

COMMENT & DISCOMMENT

The last word about Gilbert K. Chesterton's series of lectures in the United States has been said, and Stephen Leacock is the man who has said it. As in the case of other critics, one is still left up in the air as to what Mr. Leacock really thinks, but those who have enjoyed his droll foolery are not as much bewildered as they would be otherwise. Mr. Leacock is, in normal life, a staid and sober professor of economics in McGill university, somewhere in Canada, but in his lighter hours he is a professional humorist. The author of "Moonbeams from the Larger Lunacy" and "Behind the Beyond," is, in a sense, the same sort of a character as Lewis Carroll, who, in addition to "Behind the Looking Glass" and "Alice in Wonderland," was capable of writing these on the calculus.

Mr. Chesterton is perhaps the foremost English writer now living. A month or so ago, he arrived in the United States, and has toured the country giving his lecture, "The Ignorance of the Educated." Every place that he has been he has created an enormous amount of discussion, some of his hearers taking the ground that it was wonderful, and others declaring that so far as they were concerned, it struck them as the purest piffle.

The Omaha Bee was the only Nebraska newspaper to come out openly and deride the great Englishman. At the time this rather hurt our feelings, because we have always been fond of "the Napoleon of Notting Hill," "Manalive" and "The Man Who Was Thursday." In fact, we used to read "The Flying Inn" about once a month until in a moment of enthusiastic weakness we lent the volume to a friend. We've forgotten just who the friend was, too.

As we said before, Stephen Leacock says the last word concerning Mr. Chesterton. After he has finished with his foolery, no ordinary newspaper editor will have the heart to take up the cudgels or weave a bay wreath. But Stephen has a way of his own. Writing in Vanity Fair, he tells of the appalling catastrophe recently occasioned in his quiet home town by Mr. Chesterton's lecture:

Until Mr. Chesterton came and lectured in our town, life had moved along in a more or less monotonous way. I don't mean that nothing ever happened. There had been the great war of course and various things of the sort. But no real upheaval.

The standard of general intelligence had seemed to be slowly rising. The ability to read was almost universal among the educated classes and was accompanied, to a considerable extent, by a desire to do so. Schools had been founded and were received with something like general approbation. A university had been endowed and a professoriate attached to it. The legislature was even considering a vote of a million dollars to the institution. There were a quite considerable group of people who understood Browning, while the ability to give and receive the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam as a Xmas present had assumed of late years, a very flattering proportion. In short there was a decided atmosphere of intellectuality.

All this is altered now. On a given evening, with a fair warning to the public press, Mr. Chesterton delivered a lecture on "The Ignorance of the Educated." Naturally this topic attracted all the educated and all the ignorant. No arrangement was made for seating them separately. They were all mixed up and there was no way of telling them apart. A press report referred to the audience as the "intelligenzia" of the city; but I don't think it was quite so bad as that.

At the lecture itself there was little visible sign of intellectual disturbance. A few persons at the close of the lecture were permitted to ask questions and were treated as they deserved. It is safe to say that no one at the time realized the catastrophe that had happened.

The next day the controversy broke out. It is still raging. Till it can be settled our intellectual life is suspended; the vote of a million dollars to the university by the legislature is indefinitely held up.

The question is this. Some claim that Mr. Chesterton's lecture was the most brilliant literary diagnosis they ever heard. Others say that it was the damndest tommyrot they ever listened to. The first school hold that Mr. Chesterton's synthetic hypothesis was fascinating; the second claim that they don't know what in hell he was talking about. The adherents to the first view state that Mr. Chesterton's lecture was the most nimble piece of dialectic imaginable—the others, that it was the most awful piece of piffle they ever had to sit through.

The above division indicates the general basis of the controversy, but in

detail it resolves itself with more specific inquiries and more refined shades of opinion.

Thus, in connection with the general locus of the lecture it is unanimously held—

That it was over the heads of the audience,
That it was below their level,
That it was above them,
That it was beyond them,
That it was beneath them,
That it was entirely aside from them.

In short, there is no unanimity of opinion even to the simple question of where the lecture was. There is a similar diversity of opinion in regard to the effect or chemical reaction on the audience.

It is variously held—
That it left them cold,
That it got them warmed up,
That they were simply convulsed,
That they were bored stiff,
That they were in fits,
That they damn near died.

