but a leading editorial writer in the Hospital (London, July 21) is of the opinion that it does more harm than good. Baby shows, he thinks, even those with scientific or eugenic elements, are of "a vulgar and debasing tendency." Their attempts at scientific accuracy are largely pretentious and unreal, and hence without value. He tells of one show where four ladies were supposed to examine, test and classify 160 infants each, in a single day. Says our critic:

"No one questions the desirability of the object, nor the motives of those who minister to it. But we think that discretion, sound judgment and good taste can not be detected in . . . the organization of 'baby shows.' In these, it would appear, mothers are invited to conduct their offspring to some public hall and to submit the infants to a scheme of classification based upon standards which, so far as we know, remain without definition. The precedent of the public show is closely followed. Public announcements herald the event, and the local celebrities contribute their patronage. Judges are appointed, and proceed to value the 'exhibits' in an atmosphere throbbing with the expectations of the exhibitors. Whether maternal testimony to character is admitted we do not know. Finally come the fixing of the labels and the attachment of the ribbons. Then the show is over, and the neighboring streets witness the decorated infants led home by proud mothers, just as after kindred events they witness champion stallions and prize puppies blazing with trophies.

"What special part in the promotion of infant welfare 'shows' of this order are supposed to play we can not guess. The most conspicuous feature of the performance, to our view, is its essential vulgarity, and next we should place its capacity for the encouragement and promotion of vulgarity. Maternal self-respect, reserve and dignity and delicacy of mind are, after all, not unimportant qualities in the rearing and training of children. 'Baby shows' will hardly contribute to baby growth. Our contention, indeed, is that such exhibitions will move to quite opposite ends. It is because of this, and because of the public estimation of infants like so many competitive cattle, that we say these methods must exercise a vulgar and debasing tendency.

"There is another feature of the performance which justifies criticism. We refer to the large element of pretense and unreality which must in the nature of things characterize the awards of the 'judges.' By what precise standards can any one appraise the comparative values of the individuals in a group of healthy babies? The pretense to do so is little better than a sham, and is utterly without scientific or practical value."

In one column the Chicago Tribune insists that "it is apparent to all men and women of intelligence that the duty to support the government in the efficient conduct of the war for the fulfillment of its obligations and responsibilities is paramount." In further comment upon the rights of free speech and assembly the Tribune vigorously denounces the holding of meetings or discussions which might have the effect to embarrass the efficient conduct of the war. In an adjacent column, curiously enough, there is an editorial of the same length condemning most severely the Secretary of the Treasury for his "reports of scrambled finance," for his "blunders" and "incompetencies." "The country," continues the Tribune, "is entitled to full and accurate information on war revenues and war expenditures. It is apparent we are not getting it. Every day we hear new statements of enormous additional appropriations." Perhaps the Tribune believes that the right of

free speech should be limited to newspapers alone, or even to the Tribune. Many persons are inclined in war times to believe that their fellow citizens who do not think as they do should not be permitted to think aloud.

SUGGESTS MENU FOR STUDENTS

Miss Bab Bell Says Light Lunch Is Best During School Hours.

Miss Bab Bell of the Agricultural Extension Service has issued a circular telling what sort of lunches should be prepared by mothers for their children in school. She says the less unnecessary tax put upon the pupil's digestive organs the more energy he will have to spare from mental work. No child can study well when his system is overburdened with heavy, concentrated food, she says.

Wholesome foods suggested by Bell are: Milk or cocoa; good, wholesome sandwiches—two kinds rather than two of one kind; fresh, canned and dried fruits; rice puddings, baked custards, junkets, gelatins; eggs in custards, or hard boiled and chopped fine for sandwich filling; bread and cookies with nuts and fruits; well-cooked cereals; green vegetables; small amounts of home-made candy.

Wholesome lunches suggested by Miss Bell are: (1) One chicken sandwich, one jam sandwich, one apple, one glass of milk, one small piece of cake (two graham or plain crackers and two apples for recesses). (2) Ham sandwich, fudge sandwich, apple sauce, one glass of lemonade. (3) Brown bread and butter, cottage cheese sandwich, celery, one orange, nut and raisin cookies. (4) Minced ham sandwich, lettuce sandwich, or graham bread and butter sandwich with celery, baked custard, two apples.

JEFFERSON MOTHERS ELECT

Mrs. E. T. Truitt Heads Club in That School District.

Mrs. E. T. Truitt was elected president of the Mothers' Club of the Jefferson School at the first fall meeting of the club Friday afternoon. The other officers elected were: Secretary, Mrs. G. W. Miller; Vice-president, Mrs. E. C. W. Miller; Treasurer, Mrs. O. S. Trimble. A program committee composed of Miss Edith Robison, Miss Mary Dysart and Mrs. A. E. Reese was named. Mrs. J. M. Long, Mrs. J. Silver and Mrs. O. W. Boutwell were selected for the relief committee.

A check for \$6.69 was sent to the Red Cross. The money was made at a supper August 13. The club will meet the third Friday of each month at 3 o'clock.

Stephens Students Guests at Theater.

The entire faculty and student body of Stephens College were the guests of T. C. Hall this afternoon at the Columbia Theater.

ACTIVITY BOOKS READY SOON

All-Year Tickets Will Be On Sale This Week.

Activity tickets admitting the owner to all University sports and debates will be placed on sale next Wednesday or Thursday. Eighteen hundred books have been ordered from the E. W. Stephens Publishing Company and are now on the press. Delivery is expected Wednesday.

These season tickets cover a year of thirty-three sports, five football games, ten basketball contests, two tennis matches, two debates, eleven baseball games, and three track meets. They will cost \$5, thereby giving admittance at the rate of 14 2-7 cents for each event. Single admission to the events would run up a bill of about \$19. About ten students are obtaining advance orders for the books.

The thirty-three admissions contained in the activity ticket is one less than last year, as an admittance card to a freshman football game has been omitted. The order for 1,800 is a duplicate of the 1917 order, for Director W. E. Meanwell does not expect the high cost of living to interfere with the demand for seats.

DINNER FOR M. U. MEN IN CHINA

Lloyd Jones and N. N. Polk Visit Shanghai Before Returning to U. S.

SHANGHAI (By Mail, Aug. 17.—A dinner was given last night at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Bassett at 19 Route Pere Pichon, this city, in honor of Lieutenants Lloyd Jones and N. N. Polk of the U. S. Army in the Philippine Islands. They were in Shanghai on a short visit before returning to the United States and possibly France. Both are graduates of the University of Missouri.

Other guests at the dinner were Thomas F. Millard and J. B. Powell. Two other Missouri graduates in China, A. Heinz and S. R. Price, were unable to attend, Heinz because there is a small-sized revolution between Shanghai and Peking, where he is located, and Price because of other reasons.

Grant School Mothers' Club Meets.

The Mothers' Club of the Grant School held its first meeting of the year at 3 o'clock Thursday afternoon. The new president of the club, Mrs. L. F. Chil'ers, presided. Mrs. J. L. McCrary gave a piano solo. Dr. J. L. Meriam spoke about the purpose and aims of a mothers' club and urged the mothers to co-operate with the teachers. The next meeting of the club will be held on the third Friday of October.

Freshmen are especially invited to join the University men's Bible class at the Presbyterian Church, this morning at 9:45.

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