

and contractors who have made fortunes by extra labor and by economy. The building trades unions of Chicago have effected the building industry so that few buildings are now being erected. The division of the products of labor irritates workmen and they have made rules lessening the number of apprentices who may learn any trade. They have made ridiculous and arbitrary divisions between this and that man's labor which remind one of the juvenile king who stood shivering and taking his death of cold while his little shift was passed from one courtier to another till it finally reached the hands of him whose office it was to put on the King's shirt. While he was putting it over the little King's half-frozen shoulders, it came into his royal highness' mind that over organization was burdensome and tiresome and ordered a strike but such is the tenacity of custom that the strike failed, as this strike in Chicago may also fail.

**The Stotsenburg Fund.**

Previously reported.....	\$119.80
Mrs. Charles Francis Roe, New York city.....	100.00
Chain letter receipts:	
Mrs. L. M. Perry, Denver.....	
Mabel Deitch, Malcolm.....	
Miss Garcelon, Boston.....	
Mrs. L. C. Richards, Lincoln.....	
Mrs. A. C. Cass, Denver.....	
Mrs. Cowdery, Lincoln.....	
Mrs. Mildred Leach, Lincoln.....	
Miss E. L. Frow, Lincoln.....	
Mrs. A. S. Raymond, Lincoln.....	
	\$ 2.40
Total.....	\$222.20

**THE PASSING SHOW**  
WILLA SIBERT CATHER

Minnie Maddern Fiske has been here in her new play, "Becky Sharp," an adaptation of Thackeray's "Vanity Fair." The play has been somewhat of a disappointment to the public and to Mrs. Fiske herself. Not that it is not clever enough, and interesting to boot, but it lacks—well, nobility. I believe it was Mr. Zangwill who said, "There is a force within the heart of things that makes for beauty," and when that force is not strong we feel the lack of it, even in a work of art. Of course, Mrs. Fiske is always artistic, but, ah! she can be so much more than that.

The play "Becky Sharp" is by Mr. Langdon Mitchell, and the young man has shown remarkable skill in selecting the essentials of his play out of the great mass of material before him. He has taken only as much of the novel as concerns the fortunes of Becky, introducing, of course, the fragile Amelia, by way of a contrast.

The first act opens just after Becky's marriage to Rawdon Crawley, and we are treated to Sir Pitt Crawley's proposal of marriage to Becky and regret that she has married his handsome nephew only an hour before she has the opportunity to become Mrs. Crawley. Miss Crawley's rage at her nephew's alliance closes the act.

The second act presents the ball at Brussels. Becky is discovered, flirting with all the men, cut by all the women. But in spite of her clever speeches, the act drags. Amelia, an ingenue part admirably played by Miss Williams, approaches Becky and tearfully demands her husband, to which entreaty Mrs. Rawdon blithely responds, "Take him, my dear, and keep him. I'm worn out with looking after other women's husbands." If the first part of the act is

slow, the climax makes up for it. It is a remarkable piece of stage management, and Mrs. Fiske's superior intelligence is seen all through it. The English generals in uniform are grouped at the top of the grand staircase, below them, in the ball room, the dancing is at its height. Mrs. Fiske herself is seated at a table playing cards with George Osborne and cheating him out of his eyes and his heart. Presently a soldier enters from the left, goes up the stairway, has some conversation with the generals and then departs as silently as he came. After a few moments another soldier enters and goes through the same performance. The generals are visibly agitated by this time. Then a dispatch bearer, covered with dust and bleeding, dashes in through the door, through the crowd of dancers, up the stairs and falls at the feet of the officers. Still the dance goes on and the mirth is unabated. Suddenly a woman screams; she has heard the cannon. The music stops, the wounded soldier rises to his knees and shouts in the phrase of Lord Byron, "It is, it is the cannon!" The call to arms sounds and the dance breaks up, and the dancers hurry off to step to another kind of music.