And in addition there are a number of single and particular issues that are joined in connection with the main line of dispute. Of these may be mentioned the claim—

That the lecture was priceless,
That it wasn't worth two dollars, or the very hotly debated argument to the effect that

The whole lecture was a delightful piece of fooling,
That whole lecture was a piece of lamfoolishness.

You might have thought that some help toward a solution would have been found in a study of the press reports of Mr. Chesterton's discourse. But unfortunately they are characterized by a peculiar vagueness, as if the reporter himself had suffered internally from the same controversy as affected the general public. The report which seems to come nearest to a definite pronouncement appears to be the following:

"Mr. Chesterton's lecture last night was a decided coup de surprise for those who had expected a lecture en regle. From first to last the whole causerie was characterized by a charming espièglerie that was little short of diablerie. As a jeu d'esprit it appealed to us as a tour de force but whether it had any signification is more than we can expiquer."

Meantime the most distressing phase of the situation is the fact that Mr. Chesterton's doctrine, or what is supposed to be his doctrine, is spreading. It is generally understood that he was claiming that education is no use and that an illiterate waiter is a wiser man than a cabinet minister. This idea has taken hold. The speech and manner of illiterate waiters are being widely copied. Several of them are now giving lessons in the illiterate use of English at high prices. The effects as seen already in the speech of our leading citizens is quite deplorable. As one example among many, let me refer to the case of the Anglican bishop of the city, a man hitherto quite notable for his scholarship and culture. On the evening of Mr. Chesterton's lecture he was sitting on a front seat, evidently much impressed. On the following Sunday in place of his usual sermon, he is reported as saying—

"There's a lot of guys in this here congregation that are no better than so many boneheads and tightwads. I want to see them loosen up and shake out something—if not there'll be something doing in this church. If every gink in this church don't come across with his dough he'll hear from me. Now turn to Corinthians Six and listen to me spiel a piece of it."

Deplorable though this is, it is easily matched by similar cases of Chestertonism all over our city. The dean of one of our college faculties is reported as having put up a college notice to the effect that "This Faculty ain't giving no Lectures on Toosday." Our railway companies are putting up such notices as—"This Here Train Don't Carry Nothing But Sleepers"; our theatres have signs that read "There Isn't Only Standing Room"; and on the boards in front of our churches the inscriptions read, "Divine Service Right Off; Hop In."

We understand that Mr. Chesterton has returned to England. But we appeal to him in fairness, before our intellectual ruin is complete, to come back and say that he didn't mean it.

Nellie G. Poteet, better known as Nellie Prall, and Harvey F. Mounpain, both of Alliance, were married by Rev. Stephen J. Epler at the office of County Judge Tash Monday morning. The bride has been living with her mother and stepfather, a teamster, and a few months ago it was necessary to have him placed under bond to keep the peace. Another row came off Sunday of this week, and for a time it looked as though Mr. Prall would be hailed into court, but he got no farther than the sheriff's office. He was allowed to depart and no charges have been filed to date.

Diana Beads are the latest at Thiele's. 42

SOCIETY

A telegram was received from Los Angeles Wednesday that brought the news of the marriage of Miss Catherine Kneist of this city to Ray A. Cook of Los Angeles. The couple became acquainted several years ago, when Mr. Cook was private secretary at the Comstock and Jamison ranch near Ellsworth. Later Mr. Cook entered the service, and following his discharge met Miss Kneist at Omaha. The bride is well known in Alliance, and there are a host of friends who extend best wishes.

Announcements of the marriage of Major George H. Holden, well known in Alliance, to Miss Margaret Jean Butter, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James B. Butter of Alexandria, Neb., on Tuesday, April 19, have been received by Alliance friends. The couple will be at home at 305 College Avenue, York, Neb., after the first of the month. Major Holden was connected with company G of the Fourth Nebraska, the Alliance company, for a time during its organization.

The children of the booster choir of the M. E. church held an outdoor party yesterday afternoon at the city park. The booster choir was organized and served during the recent revival meetings held at the church, and held a contest for attendance, the Blues against the Reds. More than 125 children were enrolled. The Reds won by a small majority. Mrs. M. C. Smith had charge of the party given by the losing side yesterday.

Word has been received from Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd C. Thomas, now touring the south, that they are now en route to Houston and Galveston. They spent last week in Fort Worth. Friends had expected them to return the first of the month, but their trip has been extended from time to time, and will probably last for at least another month.

