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Longwood University

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# The Focus

February, 1917

State Normal School
Farmville, Virginia

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# THE FOCUS

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## The Message

*Elizabeth Malcolm*

Over the mountains far away,
Over the dismal cypress swamps,
Far from the land where the paroquets play
And quivering palm trees croon and sway
By the light of the firefly lamp,
Where the mosses hang over the still lagoon:
When will its waters reach the sea?
From silver sunlight that's called the moon,
Where the hush of the night is an indistinct tune,
Came a yearning call to me.

For winter had frozen my heart with cold,
An icy cloak wrapped the land about;
I had forgotten the daffodil's gold
And the heart of the spring in the soft, warm mold
That would soon put the winter to rout.
I fain would have answered the call, but the chill
Whistling wind through the cold air spoke,
"Yearn not for the deadening lotus still,
It numbs the spirit and dulls the will
With its languorous heavy yoke.

"Be glad for the sting of each winter night
And the red warm blood that burns,
For icy stars that dance with delight,
For the will and the need and the strength to fight
The cowering self that turns."
The wind gave a nip to my frosty cheek
And scuttled on over the lea,
He laughed as he made the old oak creak;
But the soul of his laugh will always speak
His wonderful message to me.

## A Short Review of Woman's Education

IT IS rather a difficult thing to point out in history just where the serfdom of woman began to give way to freedom and education. For ages man seems to have forgotten the Creator's intention that woman should be man's help-mate and not his slave. We can scarcely comprehend in modern days the narrow-minded view held by man concerning the woman of ancient times. The first instances of a broader view seem to have been in individual cases rather than in general. My purpose is to take up these instances and show how they gradually widened to the entire sex, to trace this influence down to the present and at the same time keep before you the main things that should constitute the education of the average intelligent woman.

While the history of ancient Greece tells us that the system of Athenian education recognized intellectual culture as equally necessary with physical training it also shows that the female sex, with the exception of the abandoned portion, was not only excluded entirely from society but from any part in intellectual improvement as well. To the courtesan, however, opportunities of education and culture were granted and the learning and eloquence of some of these enabled them to rule the leaders of the state and gave them a reputation which has come down to our own day. To those who have studied Grecian literature and perceived its influence on the minds of men for centuries, it seems strange indeed that when Greece stood first among nations in intellectual culture and physical bravery, the mothers of these Grecian writers such as Plato, Aristotle and Socrates were more obscure and ignorant than the present servant class. Left alone in her home as a virtual

slave, how dull must have been the lives of these Grecian mothers. For her son, we are told, was taken from her at the early age of seven and placed in military training, while her daughter was sold into marriage when scarcely more than a child. Aristotle seems to have been the only prominent man of his time to urge the right of woman to culture and education. But great as his influence must have been he did not awaken the men of Greece to their unjust treatment and the resulting pitiable condition of the female sex.

Rome did not entertain the idea that it was the duty of the state to educate the children of its citizens but in Rome we find the condition of women much more favorable than in Greece. As early as 138 A.D., we have a record of the "Puellae Faustimanae," a school for orphan and foundling girls established by Antonius Pius in memory of his wife. The men of Rome did not question the right of women to education but rather worked against this point. It is said the thought of an educated wife filled the orthodox Roman with a peculiar horror. One prominent Roman writer defines the proper education of woman as "knowing how to pray to God, to cook and to sew."

The other countries with the exception of Spain seem to have been little farther advanced in the education of women than Greece and Rome. However, in Spain the education of women seems not to have been completely neglected and many of the most eminent poetical writers of the nation were of the gentler sex. The women it seems were only taught various feminine employments such as knitting and embroidering. However they were forced to commit to memory long, difficult religious chants which they were allowed to rehearse at the various festivals, these being their only appearance in public.

After the introduction of Christianity into the various countries the education of woman was not

so obscure. Gradually knowledge began to be recognized as the birthright of every son and daughter of Eve. Slowly the gates of instruction were opened to women and to a certain degree she was allowed to occupy the social position that the Creator qualified her to adorn.

