

novice, and you can't make a novel out of good bits of description. The young editor's former glorious career is much overdone, and the frequent references to it are often in bad taste, witness the following:

"As the yacht touched the pier, pretty girls, or pretty women or jovial gentlemen, all were overlooked in the wild scramble the college men made for their hero. They hailed him forth, set him high on their shoulders shouting 'Skal to the Viking!' and carried him up the wooded bluff to the Casino. He had heard 'Mrs. Van Skuyt' say, 'Oh, we're used to it; we've put in at several other places where he had friends.' He struggled manfully to be set down, but his triumphal swept on. He heard bystanders telling each other, 'It's that young Harkless, the Great Harkless, they're all so mad about,' and while it pleased him a little to hear such things, they always made him laugh a great deal. He had never understood his popularity."

Why, Bryan, in his palmy days, knew nothing like it! Another thing likely to puzzle the practical reader is the number of indigent persons the strong and tender "Harkless" was able to support from the income of one country newspaper.

As we well know, the great and good are never known as such in their own town. I had only to go to Lawrence, Kansas, to hear that Frederick Funston was a coward and averse to telling the truth. Yet Mr. Tarkington tells us that the good people of Plattville were as dust beneath the feet of their dear young editor, and that the young men so loved him for his virtues that they mounted guard every night to keep the Whitecaps from him. A home trader or a pugilist might stir the youths of Indiana to such a degree of enthusiasm, but I know well enough that the inhabitants of a western village would not have left enough of this sentimental "tender strong" college youth for the Whitecaps to carry off. A *bas* the "tender strong" college man in fiction anyhow! The day will surely come when he will be called to render an account of all these things.

The chapters which deal with the raid on the Whitecap's village, and the hospital episodes are considerably above the rest of the book. Mr. Tarkington's descriptions of nature are almost invariably fake and far fetched, and come dangerously near "fine writing." I think some of them must be made up of the "daily themes" the young author did at Princeton, when his professor told him to go out and observe nature and duly chronicle what he saw. Nature is very nasty and unreasonable about being "observed," and they who seek her critically shall not find her. Mr. Tarkington's English is not always faultless. I find this astonishing sentence, which surely his professor neglected to underscore, "a crescendo of portliness was playing a diminuendo with his youth." Now a Harvard student might so express his feelings, if he had been to a Boston symphony concert the night before, but why should a Princeton man be thus tempted? In the face of the following phraseology, the professor's red ink pot must have shrivelled up in impotent despair:

"A flock of blackbirds was setting down over the Plattville maples. As they hung in the fair dome of the sky below the few white clouds, it occurred to 'Harkless' that some supping god had inadvertently peppered his custard, and now inverted and emptied his gigantic blue dish upon the earth."

Either that extract is a reflection on the Princeton chair of English, or the "supping god" had inadvertently supped more than was good for him.

The execution of Mr. Tarkington's novel is so amateurish that it will

scarcely be seriously considered among literary people—outside of Indiana—and his view of life is so shallow and puerile and sophomorically sugary that grown-ups will have very little patience with it. Appearing as a serial in a college weekly it would be all very well, and might strike one as a promising piece of work. The Princeton brand of novel opens up new vistas before us. The fiction of the Harvard school and the Barrett Wendell Method has entertained the philistine aforesaid, but, God wot it has never offered us anything so refreshingly youthful as this.

### THE OLD TOWN ON THE RIVER FLORA BULLOCK.

I am sure that he was only an ugly yellow cur with one ear and a half of another, a lame leg, and a sharp tenor yawp. It must have been so, though I have not seen him, nor has any one now living, and no one has pictured him for me. Yet I have him plainly in my mind and cherish his acquaintance. His name was, is and always shall be Schneider, and he is companion extraordinary to the most genial of the immortals; one of the most favored of all dogdom, because he goes with his master into the realms of unforgettable things.