If for nothing else, this play would be notable in that it is the occasion of one of those fitful revivals of energy which have occasionally graced Maurice Barrymore's indolent career. His Rawdon Crawley is another illustration of how true an artist can be when he takes the trouble to try. It is only fair to say that his Rawdon is nearer to Thackeray than is Mrs. Fiske's Becky. He plays the character, not a caricature of it. He is the only noble figure in that sad assemblage of sordid and selfish people, stupid, slow, powerful in any last resort, the kind of fellow who lives badly and dies well, as hard as iron in an extremity, otherwise as soft as a woman. His good-bye to Becky before he leaves for the field of Waterloo, was, I think, the finest bit of acting in the play. This duffer of a Rawdon, who never pretended to pay his debts and couldn't keep out of the bailiff's hands, came out strongly just where other men were weak, and he was staunch where other men were disloyal. He goes out with tears in his eyes and Becky stands at the window and watches the troops go by, laughing good naturedly to herself as she says, "There they go to die for their country—and I am dying for my breakfast!"

Eight years elapse before the events of the third act occur. During that time Rawdon and Becky have pulled along together rather better than most married people, have lived and owed money and broken up establishments all over Europe. Two things have never changed, Becky's unfailing pluck and Rawdon's unwavering admiration for her. The act opens on one of their blue days. The bills are stacking up and there is not a sixpence in the home. One of Rawdon's creditors has fallen into prison for debt and threatens to expose the fact that his wife has cheated at dice. When this news arrives Rawdon flies into a passion, but when the unphaseable Becky denies that she used loaded dice, he believes her immediately, and sits down rubbing his forehead. He is so very much in love with her that he is blind to most things, and what she does goes, and all that, yet there are certain shades of black that she cannot persuade him into calling white.

"I say, Beck," he says as he sits down, "don't frighten me like that again. Sport's sport, damn it, but loaded dice—that's pretty muddy, you know."

Again, when she suggests that he dun one of his friends for a gaming debt, he tugs at his mustache, in a helpless sort of way, and explains, "Hang it all, you can't remind a fellow of a debt of honor, Becky." Rawdon had a code of ethics,

somewhat original and rather inconsistent, but what he believed he stuck to, and he wanted to do the square as nearly as one may do it on nothing a year. As for Becky, the one admirable quality about her, now and always, is her grit. Mrs. Fiske believes that Becky's pluck, coupled with her cleverness, was enough to make her more dear to Thackeray than were any other of his women, and it is upon these qualities that the actress bases Becky's claim to public interest. Even in that splendid dramatic moment when she is discovered at supper with the Marquis of Steyne, her nerve does not fail her and she lies to the last, lies even when the marquis' bank notes are in her husband's hands. Great as Mrs. Fiske was in that scene, I think Barrymore was greater. Her magnificent acting recalled that phrase of Stevenson's, that if that blow from Rawdon Crawley's fist had not descended upon the marquis' head "Vanity Fair" would cease to be a work of art. For dramatic purposes Mr. Mitchell has added a few flourishes to Becky which I think a little inconsistent. Take, for instance, that soliloquy by the fire, in which Becky says: "I am so tired of it all—my God, the very muscles of my face are tired with smiling to the people I hate." That is not Thackeray's Becky. She liked the game for its own sake, regardless of the stake. Next to winning, she liked losing.