It is only since the latter part of the eighteenth century that England, which is today one of the foremost countries of the world, has established even elementary schools for the education of women. In the early part of the nineteenth century a movement was set on foot for the higher education of the female sex. This movement was met by much ridicule from men. Bitter and intense attacks were directed against such schools in America as Wellesley and Bryn Mawr. But despite the obstacle placed in her path by the jealousy of the stronger sex, the women of England have pushed forward. Boarding schools and later colleges were established for girls. At last in the closing decades of the nineteenth century the civilized world began to slowly take some thought of woman's higher education and to wake up to the fact that just because a certain system had been the custom since man's creation it should not be carried on even to the detriment of mankind. In 1846 Queen College, the first of its kind, was established in England. Later in 1849 Bedford College for women was founded in London. During the passing decade, Cheltenham, Girton, Newman and other colleges for women have arisen. Eight of the ten men's universities now allow examinations and degrees to women. At the present time we find the women of Great Britain adopting all trades and professions suitable to them. Today we find the women of England are taking the lead in the fight of women for equal suffrage, a fight which is revolutionizing the entire civilized world.

Coming from England at the time when women were completely under the rule of men it is natural that our own ancestors would not at first

promote the cause of woman's education. It was not until 1789 that the female sex received any education other than the careful training of the home life. In this year when the public school system was established in Boston, girls were allowed to enter from April until October, but only from one to two hours daily were given to their instruction. The first female seminary established in the United States was opened by the Moravians at Bethlehem, Penn., in 1749, but only girls of that sect were admitted. In 1804 only three of forty-eight academies or higher schools were for girls, although a few others permitted co-education. The first instance of government aid for a systematic education of women in America occurred in New York in 1819. The first girls' seminary to approach college rank was Mount Holyoke. Then came Radcliffe and Vassar. These were the first colleges exclusively for the education of women. It seemed hard enough for women to assert their rights to a higher education but to enter a profession was at first almost impossible. Nevertheless, in our country today as in England, the women are entering professions and trades practiced by men. Gradually they are beginning to take part in their own government and a great many are now holding public offices.

Not only have America and England advanced during the last few decades with education of women, but other countries as well. Only recently the women of Japan have started a movement to obtain rights of suffrage. China, whose obscurity in educational matters and whose cruel, inhuman treatment of women dates back past the annals of history, has at last emerged from the dark shadows of heathenism and promoted a movement for the higher education of women. The horrible punishment formerly inflicted on the Chinese women in innocent babyhood is being gradually removed. These women who for centuries

have been ignorant and superstitious show remarkable dexterity in learning, and China, it is predicted, will produce some of the greatest leaders in the suffrage movement.

Woman is not satisfied with the position she holds today, but urged on by her indomitable will power and the progress of the women of past ages is even pushing forward for more laurels. Women are gradually, as has been mentioned before, being allowed to hold office. They are no longer excluded from their position on account of their unjustly adjudged weakness. Gradually the world is adopting the opinion of Walt Whitman, who says:

"I am the poet of woman the same as man
And I say there is nothing greater than
the mother of man."

What can be truer than the last line of this little stanza? In all ages of existence no power has wielded so great an influence on the deeds of man as a mother's teaching. Back of the achievements and highest motives of such men as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and Woodrow Wilson was the influence of a mother in the home. What can be a greater tribute than the few well spoken words, "All that I am, I owe to my mother." It is said that at the time of his return from the great victory of Waterloo, the Duke of Wellington pointed to a place in the old homestead where the first teachings of a mother had planted the seed that grew and flourished into a noble manhood and said to his soldiers, "Therein lies the victory."

"The mother in her office holds the key
Of the soul, and she it is who plants the seed of
character,
And makes of the man, who would be a savage
But for her gentle care, a Christian man."

# No Room

*Elizabeth Paulett*, '10

THE THEATRE was dim and the curtain rising as they entered, but the light was strong enough to reveal the misshapen, altogether hideous outline of their usher, a little fellow of no apparent age. Did I say altogether hideous? No, I did not mean that, for nothing can be altogether hideous which prompts in us sympathy and compassion. And there could be very few that could look at this little hunchback without hearts touched by such emotions.

But one of the few was this thoughtless, luxurious girl who drew her dainty skirts very noticeably away as she passed the attentive but unattractive little form, and brushed through the soft rose curtains into the box reserved for herself and her companions.

"Such creatures as that should not be in positions of this kind," she remarked, her voice audible to those all around and also to the "creature" in question. They did not realize that he had heard, however, for nobody looked to see the pain, or the poor attempt of the twisted shoulders to brace bravely up.

Everybody did look at the girl, however, for she was pretty and well dressed, and demanded attention as her right, as these money-made American girls have the power of doing in a country where it is no longer birth nor breeding that counts, but only billions. Rose Guerrant was, in truth, a very sweet, human sort of a person, and it was only her twisted idea of how she should act and feel that caused what was really a cruel, unnatural act. She had never known anything of life—real life. She was a society bud, shielded and guarded from things disagreeable and repulsive.