The pie social given Wednesday

evening at the Christian church was a great success, \$29.00 being cleared from the sale of pies and candy. Games and music were enjoyed, and the evening spent informally.

An informal dancing party was held at the H. A. Dubuque home Tuesday evening. Those present were Miss Edna Bullock, Mrs. Bess Pickett, and Messrs. Tom Gee and Dr. J. P. Maxfield.

Regular meeting of the Rebekah lodge will be held at the I. O. O. F. hall this evening. Refreshments will be served by Mesdames John Beach, H. W. Beach, Minnie Sward, T. A. Cross and J. S. Corp.

Rev. and Mrs. A. J. Kearns entertained Dr. Claude Mason, of Siam, and Mesdames B. L. Johnson and V. V. Hilliker of Omaha, at dinner last evening.

Burgalew Aprons—25 cents to \$2.50.
Highland-Holloway Co. 42

Dr. J. E. Gettys, of Lincoln, noted preacher, author and chautauqua lecturer, will be in Alliance for Sunday May 1 and speak at both the morning and evening service in the Methodist church. Dr. Gettys has traveled extensively abroad and conducted several parties to the Holy Land. He will probably speak at the Chamber of Commerce luncheon Monday noon, May 2.

Get your supply of sassafras bark at Thiele's. 42

Henry Henderson, a member of the Fifth grade of Central school is very low with pneumonia. His classmates sent a bouquet of carnations last evening.

Girls' Wash Dresses of Gingham, Percales and Crash, sizes 4 to 14, \$1.20 to \$4.00.
Highland-Holloway Co. 42

Home Cook Shop serves coffee and waffles from 7 to 9 a. m. A general delicatessen, 118 West Fourth St. Mrs. A. H. Robbins.

See the HAREM-SCAREM Dresses for Girls, 4 to 14. Something new at—
Highland-Holloway Co. 42

GIFTS

You do not give a present with the idea of supplying a need. That's charity.

Your thought is to make a friend happy with something choice, which is admired and desired because of its beauty, artistic design and permanent character.

So jewelry, silverware, and the many articles a jeweler sells—Gifts That Last—are most appropriate of all gifts.

The variety, attractiveness, style and quality of our stocks, make this store the Gift Shop of Alliance.

New Styles in Rings.....\$5.00 to \$50.00

Thiele's
The Store With a Guarantee Without Red Tape

GIFTS THAT LAST

--- its just like

Finding Money

ALLIANCE HOUSEWIVES WILL DISCOVER THIS CHINA SALE TO BE A MONEY-MAKER FOR THEM WHEN THEY SEE THE REMARKABLE BARGAINS OFFERED



Saturday we will place on sale a Big Special lot of American-made Dinnearware, a good quality that will give you lot of wear

66--Dozen Pieces--66

A SPECIAL LOT
—at a—
A SPECIAL PRICE
—of—

29c
EACH

Sale Starts Saturday at 1:30 p. m.

EVERYBODY HAS A CHANCE TO BE THERE TO GET A GOOD SELECTION. These Dishes Can't Last Long at These Prices

You have our word as a reputable merchant that this offering represents a truly advantageous buy—if you are soon to want dishes. They come in a plain white pattern, in the pleasing Mayflower shape. You will buy

GENUINE SYRACUSE CHINA, **29c**
at, per piece

This is a sale of real bargains. There is sufficient quantity to enable you to select a full set of dishes in a desirable pattern, of good quality.

There is no number in the lot that is not a good value at 29c, and many single pieces would run as high as \$3 at regular prices. They will average well over 60c in value.

LOT INCLUDES PLATES—all sizes—CUPS, and SAUCERS, BOUILLON CUPS, CREAMERS, FRUIT DISHES, OATMEAL DISHES, SAUCE BOATS, MEAT DISHES

SALE ENDS
WHEN DISHES
ARE SOLD

Glen Miller
HOUSE FURNISHINGS

SALE ENDS
WHEN DISHES
ARE SOLD

Announcement

I wish to announce that I have leased, for a period of six months, the

VAN GRAVEN STUDIO

I want to assure patrons that there will be no lowering of the standard of excellence already attained by Van Graven's. The same prompt service and careful attention to the finer points of photography will be insisted upon.

A WIDE VARIETY OF IDEAS

Walter J. Perry