The last act is in Becky's lodgings in Pumpnicken, where she lives with the old hope of getting back into respectability, wearing soiled evening gowns and drinking beer with noisy German students. The atmosphere is meant to be cheap and sordid, but I found it no less attractive than the rest of the play. *Vanitas vanitatum* is all very well in a book, and one can stand the meanness and petty vices of humanity in type, but in actual flesh and blood, clothed in selfishness as with a garment, flaunting their miserable ambitions as they flaunt their jewels, these people are hateful beyond the limits of one's patience. Some way these envious, scheming, snobbish, stupid English folk seemed very much more detestable than the suave, worldly people in the French dramas. After all, they are only conventional Don Juans and their wickedness is only stage wickedness. But these Thackeray folk are too much like the sad caricatures of humanity that we know every day, not the rare victims of grand passions, but the countless slaves of petty and sordid ones, the people who love money better than blood, who wait for dead men's shoes, blackmail their neighbors or leer at their neighbor's wives. "Becky Sharp" will not be a popular piece. Not even the genius of Mrs. Fiske, nor the admirable efforts of her company can secure for the play a long run. Ten righteous men would have saved Sodom, one would save "Becky Sharp;" but there is only poor, stupid Rawdon, much more sinned against than sinning. There is not enough beauty in the play to save it. If our fellows are like these people, we at least will not admit it. We will wear dominos and masks and play that there are gentlemen and gentlewomen behind them. The soul refuses to be stripped bare of its disguises in this fashion. The mirror which William Thackeray held up to nature was too true a one, we shudder and drop the glass.

Went Through.  
"Little Johnnie had a pair of skates when I saw him last."  
"Did he learn how to use them?"  
"Yes. He has a pair o' wings now."  
—Town Topics.

As we travel the path of life, we always fancy that the other fellow has the best side of the road.—Town Topics.

**CLUBS.**  
[LOUISA L. RICKETTS.]  
CALENDAR OF NEBRASKA CLUBS.

April.

21. History and Art c. Parliamentary drill—Sigismund-Hapsburg Dynasty.....	Seward
21. Woman's c. Household economics.....	North Bend
21. Woman's c. French.....	Lincoln
21. Review and Art c. Velasquez.....	York
23. Woman's c. Business meeting.....	Lincoln
23. Woman's c. French history.....	Minden
23. Sorosis. Literature.....	Stanton
23. Matinee Musical Artists' recital.....	Lincoln
24. Woman's c. Current events.....	Lincoln
24. Woman's c. Literature.....	Fairbury
24. Woman's c. Birthday.....	Omaha
24. Woman's c. Ethics and Philosophy.....	Omaha
24. Woman's c. French conversation.....	Omaha
24. History and Art c. Business meeting.....	Albion
25. Woman's c. Oratory.....	Omaha
25. Century c. What has Holland done for the world in agriculture, charitable and reformatory work.....	Lincoln
26. Woman's c. History.....	Lincoln
26. Woman's c. Household economics.....	Omaha
26. Woman's c. English literature.....	Omaha
26. Woman's c. Education.....	Omaha
26. Lotus c. Current events.....	Lincoln
27. Woman's c. Music.....	Lincoln
27. Woman's c. Modern methods of voting.....	Plattsmouth
27. Woman's c. City improvement.....	Omaha
27. Woman's c. Current events.....	Stromsburg
27. XIX. Century c. Painting in Spain.....	Seward
27. History of politics.....	Seward
28. Woman's c. Child Study.....	Lincoln
28. Woman's c. French.....	Lincoln
28. Woman's c. History.....	North Bend
28. Woman's c. English history.....	Stromsburg
28. History and Art c. Germany.....	Seward
28. Self Culture c. Olla Podrida.....	St. Paul
28. Zetetic c. Philanthropy.....	Weeping Water

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Pres., Mrs. Anna L. Apperson, Tecumseh.
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Rec. Sec., Miss Mary Hill, York.
Treas., Mrs. H. F. Doane, Crete.
Librarian, Mrs. G. M. Lambertson, Lincoln.
Auditor, Mrs. E. J. Hainer, Aurora.

**Announcement.**  
To the Club Women Who are to Compose the Fifth Biennial of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, to be Held in Milwaukee, Wis., June 4-9, 1900:

The biennial committee finds that in order to show adequately what the general federation is accomplishing through the individual clubs and the state federations, it must prepare for ten sessions. These with the preliminary and closing meetings which are provided for by the constitution, the evening meetings and the very important business meetings will consume the week for which we have been invited to Milwaukee. That delegates may leave for home Saturday, June 9, it is necessary for the council to meet Monday, June 4, at eleven o'clock A. M., and the meeting for reports of state chairmen of corre-

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