

Winnetka Weekly Talk

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by

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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1919

Americanization Of Citizenship

Further and further is the idea spreading that Americanization of the foreign born is the road to national felicity. More and more deeply into the public mind is sinking the responsibility of the community to the newcomers that are in, but not of, it. Clubs and churches are organizing Americanization work. Factories have classes in English and civics. Night schools have been established and every attempt made to make the evening class room seem an attractive place to the men and the women who have spent the day in toil. And results are being obtained, results that gratify, even though they do not entirely satisfy, those who have accepted the burden of the native born to the residents of foreign birth.

We do, indeed, need Americanized citizens, an electorate capable of reading the ballot which they vote. We do need in every community a public that understands American institutions and American ideals. But it is not alone the foreign born to whom these things are a sealed book. Ignorance of American history and American institutions is much more widespread than that. The intelligent voter is about as rare as the voter who cannot read his ballot. It is indeed, the exceptional person who has that appreciation of his country's life and institutions to make of him a really intelligent voter. We need Americanizing in a very general sense.

Most American born people are able to read the English language intelligently long before they reach the voting age. But ability to read is not enough. There must be the will to read and to seek out the truth, for there are many agencies whose purpose in life it is to confuse the public mind in matters concerning public policy.

Intelligent citizenship is not an easy thing to acquire. Its acquisition is, however, a duty that ought to stand high in the minds of those who are capable of achieving it. While we talk Americanization of the foreign born among us, it would be well for us to look to the quality of our own Americanism, to determine just how real it is.

"Can Such Things Be!"

In a recent number of the Atlantic Monthly there was a pitiful account of the sufferings of the Christian people of Armenia at the hands of the Turks and the Kurds, sufferings in which American and British missionaries and teachers were often compelled to share. The author, the wife of a missionary doctor, chose for her tale of cruelty the telling title, "Can Such Things Be?" The reader, scarcely able to accept the facts that were presented, yet was compelled by the earnestness and the evident veracity of the writer to believe that such things not only could be, but are.

In the November issue of the same magazine, in the contributor's column, is a letter from Othman el-Jezdi, announcing the fact that he has appropriated the title for a compilation of newspaper clippings which he has translated literally into Turkish and is to have published shortly in the leading weekly of Stamboul. These extracts from the New York press give accounts of half a dozen recent lynchings and race riots in the United

Shall Winnetka Have Its Own Motion Picture House?

Editor's Note:—The question of whether or not Winnetka is to have a Commercial Motion Picture House will be submitted to the voters in a referendum ballot early next year. The accompanying article is the first of a series to be published in the columns of the Weekly Talk. The editor welcomes expressions of opinion on this subject. The proposition of establishment of a Motion Picture House in the Village should interest every voter in the Village. Articles submitted must be brief to insure publication.

By Grace A. Fentress

Shall Winnetka have its own Motion Picture House?

This depends: is it the interest of the children or that of the adults which we are considering? If the children's good, then I believe the establishment of such a house, here in our midst, to be most undesirable. There are obvious objections to sending our young people to Wilmette, to even as universally good shows as they produce there. But are not our children better off at Wilmette movies, weekly, than they would be at the Winnetka house, daily? The mother who thinks she can control this daily attendance, will find the problem of the home greatly complicated. The Winnetka house will not be, as she now dreams, the solution of her present difficulties.

I have it on authoritative statement, that to have a financially successful commercial house, there must be a minimum weekly attendance of 6,000 or a daily attendance of 500, both afternoon and evening. For Winnetka to create such an audience, she must resort to extensive advertisement without and to tremendous development of the movie-fan within. There will be the ever present tease of this movie-fan; the lure to see each picture as it comes out; the constant inner-urge of the child, pressed, as he will be, both from

within and without. Will not this increased attendance at movies bring a threefold harm to our children, a physical, mental and moral harm?

First, physical—Who could expect outdoor exercise; so necessary to our growing school children, to compete with the indoor thrill and adventure to be had for the asking, just around the corner? Physicians agree that increase in eye and nerve strain is very common among children frequenting the movies.

