

WE AND OUR NEIGHBORS

For a week the weather has been very warm and post lenten festivities have lost go. Lawns on which the green grass grows and the kind that girls wear as well as bishops, are popular. The New York papers report society, except a small part that has stayed at home to get married on its way to Europe or Newport. The warm weather arrived in the metropolis a week ahead of the rest of the country. Even the weather is old when it gets to Lincoln.

In London the trades-people are growling over dull times, reason unseasonably cold weather. The English spend this time of the year out doors. They are bound to tradition and if it is too rainy to play out doors they will not play at all. Of course custom has suited itself to the average, the usual. In America there is no average, no usual. The weather melodrama is always new.

Just at present those abominable hot winds are blowing. They are the black beast of the Nebraska climate. It is well. By this means the population is kept from becoming too dense to support itself. The only heart-breaking melting question is: "What will the Summer be?"

Mrs. Peattie, in the Omaha World-Herald, thinks that the nearsightedness of the contemporary child is due to the blackboard, the varying size of the characters the teachers see fit to place upon it and the pupil's inability to draw them nearer in order to focus the eyes properly. If this be so an electric remedy is easy if not too expensive. People are so in the habit of working children off for half price or no price, of making their dresses or bits of trousers out of any old thing, of thinking any salary too high for a woman who only teaches children, that a plan for the preservation of their eyesight will probably seem a great piece of foolishness. Any one who watches the children come pouring out of any one of the public schools will be astonished and appalled at the number of glasses set astride the unformed noses.

There might be a little blackboard hinged to every pupil's desk and connected by wires to the teacher's desk. When she wishes to impress an improving theory on the mind of the school, by means of the blackboard, she may sit at her desk, and write, draw or cipher as the occasion demands and the figures will simultaneously appear on the individual blackboards. Of course the mechanism and the wires must be kept locked from mischievous hands. The juvenile mind lacks a moral sense. Nothing delights it so much as destruction and especially destruction in a large sense as of a system. To pull a wire out and thereby set "teacher" and all the teachers in the building crazy would delight even little "Eva." In spite of the diabolical tendencies of children their eye sight should be preserved to them in hopes of an adult repentance. The electric system referred to would be forever getting out of order unless boxed and locked. Every building would require a resident electrician. Perhaps when heating is done by electricity it will be possible to get a janitor with a university education. The time is approaching when the man who knows the ways of electricity as only "professors" know them now, will be no more remarkable than the man who can read and write now—and only a little while ago he put on airs.

A mysterious allusion was made in one of the Sunday papers to a weekly paper—not designated—which is unusually careful of details and which at last has made a mistake in a man's name. The compliment is the most delicate and sat-

isfactory THE COURIER has received. As there is no other paper in Lincoln which fits the description the unknown writer has chosen to apply, there is no forwardness in accepting it. Besides, "I done it," that is I pasted the cutting from the Chicago Tribune on to the copy, intended for this column and I presume the Gods of the composition room decided not to give credit. Mais, je vous remerci mon ami inconnu.

"Our years are like the shadows
On sunny hills that lie,
Or grasses in the meadows,
That blossom but to die:
A sleep, a dream, a story
By strangers quickly told,
An unremaining glory
Of things that soon are old."

The poetry of some of the hymns that congregations sing is the one remaining literary influence that reaches even as many of the people as go to church. Before the people could read there was poetic feeling. There was a mystery about literary effects on the heart that fascinated the peasantry and the scornful knight to listen as often as the jongleur would sing his narrative songs. Before that in the Homeric period the people listened for hundreds of years to the men who chanted their history into an epic. There would have been no Iliad if the people had not listened. Today they will not incline their ears. Only a few of them go to church once a week—half of those who go are too late for the "opening services" and miss the message a poet wrote and ages have ripened.

Few read now that the heart of the mystery is plucked from letters. The people are absorbed in affairs. Everything else is vanity. "All the labour of man is for his mouth and yet the appetite is not filled."

Mr. John S. Sargent, the portrait painter, whom Whistler has flattered by putting in the same sentence with Velasquez, is to paint a portrait of the right honorable Joseph Chamberlain. The painter can scarcely leave the monocle out of Joseph's eye and if he puts it in he might as well try to paint a serious picture of Mr. Punch. Perhaps the painter will paint a picture of his sitter's alert though politically unscrupulous soul. In that case the likeness does not matter and it may be a nice picture. A New York critic says that "the best portrait painters hold that the first essential of great portrait painting is that the subject shall not be able to recognize himself." Mr. Sargent is a great portrait painter indisputably and I know of none of his portraits wherein the likeness is said to be striking. Many who saw at the world's fair the picture of St. Gaudens's wife and son will be haunted forever by its beauty. On looking at photographs of Mrs. St. Gaudens and son it is impossible not to consider them unsatisfactory as family souvenirs.

Pabst's new beer advertisement looks like a cathedral window. It appears in the principal monthly magazines and shows a maiden who looks like Ruth, plucking hops and only separated from Boaz cutting rye by Mr. Pabst's announcement of the good his tonic has done. The advertising agent may be trying to attract the attention of those who care only for the lines of church architecture or much more likely he is a Gargantua in a small way.

The story, "Sons and Fathers," finished all but the last chapter in last Friday's Chicago Record is a very poor story and a good mystery. When only

going to school

Do the children go to school? And are they joyous and happy? Is school-life a pleasure? And is progress being made? Or is the opposite true? Does the close of each day bring a headache? There is no appetite and sleep is imperfect. The color gradually leaves the cheeks and only a little effort is followed by exhaustion. To continue school means to come to the end of the year with broken health. What is the best thing to do? Take

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