That feast is best which leaves one—or, perhaps I should say, one leaves—hungering for more. This is strictly a philosophical, an idealistic notion, so seldom put into practice that one is not safe in asserting it as an actual truth. Only occasionally do we feel the tantalizing, suggesting pang of mild hunger after we have had a chance to satisfy ourselves. Of things mental we are always stuffed so full that we are always crying for less instead of more, and suffer from lethargy and indigestion. Very few of our writers, for instance, send us from their boards with a haunting desire for more. And yet what a pleasant sensation that is. I enjoyed some such feeling the other night. Rip Van Winkle and the scolding but the perfectly just Gretchen, Dietrich and the ghostly Heinrich Hudson with his dumb "family" lived before my eyes. But Schneider came not, came not, even at his master's whistle.

"I thought you maybe knew him. He was a dog," said Rip, and the pathos of his home-coming is complete. It is the kind of pathos which makes you laugh until a sort of sharp feeling somewhere between your throat and eyes stops you. The trouble, the unhappiness is wiped out and forgotten when at last old Rip sits with his family and neighbors and wishes health and long life to them and all good friends. But Schneider is not there, the twenty years are gone irretrievably, and only a little artificial life can remain to the old man.

How easy it would have been for the dramatist to bring in some ugly mongrel from the street in order to complete the ensemble at the end; how easy and how preposterous. In the midst of the impossibilities and incongruities of the play the management of the Schneider matter is perfect. How much more interesting the dog is than he could possibly be if made to wag his stubby tail—be sure that his tail would be stubby—"in public on the stage." And the very fact that Rip thinks and talks of his boon companion—did Schneider im-bibe, too—when his bow-wowship is not present measures his good feeling. We shall not forget Schneider, the unseen, though other images sent to our minds by way of the optic nerve may be obliterated in time. We shall remember him as one of the most illusively ideal characters we have met.

At the Overland theater one has the pleasure of spending the time between

acts studying a suggestive drop curtain. Now, I know it is still dangerous to mention drop curtains to a Lincoln public. There are some unfortunate memories connected with the subject. But one who has suffered before the Fountain of Youth horror can all the more enjoy the Indian scene at the Overland. The attack upon the stage coach which is pictured there is historical. The event occurred down on the Blue and is recalled by all old timers. The draperies of Indian blankets, the border of moccasin work, and the collection of Indian weapons are in keeping with the main picture. The old coach is attacked by a band of warriors dressed, as to their heads, with the usual feathery toggery, and undressed as to their bodies, "like real Indians." Their weapons are bows and arrows, but one fellow sports a revolver, harbinger of civilization. A few buffalo skulls just sticking out of the sand are suggestive. The stage horses are going at a terrible pace, in spite of the fact that their legs look as if they were done up in canvas leggings. The artist was hardly a Rosa Bonheur. A critical old stage driver says that the picture is all wrong. The country of the Blue is not rightly represented, the bushes look too much like sag brush. Then, he says, Indians did not attack a stage in such country on foot. Well, it is only a drop curtain and too much may not be required. The spirit which suggested the scene is praiseworthy. It points no moral, appeals to no passion; it simply reminds us of old tales which every day grow older and slip further away into our own history.

The present fad for Indian pictures in calendars and works of art to frame in red mats and moulding and hang on your walls seems to me curious. Mr. Rhinehart and other Indian painters have pictures to sell, the Indian still stands as typical of the west, though why, I cannot say, unless it be that old ideas die hard, and we of the west regard him as a relic of our past, therefore interesting. But the pictures are not pretty, they bring no satisfaction. Indeed, I believe the main use for these curios would be to send them back east to friends who would know without any explanations from you that they were some neighbors of yours. It would afford them much pleasure, I am sure.

At the top of the arch above the stage of the Overland is a small tree with the motto, "Plant trees." Now, I am disposed to quarrel a little with the apostle of the forest for putting the insistent preaching up there. I do not know whether it was meant that the planting of trees would prevent all future attacks upon stage-coaches by the noble red men. Unless that is the meaning I hardly see the timeliness of the moral. Mr. Morton's work in the interest of our forests is worthy of much praise. The Conservative editorial regarding the slaughter of the innocent little spruce and cedar trees for the Christmas festival should have been copied in every paper in the country—though I am not sure that much could be accomplished with a world still chained to tradition. But that motto in the theater makes me nervous. I feel guilty, and ponder whether it is meant that I should go get my spade that very night and plant an apple tree. Then, later, come visions of spades and mounds of earth. But the disturbance does not last till morning. It is simply disquieting in a place whither one goes, after paying the price, to forget the cares of the world, the treeless plains of the tree-planters' state, and the unpleasantness of manual labor. A stranger in the old town might almost expect to see the whole audience leave the theater between acts in order to do their part in following out the injunction.

