

## Esthetic Essays On Esthetic Subjects.

Treatise Concerning "Secrets" and Those Who Often Reveal Them

Everyone has secrets; and there are few people who don't. A person could not be a rational being without harboring in his mental nest a few modest reflections not intended for publication. If the mind did not have a private bill of fare to occupy itself with it would be compelled to resign itself to death by slow starvation. The possession of a secret locked tight in the secret recesses of the cerebellum serves as a vitalizing stimulus to the mental powers, causing them to range through fields of activity where they have no right to be and which are all the more delightful on that account.

To the elderly virgin whose age has reached the point where it is stationary, not only one but many secrets are essential to her very existence. When all other comforts have fled beyond her reach, a secret is the only thing that can compose her disordered intellect and lull her vigilant paraphernalia of observation into a state of relaxation. She keeps a close tab on the activities of others, just long enough to discover something not intended for her to know—something if served up for the scandal hungry public to feed upon, would mean the utter destruction of perhaps a score of her fellow creatures. No one is more acute in prying off the lid and investigating the contents of the jar of privacy than this self-same maid, and once having obtained possession of a prize, she fondly dotes on it until in her distorted imagination it increases in magnitude until an objective climax of astounding proportions is reached.

It would mean life-long torture for her to keep a secret, and one goes from her as naturally as the chronic mover changes his quarters when the rent is due. In some sort of a round-about fashion, the murder gets loose and romps about until it stands on the edge of the earth unable to go any farther. As a monument to her aberrational mental activities, a high and noble edifice of ninety-nine per cent fallacy stands upon a tottering foundation of truth which, however, heroically supports its burden until the mischief is done. The old maid is indeed an ideal circulating agent and to give her credit, she does her work well, and she well deserves a title as the hand-maiden of old Dame Fama.

Have you ever noticed a man emerging from the inner shrine of a fire-water dispensary, and watched his evolutions when his spiritual guide and pastor hoves in sight. Note how he navigates along with graceful undulations, striving to reach the street corner first in the consciousness that his breath is not sufficiently convalescent for an interview. He hugs the star-board side of the sidewalk with frenzied zeal, until he completes the first leg of his course and shapes his prow to the leeward to proceed on the second. Hasn't that old sinner a secret a-buz-bin' in him? Recent events would indicate that he has. Didn't he get up in meeting last Sunday and swear that he had made up his mind to cancel all his contracts with the demon of drink? And didn't the preacher say, "God bless you," and didn't the choir sing "A Wandering Child Come Home?" In order to prove his utter depravity, he dodges into a restaurant and buys peppermints to kill the tattling proclivities of his breath. Such a man! Such a secret! He is more to be pitied than a freshman—well, maybe not that bad; the next lower point in the scale might do.

This man's wife has secrets, too, of a heart-rending sort. It is horrible to contemplate her suffering when she realizes that she is the wife of a drunkard; that all her Christian hopes and ideals must be blasted; that her children must grow up deprived and stigmatized by their father's degradation—with no chance for Christian training or an education, and worse of all—that she can't have any money to buy a new hat for Easter. O terrible is the hardship of her existence!!!

Since everybody has secrets, it would hardly be wise to deal with each case, as we would like to do. And then, too, such a task would be difficult to perform. Just think of the immense varieties of secrets that could be tucked into the blank between the happy,

young wife who intends to surprise her husband with a complication of angel food for his supper and the profound misery of the maid of sixteen summers who is compelled to wear the made-over gown of her mother—a gown of a different style of architecture to what is suitable to her needs.

Oh, the thousands and thousands of secrets! If I were the town gossip or the member of a sewing circle, what a paradise it would be to know them all and be able to blow them all.

But I only know my own. This makes a first-class topic sentence, but I really haven't the time to proceed farther.

### WESTERN STUDENTS

An Extract from An Article by Chancellor Andrews

The following extract is taken from Chancellor Andrews' recent article in the New York Independent on "The Coming Generation of Western Scholars," having been brought to our attention through the courtesy of a friend:

"If the western college student is in culture scarcely the peer of his eastern contemporary, he quite balances the account by superior mental power—I am of course, speaking of the usual or average case—and by greater industry. Western youth can boast as good blood and ancestry as eastern. The best immigrants to the United States have settled in the west, and their numerous children and grandchildren attending universities are among our most promising students. Western men and women put forth effort more naturally than the scions of families who have been well-to-do for generations. They possess the will for it, and also the strong physique. Never have I seen in the east, save in professional and graduate schools, such desperate and unremitting application to study as characterizes the mass of students in the prairie states.

"Western students generally display a veritably insatiable hunger for higher education. In them survives the spirit of their pioneer fathers, who before they had places to lay their heads, taxed themselves to build schools and equip universities. Western students attend college to learn rather than to be taught. They average to study many more hours a day than eastern. The typical college idler is never seen. With eagerness for knowledge the western student combines a zeal and a power for hard work seldom if ever witnessed in eastern institutions.

"The outside 'seminar,' to cram men for 'exams,' reducing the necessity of study to a minimum, and turning into a farce so much undergraduate 'work' at the oldest of our universities, the west has not adopted.

"This assiduity in mental toil—often under the greatest obstacles—is an invaluable discipline, not only intellectual, but moral, tending to form and settle a young man's character as desultory study could not possibly do. It is not astonishing then, that the western collegian should display not merely much the greater power of concentration, but also the more earnestness morally. This shows itself as well in his general as in his collegiate life. The moral weight of the average university student is among the things that have most impressed me in my experience west.

"Native ability, enthusiasm for knowledge, coupled with the power for study which their strong physiques impart, and their readier submissiveness to discipline, all attested by the goodly number of fellowships, which western men and women hold in eastern graduate schools, assure the coming generation of western scholars a prominent place in American mental life. These are some of the reasons why, as a New England college professor (not a professor of rhetoric) has put it, to continue as our chief purveyor of highest education—products 'the east has got to get onto her job.'"

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