There was one person in her crowd that failed to respond with nods and affirmatives when her careless remark was uttered. Rose cared a good deal for what her Cousin Rob thought, and she was made vaguely uncomfortable by his action. His keen eyes had followed the boy, and you may be sure *he* had not missed the pain, nor the brave squaring of the shoulders. The girl's eyes met his as he turned, and she caught in them almost a look of distaste, certainly one of disapproval. And a brief, a very brief thought for the child caused her eyes also to follow him for a minute. She had meant no harm, but it was unpleasant to have her jolly party offended by a repulsive sight in a place where everything was certainly supposed to please.

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The next day the little hunchback searched through a cold February day for a new job, for in the box back of Rose and her companions sat one of the stockholders and important directors of the theatre, and Rose and her kind were good patrons and must be catered to. Besides it was not his lookout that his manager had taken little misshapen Carl from the streets, where he had bade fair to become a vindictive little outlaw, jeered at by the rough boys who considered his misfortune a joke, and kicked or cuffed around by older associates whose own hard lives were their only excuse for their cruelty.

Carl had no home but the streets. His mother was long since dead, and his father—Carl did not know whether he was dead or alive. He had never known him at all.

So now he left the theatre after three happy weeks in which he had "made good." There was no doubt of that. Since the day when the kindly manager had found him sitting on the curbing, crying, with one of the rocks which he had been viciously throwing at his tormentors still clenched in his hands, he had tried so hard to "make good." He had been so

proud of his new suit, and the pretty shiny buttons which the other ushers had laughed at him for noticing. But their laughter had been kindly, and in their slangy, boyish way they had done their best to teach the little stranger his new job.

"Here, kid, show de gent third row. Get a hump on you."

"Say you, slide that couple along in dere. Dey've got de wrong seats."

"Hey you, Buttons, don't go to sleep. Here's a leddy on your row."

Many a sly pinch was administered, but Buttons did not resent, for he took it for what it was meant—good-natured, almost affectionate badinage, and he laughed; but somehow he never teased or pinched. Not yet did this tortured little being feel itself a part—one of them. It would have come in time, I think. With even this boyish brand of careless kindness, I think this little heart would have warmed and glowed into responsiveness and laughter.

But now he had to leave. There was nothing to do but to go back to Mollie's, and shift along in the old way. Mollie had always been kind. It was the only home he knew. True, Mollie was very little company, for she was generally in a drunken stupor at night when Carl went home, but Carl did not expect more. He appreciated his home such as it was, and, in a way, cared for Mollie, and faithfully brought to her many of the pennies which he could beg or pick up in any manner.

It was hard, however, for Carl to make pennies. People preferred strong, well-built lads for their work, and would even call on the pale thin ones before they did the misshapen ones, such as he. As it did Rose, the sight of him offended their taste, and they preferred to toss him a penny and tell him to "get out!" Almost all of his money came in this way, and a certain amount of self-respect was destroyed

by each penny tossed. Carl would get out, and slink out of sight with his pennies in his ragged pocket.

Then, since he could not absolutely efface himself, he would seat himself on the curb or hang somewhere about the streets. He was always a target for the jeers and witticisms of the other street boys, who, jeered at and struck themselves at home, loved to have some weaker being on whom to wreak their vengeance.

Often his little heart swelled with fury, and he hated with the hate that kills, but he was calm before his tormentors, for there was no father to protect, nor mother to resent. There seemed none who cared to overlook his hideous deformity and find the fellow being within—a little being starving for love, and growing misshapen like his outer being through resentment and hatred. Ah, little Carl, it would help me to think that one of those who brought you into the world, in which there was no place for such as you, looked in pity on you at this time, for certainly no one else did.

When Mollie died, Carl was indeed alone. The landlord, who for reasons unstated had not put Mollie out, had no compunctions about Carl, so now the streets saw him by night as well as by day. He soon learned to accept kicks and cuffs as a matter of course. Finding that their tossed pennies did not now rid them of his presence, people ceased even this slight charity.

The child was gradually starving. Starved souls live on, but starved bodies die, so little Carl would soon be released. Cold and hunger is a combination which the strongest cannot combat long, and the little hunchback would doubtless be an easy victim.

Still he did put up a fight, and applied to place after place for work. The last was a circus, but the man laughed, and said, "We can't use you. Your kind's too common. Too many like you."

Too many like him! Well, soon there would be one

less. He was sick now, too sick to be walking; and night was coming with its bitter cold. He must find a place to sleep—some place where the wind would not cut through him so!

