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MARCH 9, 1901.

THE SPHINX



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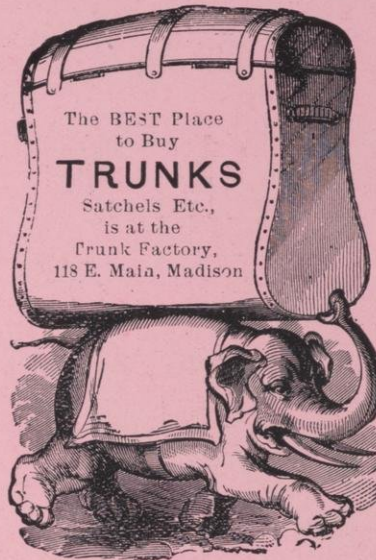
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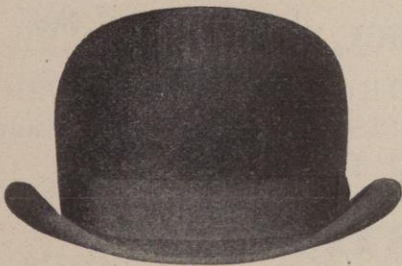
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THE SPHINX.

Vol. II.

MADISON, WIS., MARCH 9, 1901.

No. 11



Song of the Hall Girl.

How dear to my palate, the eatings of Chadbourne,
As three times a day they're presented to view,
The hamburgers, oatmeals, and ribbed beef of lunch time,
Which means when I eat it, bad words I eschew.
There's wieners for Sunday and chicken hash Monday,
And Tuesday brings beef a la creme for a change.
Our fare for each week is delightfully varied,
For nothing in life our wieners I'd change.

CHORUS:

The green plums, the prunes, whip-and-gingerbread-pudding,
Are dearer to me than the choicest of ice.
To speculate what will be on for to-morrow
Is all that gives eating its deserved bit of spice.

Consideration for Animals.

MRS. SMITH, (as two black kittens, one having two white spots on its back and the other three white spots, come into the room) Why, what cunning kittens; what do you call them?

MRS. B.—Two spot and three spot.

MRS. S.—Two spot and three spot? Why don't you call them deuce and tray?

MRS. B.—Oh, no; you wouldn't have me traduce the cats would you?

Which?

Two queens for a single throne
Have honor with me to-day.
Each for herself alone,
Just in the mooniest way,
Oft crosses my thoughts of late.
How separate? How know apart?
Now cruel, cruel is fate,
Soon to decide in my heart
Or forever regret that I met,
Not both, but one at a dance;
To curse that ever I let
Wild Cupid cast his lance.
In vain I strive. The two
Ne'er can I dare to woo,
Since to but one have I any clew.

The Renunciation.

He stood upon the high bluff overlooking the lake. The rustic rail that he leaned on creaked and groaned beneath his unaccustomed weight, while his least motion would send the fluffy snow sliding off it in tiny avalanches. Behind him ran the drive up the hill in sinuous curves, with the tracks plainly marked in the loosely packed snow as they wound among the bare trees until they came to the parting of the ways at Main Hall. Before him stretched the lake. As he gazed at it through half shut eyes the snow, drifted in irregular heaps upon the blue ice made it look almost as a summer sea with its foam crested waves. The air was hazy. The low-hanging clouds met the snow in the distance and blended themselves with it in dreamy indistinctness. The opposite shore was a mere dark something behind the misty veil.

The drear scene struck a responsive chord in his soul. He too was desolate — lonely. He had never before felt with what great ties she had bound herself to him: how much she meant to his very existence. He had tried once before to do without her but had failed. Now again he was about to tear from his nature that which had become almost a necessity to his daily life. It was not choice that prompted him to do this; his whole being rebelled against it. And yet he felt that it was right. Despair gripped his heart again. Was it then, worth the effort? How much easier to glide along in careless indifference, unheeding, unthinking. His better nature reasserted itself. With nervous trembling hand he seized the last tie that bound him to his past existence. Raising it above his head with a decision that surprised him he hurled towards the snow-covered lake the yellow stub of a half-smoked cigarette.

THE SPHINX.

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Always remember that this is only fun and pretence, so that you are not to believe a word of it, even if it is true—Kingsley.