Second, mental—Is there any form of recreation to which children contribute so little as to the average moving picture show? Mental effort being at a discount, how can there survive the old-fashioned competitive games—charades—or the children's own dramatic efforts?

School principals tell us, there is an appreciable falling off in scholarship in neighborhoods where movies have been sometime established. Also that any continuous or sustained effort is nowadays, sadly lacking.

Third, moral—There will come to our Village, hoards of young people, all kinds and conditions of boys and girls, attracted by widespread advertising. They will bring to us, not only contagion, but, in due time, every kind of social problem solution of which will demand the combined effort of police and the Juvenile Protective association. Sweet shops will spring up around our new house luring the young people to spend much time and money, and where they will see and hear much that is not good for them.

The question of whether Winnetka shall have its own moving picture house will come up before us, later, for referendum vote. Before it is too late, let us consider, seriously, the really vital issues of this question.

Winnetka Man Takes Leading Role in Princeton Triangle Club Production

When "The Isle of Surprise," an original melo-farce with musical accompaniment which comprises this season's offering of the Princeton University Triangle club, plays in Chicago on December 23, its personnel will include William M. McIlvaine, Jr., Green Bay road, who will appear as a lieutenant.

This season marks McIlvaine's first appearance in Princeton dramatics, as he was busily engaged last winter captaining the freshman basketball quintet to a well earned victory over the Yale yearlings. McIlvaine, however, gained considerable dramatic experience at the Hill school and promises to be a valuable addition to the present cast.

Departing from the general precedent which has lured college playwrights into poor imitations of Broadway, the authors of "The Isle of Surprise" have permitted their creative talent to run its natural course. As a result, they have furnished a delightful vehicle for the ex-

pression of undergraduate ability along dramatic, artistic and practical lines. The argument, which is all absorbing, is built around the warm dreamy atmosphere of a sunny isle in the Arabian sea, presenting engrossing situations, a rare combination of oriental and American dancing, and a pleasing touch of undergraduate humor.

A striking feature of "The Isle of Surprise" is that it is an amateur production throughout. The management has avoided the taint of an indifferent combination of amateur and professional talent, with the result that the play is the sole product of undergraduate efforts. This feature has been carried even to the stage settings which have been designed by a student who formerly lived in India, the scene of the action.

After two performances at Princeton the club will appear in several cities of the middle-west playing in Chicago on December 23.

ed States. Not a single line of commentary is to be added to the press reports; America is to be allowed to hoist herself on her own petard.

It is a sweet revenge to take and, unhappily for the great democracy of the new world, it is beyond our power to offer any word in self-defense. We have no age-long inherited religious and racial hatred. We have no claim to ignorance and lack of opportunity. What we, a civilized, educated, law-abiding people have done to helpless members of our communities, seems, to this man of the Orient, to balance fairly the atrocities of other peoples which have shocked us into saying, "Can such things be!" Verily, as the writer of the letter suggests, we might look into a bit of the Old Testament—"something about the beam in one's own eye."

We Thought As Much

That report of the inspector general of the army must have been pleasant reading to Secretary of War Baker, particularly that part which expressed the opinion of the inspector concerning the conscientious objectors who declined to serve their country in its time of need.

Mr. Baker had a very tender feeling for these conscientious objectors, and a disinclination to see them unpleasantly treated because of their lack of enthusiasm for military service. And so he could scarcely have been edified to have them classified as "mainly slackers" with a few among them who were willing to serve in any way that did not involve

ARMY AEROPLANES TO PATROL FORESTS,

According to plans formulated at a recent conference of forestry experts of the western division held in San Francisco, California forests will be efficiently patrolled by army aeroplanes.

It is certain that plans for eighteen planes will be approved in Washington.

Forest rangers will be especially trained for this aerial work Colonel Young, commandant of March field, near Riverside, has volunteered to conduct a six-weeks' course in aerial forest patrolling.

A census of the country's manufacturers was made for the first time in 1810. Under the present law a manufacturers census is to be taken in connection with the Fourteenth Decennial Census and every two years thereafter.

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ANNOUNCEMENT



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