Then Carl thought of the one person besides Mollie who had befriended him; and with his head bent to the cutting wind, made his way slowly and wearily —for he seemed very tired—to the home of the manager who had once helped him. At the door his courage, which was always at low ebb, failed him entirely, and creeping behind one of the big pillars of the porch, he dropped wearily down. He did not think or plan what he would do the next day, but somehow the thought of the manager's former kindness helped him to stand his present misery. Then, strange to say, a pleasant warmth stole over him, and he began to dream. And then came dreamless sleep.

The manager found him in the morning, and he himself carried the body in. He looked almost happy and altogether respectable when the twisted shoulders lay snug in the casket which his friend had bought.

A reporter on one of the papers, attracted by the unusual situation, called to talk it over with the manager. There was little to say. Together they stood and looked down into the quiet face.

"Poor little kid. He never had a chance, did he?"

"Only one," answered the manager quietly; but when asked, he refused to say more. It would have been bad for his business, you see.

# Such is Life

*Elizabeth Chalmers Fulton Malcolm*

MY NAME is Lula Maiai Jenks. I have decided to keep a dairy because so many things are happening to me, and when I am very old I will get this dairy out, and then I will read it and wish I was young again. I am sixteen with yellow-brown hair and blue eyes. It is straight as a poker but when I was little, mamma said it used to curl all up (my hair). I read in the newspaper of some stuff that would make it curl naturally. I am going to get some. I have a chum. Her name is Amie Lilee Johnson. She is older than me. Her hair curls. Her mother named her Amy Lillian, but she didn't like it so she writes it now as I wrote it. I think Maiai is heaps prettier than May, don't you? That's why I write my name like that. I had typhoid fever last year and Amie wrote me a letter every day. Nothing ever happens to me. I wish it would! Amie is calling me. Good-by.—Lula Maiai.

Jan 31—Ah! How many days since I have written in this beloved dairy. I have found out that I am going off to school. I do not want to go at all. My heartstrings will be wrended asunder if I leave. But this world is full of partings! Amie is going, too. Sometimes I think mamma is sending me because I got the curl stuff from the paper and put it on my head and made it all fluff up and Amie said I looked right pretty and Mr. Arnold, my Sunday School teacher, came over Sunday afternoon to bring me a book. He says I have a real peekant expression in my eyes. Amie doesn't know what it means iether. I think mother is woried because she found I had written Mrs. James Arnold 'most a hundred times over in my quarterly. She does not under-

stand me. Amie and I never expect to marry 'cept real old millionayres. I must go and pack my memory-book. Mamma is sure to forget it.—L. M.

Feb. 7—Well, I've been at school a week. Amie is the comfort of my life. Our souls are inseperible. I am crazy about one of my teachers. Her name is Miss Bliss and she lets some of us girls call her Gertrude out of school. She is the sweetest thing. The other teachers don't like her. They are old *cats*.

Feb. 9.—Amie is mad at me 'cause she heard me telling Gertrude I liked her better'n anyone. Amie's an old snoop. And I don't care. I hate school and Amie and everybody 'cept Gertrude. I adore her. I think girls are awful narrow. I've read St. Elmo and I'm crazy about it; Edna is precious and so is St. Elmo. I started The Inside of the Cup. Gertrude is reading it. But it's awful; I don't see a thing in it. I think I'll fall in —— no, I won't. —L. M.

P. S.—I read St. Elmo six times.—L. M.

Feb. 18.—Amie has tried to make up with me. We went walking yesterday. We did something *awful*, too. There were some boys on the opposite side of the street and they whistled at me. (I am right pretty now, my hair fluffs.) I didn't pay a bit of attention, but do you know, Amie whistled back. Well, I don't know how it happened, but finially they had given us their cards and Amie found she knew one of the boy's first cousins. Their names are Joe Raymond and Fred Flour. I don't think Flour is a very aristocratic name, but I don't s'pose *he* can help it. He is kind of funny too, but this place is so dull anything is a deversion. I reckon that's spelled right.

Feb. 19. Well, Fred came to see me and Joe came to see Amie. Amie is crazy about Joe, but I think Fred's awful dull. He just talks about himself *all* the time. I read in a magazine where you tried to get men to talk about themselves, but huh, he doesn't have to get insisted; it's a self-starter!

Feb. 28. Well, that old nut has come to see me three, no, four times since. I'm 'most dead. I think I must have some quality in me that attracts men. I think it's my pequent eyes. (I spelled it wrong before.) Fred says they are adorable. I like Fred all right, only he's awfully conceited. I could never marry Fred.—Maiai.