THE SPHINX attended the reception given by the engineers at their handsome home a few evenings ago, and she enjoyed herself. Indeed she may truthfully say that although she has been present at hops, proms, church socials and freshmen class-meetings, she has never had a greater picnic. To watch the loquacious embryonic engineer, his chest swelling with ill-concealed and well nigh uncontrollable pride as he piloted the staring visitor about the drafting rooms, or to listen to the erudite freshman as he elucidated the intricacies of the mysterious indicator card for the benefit of the Chief Engineer of the North-Western road, or to catch the look of admiring wonder depicted on the face of the dear guileless co-ed as some coal-oil-fingered disciple of Watt or Jackson explained to her how a rod of steel two feet in diameter would withstand a strain of 40 pounds to the square inch without breaking, were joys hard to equal in the college world.

* * *

Then too, the event furnished an opportunity for the debut of the new system of electric lighting which is looked upon by Dean Johnson as one of the wonders of the age, destined to startle the world, revolutionize modern contrivances of illumination, and throw arc-lights and old style electricians out of their jobs. By means of it the real source of light is removed from the direct range of vision of the mystified beholder, and a soft radiance percolates promiscuously throughout the atmosphere of the room, sparing the eyes from the fierce glare of the sixteen-candle-power lamp. This wonderful effect

is secured by a no less marvelous device than the following: An oblong fragment of nonflexible material, with its upper surface highly polished, (sometimes a pine board covered with tin is used) is attached to the ceiling at an angle of 47 degrees. Between this and the ceiling the real sources of light are placed, and the ceiling's highly polished surface reflects the light in unobtrusive and agreeable waves about the room. The Dean would be glad to explain the system to anyone who has not yet seen it. Great things are expected of the inventor. It is thought he will discount Tesla in the matter of wireless telegraphy, and he may even be able to discover a way to explain how a man can be a European consul and a head of a department in a live university at the same time, and keep right on doing it for two years.

* * *

No, but honestly, THE SPHINX believes that reception did a whole semester's work of good. It enhanced the pride of the undergraduate engineers in their college, and better than that, it gave the common people—the men who pay the freight—a chance to see where their money has been going. It was a good thing all around, if it was, in some of its aspects, something of a circus. Now why cannot the other colleges do likewise? For instance why cannot the laws invite us over to their lodge directly across the campus, some evening? The Junior Laws could be used to guide the awe-struck visitor about through the winding corridors and lecture-rooms. The middles could explain the getting-up of cases in the library and the various ways of economising energy;

while the seniors could furnish samples of interference that would fill King with envy. Then on the Hill, a few evenings later, we might have another opening. The interested observer might be given a look at Vic's bunch in Modern Europe writing a bi-weekly quiz, or at a roomful of freshmen grinding out impromptus or — but innumerable plans will at once suggest themselves. THE SPHINX can only say, "Let the good work go on." In the language of the twentieth-century co-ed, she believes the idea is a "sunburned peach."

* * *

Before this reaches publication, the Faculty Committee on Musical Organizations will have taken action on the matter of a trip for the University Glee and Mandolin Clubs. The opposition to the trip comes almost wholly from one or two men on the committee, principally, indeed, from one of these two, and seems to be based upon the fear that a trip takes time from studies, and leads sometimes to indiscretions on the part of the young men while away from their Alma Mater. But for that matter football and track work take time from studies too; and indiscretions—well, THE SPHINX has for a long time been looking for a man who was not at some time, in some way, indiscreet, and she has not yet found him. Here is the way this question of a trip looks to her: We want the clubs. We want them not simply because it's the style for universities to have them but because they are of positive value. They give valuable training to their members, and through properly managed trips, they give the University a good name and make for it a valuable acquaintance, and inspire for it a friendly feeling throughout the state. Now, while we agree that a club is a good thing, we must admit that unless a trip is held out as an inducement, neither the men, nor the time, nor the earnest energy necessary for the making of a good club will be forthcoming. No trip, no club, is no dream.

Now these one or two men, on this committee, forgetting these facts, and influenced only by the thought that some clubs in the past have made mistakes on trips (as they undoubtedly have), wish to deprive the University of the good a good club can do for it, for fear that some of its members might be indiscreet. Such theorists, it seems to THE SPHINX, would, notwithstanding their economic wisdom, have business men shut up shop because some business men have failed, would have Universities close their doors because sometimes the students indulge in unfortunate parades, would forbid the civil engineers to go out surveying, for fear they might get their feet wet. Should there not be a way of dealing summarily with the particular members, if there should be any, whose conduct is not befitting University students, rather than to cut the clubs out of a trip because some of their predecessors have lapsed from such conduct? THE SPHINX thinks her Alma Mater's apron strings will

reach out to the farthest corner of the state, and a student is safe so long as those maternal moorings are fastened securely about his waist.