## CLUBS.

[LOUISA L. RICKETTS.]

### CALENDAR OF NEBRASKA CLUBS.

January.	
20.	Woman's c., Child Study..... Lincoln
20.	XIX Century c., Painting in Germany..... Seward
20.	Fin de Siecle c., William Cullen Bryant..... Seward
20.	Woman's c., Household Economics..... North Bend
20.	History and Art c., Art and Literature During the Saxon Dynasty..... Seward
22.	Woman's c., Philosophy and Ethics..... Omaha
22.	Woman's c., Household Economics..... Lincoln
22.	Frances M. Ford, Picturesque Holland..... Stromsburg
22.	Sorosis, Musicians..... Stanton
22.	Woman's c., France, 1688-1697..... Minden
23.	History and Art c., Shakspeare and Bacon..... Albion
23.	Woman's c., Philanthropic Institutions of Nebraska..... Fairbury
23.	Woman's c., French Conversation..... Omaha
23.	Woman's c., Ethics and Philosophy..... Omaha
23.	Woman's c., Parliamentary Practice..... Lincoln
24.	Cozy c., The Reformation, 1517-1600..... Tecumseh
24.	Friends in Council, Dufoc, Lamb, Byron..... Tecumseh
24.	Woman's c., Oratory..... Omaha
24.	Woman's c., Education, Sanitation, Social Life and Amusements..... Ashland
24.	Woman's c., Spain..... Dundee
25.	Woman's c., Education..... Omaha
25.	Woman's c., English Literature..... Omaha
25.	Woman's c., Household Economics..... Omaha
25.	Woman's c., Art..... Lincoln
25.	Woman's c., Literature..... Lincoln
26.	Woman's c., Financial Politics..... Plattsmouth
27.	Woman's c., French..... Lincoln
27.	Woman's c., English History..... Syracuse
27.	Review and Art c., Correggio..... York
27.	Pansy c., Alcott and Twain..... Tecumseh
27.	Woman's c., English History..... Stromsburg
27.	Woman's c., Revolution in French Politics..... North Bend
27.	History and Art c., The Franconian Emperors..... Seward
27.	Fin de Siecle c., Longfellow..... Seward

### OFFICERS OF N. F. W. C., 1899 & 1900.

Pres., Mrs. Anna L. Apperson, Tecumseh.  
V. P., Mrs. Ida W. Blair, Wayne.  
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I wish to extend through The Courier hearty good wishes to the club women of Nebraska for the year of 1900. May it be not only a happy New Year, but a year of extended influence—of much and great good accomplished by the clubs. Let hearty co-operation be our watchword, ever seeking the influence and power that comes through union. Let us avail ourselves of every possible opportunity to know each other better realizing that sympathy is cultivated by acquaintance. Side by side, heads and hearts united may the club women of Nebraska achieve more and better work than ever before.

ANNA L. APPERSON,  
President N. F. W. C.

I heard a club woman exclaim the other day, "O, I forgot to send to the treasurer that eighty cents voted by the club a month ago as the five-cent per capita tax." This led me to wonder if there are any other clubs in the state which, during the stress and hurry of the holiday season, have overlooked this duty to the state federation. It means so little to each club, but to our state federation, of which we are so proud, it means self-respecting independence.

At the last meeting of the parliamentary department of the woman's club, "Privileged Motions" was the subject under discussion. The possibility of a mixed club in this department received a positive impetus, for among the many motions presented to demonstrate the afternoon's lesson was one inviting the men of Lincoln to become members of this department upon the payment of two dollars—amended to read five dol-