March 1. It's the funniest thing, Fred had an engagement with me (Amie says date, but I don't think that's cultured) last Sunday, and I was awful sick! (It was the day before my birthday and mamma had sent me a box.) I was just wondering how I could let him know, when one of the maids brot me a note from him. He said, "Unexplanable circumstances make it impossible to come; will explane soon," or something like that, and it was a week ago, and I haven't heard yet. Amie says she bet he knew it was my birthday and was scared he'd have to give me a present. I wouldn't have taken it anyway. Gertrude makes me sick all the time mushing over the girls.—L. Maiai.

March 10. I had a grand time last Sunday. Bill Jenks, my brother, and Harrison Balls came down from home to see me and Amie. We had a fine time. I'm wild over Harrison. He sent me his picture and a big box of Whitman's. He is perfectly precious and has the most adorablest eyelashes. The funniest thing happened. I got a letter which I thot Fred sent me and I started to send it back unopened, but Amie and I opened it with hot water (so we could send it back like it hadn't been unsealed) and it was from Joe Raymond. Amie says she doesn't care, but she does; s'pose I had sent it back. Oh! Oh!—Maiai.

March 20. Men are all false! I shall never, never marry. I think I shall be a nun or a missionary. *Amie* has run away and married Bill, my own brother, and I'm her chum and she didn't tell me. My hair is all coming out. I s'pose it's the curl stuff

I put on it. Fred has never written, not that I care about that *tho.* I always did think he had a common name, and you can't sometimes always tell about their grandfathers. But my heart is broken. Today I received the wedding announcement of Miss Adelaide Sharples to Mr. James Harrison Balls. I shall never write in here again. I remain in tears, Lula Maiaí Jenks.

## At the Close of Day

*A. Cole*

The sun is slowly sinking
Behind the mountains blue,
And the trees get black and blacker
Against the sky's bright hue.

Then softly steals o'er the earth
The soft gray dusk of even',
Which blots away all daily cares
And makes us think of Heaven.

O God in Heaven, I thank you
For help through all this day;
You've smoothed away the pain and care
And made an easier way.

I thank you for the night-time,
With its soothing balm of sleep,
And a bright new day tomorrow
With a fresh clean page to keep.

And may You say tomorrow even',
With the light of the setting sun,
"You've tried as hard as anyone could,
Well done, my child, well done."

## My First Days as a School Ma'am

IT WAS an awful day. Even now, nearly two years later, I do not like to think of it. I was teaching a little one-room school in the mountains on my High School certificate. I know that when you read that you immediately picture a little log cabin perched on a high crag, with children wearing coon-skin caps peeping shyly from behind the trees which grew almost to the door. Banish the thought. Mine was a *modern* one-room school. It had lots of windows, a big cloak room, plenty of blackboard space and a jacketed stove. You see I was quite fixed up. But to get back to the first day part, I was boarding about a quarter of a mile from school and two little boys, one seven and one fourteen, came with me. James, the younger and the spoiled darling of the family, had never been to school, and Theseus (see the evidence of classical knowledge) was noted for his mathematical abilities. Both were rather uncertain quantities. I had seen how James was petted at home and was not at all sure that he would take kindly to school dicipline, and I was very weak in math.

When we came to the schoolhouse we found the yard grown up in broom-straw and briars. About a dozen children were seated on the steps and when I had fought my way through brush and bramble until I was sufficiently near I said in what I considered the most approved schoolma'am fashion, "Good morning, children," and they all answered, "Good morning, teacher." I was sure I was going to like them. I liked their attitude. They seemed so respectful toward their teacher.

The door was boarded up as the lock had been broken during my predecessor's sojourn. All the

little dears looked up at me with confident eyes that seemed to say, "Of course you'll open the door for us. You're so big and strong and competent." "And I am," I said to myself and charged the door. Fifteen minutes later I asked one of the kids to go to a little house not far down the road and get me a hammer.

While we were waiting I heard a shrill whistle and all the children began talking at once. Finally, I thought I understood what it was all about. The mail man always blew a whistle when he passed so that the teacher could get her mail and send any she had. "How nice," I thought. So I went out and saw the mail man and got a card to send mama. "Dear Mama," I wrote. "I'm crazy about teaching and the children are darlings. I'll try to write you all about it this afternoon."

When we were all in, I could find no bell and so I merely said, "School has begun." There was a dispute as to where they should sit. I wanted them all to adore their teacher and I disliked to seem to favor any so I put them all where they did not want to go and they all got mad.