Sic Semper Tyrannis.

I tell you, Mr. Editor,
I'd like to write you stanzas,
But wait for something to occur;
Wisconsin's not like Kansas.

I'm sick to death of dragging out
This solemn work of jesting.
The things I used to write about
Don't seem so interesting.

I guess that I've been here too long;
My mind gets flat and flatter.
I don't care now to roast what's wrong,
It doesn't seem to matter.

Perhaps because Spring hasn't come,
Perhaps because it's coming—
The rest you may get copy from,
But I'm agoin' bumming.

Exactly.

BROWN.—Say, Jones, did you read about those workmen over in Rome, who found some petrified eggs while excavating in the Forum?

JONES.—No. Did they?

BROWN.—Yes. What book does it remind you of?

JONES.—Give it up.

BROWN.—Why, The Lays of Ancient Rome.

Scripture to His Purpose.

THE REFORMER—It seems incredible that kissing is prevalent among University young people.

THE INDULGER—Don't you know that the Bible says "The sweetness of the lips increaseth learning." (Proverbs 16-20.)

A Coquette.

"They are all alike," said the Man, as he threw himself back among the cushions in the bow of the canoe, "Everyone of them is a coquette. I don't believe I ever saw a girl in my life that didn't take delight in getting a man where she could throw him down."

The Girl made no reply. She let the paddle slide gently through her fingers until the broad blade touched the water. The canoe rocked with a gentle sway, restful as the motion of a cradle while the waves splashed a slumber song against its glistening sides. In the west the sun hung low like a great ball of fire ready to roll down the broad avenue of light it threw across the dancing waves and crush the frail craft in its way. Below it Picnic Point stretched like a huge giant tongue lapping the glittering water while the swale of the Portage seemed like a groove into which the sun was about to sink and rest.

Towards the left lay the shore. Above the border of cool green woods rose the hill topped by Main Hall in bold relief against the blue sky. At its foot stood the Gym like a feudal castle with its turreted roof.

The Man moved uneasily. The silence of the Girl surprised him. He had expected her to contradict such effrontery to her sex. But here she did nothing but look across towards the setting sun and dream and think. Her hair, loosened by the breeze, blew in an auburn mesh across her face. The Man became annoyed. "Yes, the whole lot of you are born coquettes. You jolly and flatter and cajole a man until he fancies that at last he has found a girl whom he can trust and then you snap your fingers at him and laugh and then hang up another scalp among your conquests."

"That's not so," interrupted the girl. She was all attention now. "Whenever a girl tries to be nice to a man he takes it for encouragement and then can't understand how she could have any other motive. She tries to show how she appreciates the nice times he gives her and then you men laugh and say 'jolly.' You never give us any credit for any true feeling or honest motives and I think it is horrid of you, too."

The Man laughed. This was getting interesting. He had never seen the girl so aroused on any subject before. "But you can't deny," he continued, "that a girl always tries to lead a man on and her greatest pride is to see how many men she can keep on her staff. I don't really blame them there though, that's only natural rivalry. But that doesn't change my opinion that you are all born coquettes."

The Girl said nothing. Across the lake the sun was fast disappearing. Its last rays caught the falling drops from the slowly-lifted paddle and made them sparkle and gleam. For some moments she watched its rapid fall. Then she softly said, "And you think that I am a coquette." Her lips trembled. The Man looked at her through his half-closed eyes.

He hadn't expected this. He laughed harshly—cynically. Tears came to her eyes. That was his answer.

Beyond Picnic Point the sun sank behind the land. The freshening breeze splashed the water spitefully against the canoe. The Girl plied the paddle in silence. The canoe grated roughly against the piles of the pier. Night had fallen.



In the hollow of her hand she holds her bow,
A willing slave to her art, I trow.

Non-Puritanic.

RAZZLE.—Oh, yes! *Life* is a very funny paper, but it wouldn't have done for a Puritan to read.

DAZZLE.—Why not?

RAZZLE.—Well, he would have been getting too much fun out of life.



The Tale of the Soldier with the Wooden Leg.

When I went to fight the Red Skins away back with Custer I was a young fellow, but was the proud possessor of a wooden leg. The army at first objected to having a man with a wooden leg around, but I said I would stay and I did. The captain said it was against the rules, but it wouldn't do me any good to get swelled up over it as I had already come down a peg. So I stayed and my wooden leg with me.

Well, to make a long story short, we got to fighting the Indians, and it was a hot fight I tell you. Once or twice the Red Skins shot a couple of arrows in my peg-leg, but I made them all rubber when I calmly pulled them out and threw them away. Guess they thought I was a sort of human pin-cushion. However, I noticed after that, that they kept getting nearer to me, but that they didn't shoot at me. I didn't understand their game, but before I knew it one big old buck got near enough to knock me down. When I came to, I was literally the center of admiration of a circle of Indians. I was tied to a bundle of wood, and soon had sense enough to understand that they were going to burn me at the stake. Well, of course I didn't like that but what could I do? They gave me a good exhibition of dancing, but I wasn't looking for any amusement at that time. By and by one young fellow started the fire agoing, but as luck would have it on my game leg side, of course that gave me a little longer hold on life. Talk about bread being the staff of life: it isn't in it with wooden legs. My leg soon began to burn, but of course I didn't notice it. However, the Reds did and they saw I never moved nor groaned, but kind of smiled at them. You know the Reds admire grit. Well, that fixed them. The

more the fire burned the more I smiled, because I could all right as long as it didn't hurt; but I was getting nervous because I didn't know how long my leg would hold out. I hadn't bought it for a life preserver. But just as the fire was scorching my flesh the chief ordered the fire put out; and when they saw only my old stump left where my leg had been and knew how I never groaned, why they fell right down on their knees and made me chief.

How did He Know?

MISS CHARMING.—Why do you think, Mr. Bold, that I will make an ideal army officer's wife?

MR. BOLD.—Oh, because you are not afraid of having arms about you.

MADISON, WIS., MARCH 1, 1901.

DEAR MRS. SPHINX:

I've received a good many inquiries of late with regard to the University's department of literature, and I would like to submit, through your valued columns, the following replies:

1. Yes, Wisconsin really has a department where courses in literature are offered.
2. It isn't really as weak as some people try to make out, and yet —
3. I know of only one or two people would think of maintaining that it is anywhere near as strong as it ought to be.
4. Oh my, no! I never heard of a freshman who enjoyed his English. I don't think anybody ever did.
5. The freshman is not the only one who is to blame.
6. Yes, indeed, there are places where even freshman English is interesting and enjoyable.
7. Oh yes, it depends somewhat upon the instructor.
8. I know some funny things have happened here in the marking of themes. They say the same themes have received widely varying marks from the same instructor year after year. Yes, it's queer.
9. Why, yes, there ought to be some way of bracing the department. German and Latin are made enjoyable; the study of the art of forceful and graceful expression even in our vernacular are popular; and surely the other side of the field can be less of a bore.
10. No, I don't think anyone is in favor of giving the Head of the Literature Department another year's leave of absence.

Very truly yours,

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Went out and got the deer.

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Goes out and gets the man.

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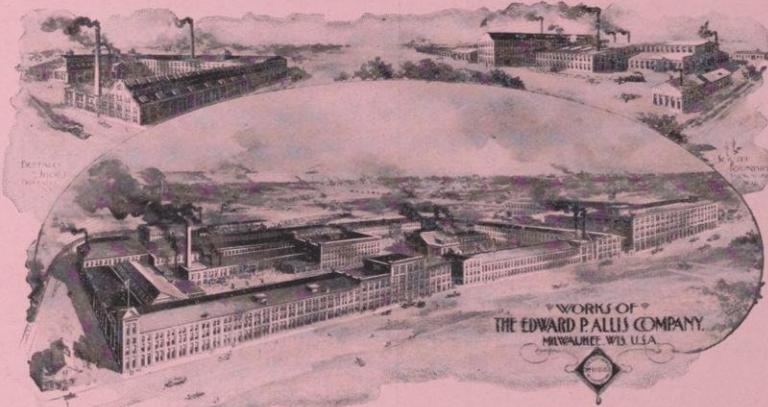
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