I decided that the first thing to do would be to get their names. My mind went back to my own school days and I said, "All of you get a slip of paper and write on it your name and the grade to which you belong." Immediately all those tiny ones who had never been to school before cried, "But we can't write!" How stupid of me! Of course they couldn't. My nice little plan was all upset. I got a piece of paper and started at the first one.

"What's your name?" I asked.

"Shug," was the brief answer.

"What!" I exclaimed.

"Shug."

"Shug what?" I asked.

"I don't know. Just Shug."

From the other children, I found out that he was

"Shug Dalton." As far as the "Shug" part was concerned nobody had ever heard him called anything else. Later I saw his mother and learned that he had no name. She asked me to please name him. I hope that he is now entered on the school roll under the unpretentious cognomen "Jack."

I had little difficulty with the rest of the names. Harold insisted that his name had always been spelled H-a-r-r-o-l-l. According to him, that was the way his mother, father, uncles, aunts, cousins, and teachers had spelled it so, against my wishes, "Harroll" went down with "Shug."

When the question of grades came up I was utterly at sea. There was no record of the work done there before and the children themselves said such contradictory things that I had to grade them principally according to size and a little by what they said. I had no idea how to go about it. I don't know now how I went about it, but after two hours work I gave recess and went to work making a list of books to be ordered. I wondered (aloud) if these were all the children who were coming and one little fellow volunteered the information that his brother, who was eighteen years old, was coming next week. My heart sank to my shoes. I *did* hope that he wasn't very smart. I have learned since that nearly all one-room schools have one big boy and he's very convenient too, especially when stove pipes fall down. If you ever teach a one-room school you'll find that stove pipes enter very decidedly into the curriculum and having a convenient big boy is no small item.

I gave recess, you remember. Well, I sat down at my desk (I'd been very proud of it in the morning) and made out the list of books. Then I started on the schedule. I had a list of the things required in all the grades, and I had them all, too, from the kindergarten to the seventh grade. I counted up the number of periods per day. Across my heart, there were

about twenty-five! Twenty-five! And I had always considered the school day as divided into seven forty-five minute periods.

I went to the door and called the children in. "Children," I said, "I don't think there is anything else we can do today. You may go now, and go quietly please."

They trooped out, chattering like magpies. I sat down at my desk and wrote the promised card. "Dear Mama," I wrote. "Things are not always what they seem."

—*M. B.*

# The Use and Abuse of Moving Pictures

*Conway Howard*

MOVING PICTURES is a great new art which has emerged through the stone age, into the age of intelligence, ethics, morals, humor and social values. It has laid a great hold on all classes of society. It occupies pages and pages in every paper from the cheapest yellow newspaper to the most scholarly journal. It gives employment to thousands of actors, literary men, photographers, directors and theatrical managers. It has penetrated into almost every town and village of this country. It has cost millions of dollars and entertains and instructs millions of people.

The school should be vitally concerned with every influence that has an important bearing on human thought and welfare; and a movement so universal and far-reaching as the moving picture show should certainly be considered.

Whether we want them or not they are here to stay and it is for us to mold them into forces of good or evil. We can either use or abuse them.

By the use of the right kind of moving pictures we can create and satisfy, not only in children but in adults as well, those qualities that are desirable for all people to possess. Now we have time to consider the question only from the child's point of view and the part the elementary school should play in bringing about the most desirable conditions.

We hear so much today, especially in our Normal schools, about the vitalizing of subjects, the making of everything real. Some subjects have always been considered dry and dull and yet the child has to wade laboriously through these subjects because it is thought that he should have them. Is it not possible to revive and revitalize these seemingly

dead subjects until they will have a definite appeal to and connection with the life of the child?

The moving picture show in its realistic conditions is a splendid means of vitalizing almost any subject in the elementary school curriculum. For instance, in history any teacher might be able to present the facts of the civil war in a very intellectual manner but one that would leave the war a distant and unreal event in the child's mind. Could it be possible for the child to see this same struggle between the States portrayed by W. H. Griffith, in the "Birth of a Nation," the result would be very different. He would then see the characters of Lee, Jackson, Jefferson Davis, and others as real men in action, and the battles of Bull Run and of Manassas, the Valley Campaign and Sherman's March to the Sea would no longer remain merely accounts of dates and numbers.

We talked vaguely of the horrors of the present war until Benzeul entered the Champagne sector with a moving picture camera. Now the whole world is thrilled and horrified with the realization of what the war really means.

In literature the application is the same. We can read in "The Lady of the Lake" of the wild beauties of the Scottish heath and the homes of the Clan Alpin warriors and we think that we appreciate them. Yet when we see picturesque warriors actually carrying the burning cross through swift fords we thrill with excitement that we could never have felt from simply reading the poem.

One reason we cannot appreciate more the things we read about is that our experience is so limited and we have such a meager knowledge of other lands and peoples that we cannot picture them in their natural surroundings. Instead we have to transport them to the surroundings with which we are familiar and naturally much of the beauty is lost in transportation. The moving picture obviates this difficulty. It shows us people in their natural surroundings.

Geography has always been considered an interesting subject, but we can never realize all that it should mean because we cannot travel over enough of the earth's surface to get a very broad view. This will have to be gotten through the moving pictures. Perhaps none of us will ever be fortunate enough to travel over the "Land of Cherry Blossoms," the deserts of Persia or Egypt, or see the ruins of Greece and Rome, but we can appreciate these when they are presented to us on the screen.

The government, as well as the schools, has realized the value of utilizing moving pictures not only in teaching some of its officials but also in giving to the public information about its departments and activities. For instance, there are films of the army and navy in action, the minting of money, the construction of the Panama Canal, the fighting of forest fires, the dangers of the government mines, the national parks, and many other things. What better method could our government take to get these valuable facts before the public? About what per cent of the population would read them were these facts compiled into a book?

The church as yet has been very conservative about moving pictures. In fact it has considered them a force of evil. It has been prophesied, however, that in the near future the church will cease to take this stand. For she is beginning to realize already the striking morals and lessons that could be portrayed by the right kind of moving pictures and the vivid way in which the old Bible scenes could be presented.

We have said so much in favor of the moving picture that it would seem a contradiction to speak of its abuse, and yet this side of the question is forced upon us.

Among the arguments against it, advanced by educated people, are, that most of the pictures are sensational and emotional, that there is no art in

them, and that they debase one's tastes and morals. It is also maintained that they are robbing the legitimate stage of its actors and audiences, and that they are not filling its place.

We will frankly admit that some of the films of today are sensational and emotional, but can we afford to do away with moving pictures on that account? Does the legitimate stage go out of business and refuse to give Shakespeare because some companies persist in presenting worthless plays? Should the moving pictures disband and refuse to give us "David Copperfield" because "The Million Dollar Mystery" is running?

Some maintain that the public does not like classical things but that the house is always overflowing when sensational pictures are shown. Why is this? It is because the public is led by the newspapers and billboards. If as much space were given in magazines and newspapers to a presentation of "Pilgrim's Progress" as is given to "The Perils of Pauline," then the former picture would be seen by as many as the latter is.

Are we robbing the legitimate stage? Should we pay one dollar and a half to see "Romeo and Juliette" when we can see it for ten cents? It is true we do miss the wonderful language of Shakespeare, but it has been said that the reason the moving pictures appeal to such a cosmopolitan class is that into the mouth of the silent actor each member of the audience can put what he would say under similar circumstances. Is it better that only a select class should enjoy "Romeo and Juliette" or should it be open to every one who can pay the small sum of one dime?

We will also concede that the music of the moving picture show is not of the best. This also is a difficulty that can be easily overcome. W. H. Griffith has proved this by selecting music that harmonizes with

his films. He has his own band to accompany his productions.

The American people are essentially an eye-minded people and if motion pictures can give for a small sum what the stage and other forces of life cannot, then it is for the schools to protect, mold, and use motion pictures.

# The Focus

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Sworn to and subscribed before me this 2nd day of October, 1912.

J. L. Bugg, Notary Public.

Entered as second-class matter at the postoffice at Farmville, Virginia

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## Editorial

*"What kind of a magazine would Our Focus be*
*If everybody contributed just like me?"*

Most any of us would hate to answer that question honestly or perhaps some of us think we don't even care, but let us stop and think. What does an attractive and well edited magazine mean to our school or any school? Any school with a high standing should be capable of editing an attractive magazine, one that not only the staff should labor over and be interested in but one that every member should be interested in and willing to work for. Through our exchanges other schools come to know us, and surely we want them to know the best there is to know of us and dear "old S. N. S." We are judged largely by our magazine, its contributions, and everything in it. Through it, other schools learn of our Y. W. C. A. work, our literary societies, our good times and our

studies. In so large a school we should have a successful and progressive magazine with never a fear of financial embarrassment or lack of contributions. If you're not interested in "Your Magazine," contribute something and see if that doesn't help your lack of interest.

Turn to the beginning of this and again ask yourself the question. Let us all make one New Year resolution for the success of our magazine and best of all keep it. As the new staff starts on its work let us not only wish them success but help them attain it.

—*V. M.*

## Hit or Miss

### INDIFFERENT

"You're a fine bunch," said the valedictorian to his classmates after he had finished his speech.

"What's the matter now?" asked one of them. "Have we done anything to hurt your feelings?"

"Yes, you have," was the indignant reply. "When I stood up there delivering that speech that I've been working on for the last six weeks you lobsters didn't pay any more attention to me than if I'd been one of the professors."—*Exchange.*

### TWO FRESHMEN SITTING ON THE WALL

"'Lo, Herman."

"'Lo, Julius."

"This is sure a rotten college, ain't it?"

"Yuh. No spirit."

"Nope. No spirit."

"None of the guys here know anything about college spirit."

"Nope. The poor boobs."

"D'ju hear the rotten cheerin' at the game?"

"Nope, I didn't go."

"Neither did I."

"What's the use, there ain't any spirit."

"No spirit."

"So long, Herman."

"S'long, Julius."—*Exchange*

Prof.—Huh! Drunk again!

Stude (sympathetically)—Too bad, so'm I—*California Pelican.*

Co-Ed (angrily)—"I should think you'd be ashamed to look me in the face or speak to me on the street."
He—"I am, Inda, but I've got to be courteous."
—*Illinois Siren.*

## A CHINESE COLLEGE YELL

The college yell of a body of Chinese students who are now visiting on the Pacific coast is:

Chi, hi, yi, shai ki.
Chung, wung, we cum.
Hip long li!

which, being interpreted, means probably more or as much as the average college yell.—*Phila. Inquirer.*

I'll recite for you a little ditty entitled:
"Run get the axe. There's a fly on ——'s head."

## A WAY FOR SENIORS TO GET POSITIONS

Put ads in the papers for the Michigan Agricultural College. It offers a course in "husbandry."

She wore a dress,
I laughed at it—
For brevity's
The soul of wit.
—*Wisconsin Awk.*

Young girl leaving class—"I've got to go upstairs and cram civics."
Her companion—"Yes, and I have to cram *morals.*"

## THE SAME OLD TUNE

"Read in the paper,
In the Farmville News,
Where Miss Blanche Jones
Had the Pinkie Whaley blues."

*Please take notice*—All girls in the opera, except the "Butterflies," bring or wear costumes to the rehearsal this afternoon at 4.30.

## DUMB!!

Kate—Oh! someone is playing a ukulele.
Gladyse—What are they playing it on?
Kate— —— !! ??

Margaret (handing Lucille the vinegar cruet)—"Look at the mother in that vinegar!"
Lucille (enthusiastically)—"I wish my mother was in there!"
"Why, Cile, how cruel!"

Miss M.—"Miss Robertson, give us the masculine for goose."
E. R.—"Gosline."

In writing the masculine for spinster, Blanche gave spinstress.

## MARKS AND THEIR DEFINITIONS

A—All right.
B—Best.
C—Coming.
D—Doing fine.
E—Excellent.

## Exchanges

The December number of the *College Message* presents a well-rounded table of contents such as deserves credit from a literary standpoint. The essay on the first page is well written and worthy of its place in the magazine. The stories of the number have unusual plots carefully worked out. "Are Dreams Worth While?" is a poem of excellent thought. "Wordsworth's Attitude Towards Flowers" makes us fully realize that to the poet the "meanest flower that grows often brought thoughts that lay too deep for tears." The other departments of the issue relating to the college life are well balanced.

The *R. M. A. Yellow Jacket* makes an attractive and pleasing appearance from the outside, but, when carefully examining it, we find those essentials lacking necessary for the success of a magazine—school spirit and co-operation. Your magazine is good but there is not enough of it. It is not representative of the whole student body. Stimulate interest and rally to the support of your magazine.

*Greensboro State Normal Magazine.* The Christmas number of the State Normal magazine is without exception the best exchange received this month. The general appearance of the magazine is not only exceedingly striking but every article in the magazine deserves special attention. It would be rather difficult to decide which article in this issue deserves the most praise, for they are all well written and just brimming over with beautiful thoughts.

*The Record* is a very well rounded magazine. It has an attractive cover, and the material is well arranged. It seems, though, the Literary Department might be improved upon, at least in quality if not in quantity.

"Summer Letters" is one of the brightest and most interesting stories in *The Tattler* for November. This magazine is indeed full of much that is instructive as well as interesting.

# School Organizations

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