

SCHOOL TOPICS

Edited by E. E. COAD
SEX PHYSIOLOGY AND HYGIENE
"There is a crying need and a growing demand for the instruction of children in sex matters. A lack of such instruction does incalculable harm."—Philip Zenner, M. D.
Most thinking people agree to the extent of the quotation given. Many persons are intensely interested in the solution of the problem. Editorials appear from time to time in the leading newspapers. Some of the greatest magazines were pioneers in the movement that today is winning the attention of all the agents of uplift that are striving for the betterment of humanity. Much credit is due the medical profession and the trained nurses for their quiet influence upon public opinion. Ministers and social workers are speaking bare truths regarding this subject today that would have shocked the false modesty of congregation or assemblage ten years ago. But as yet there is no unanimity of opinion as to the best way to meet the conditions imposed by the problem. This need not deter anyone. All agree that the prudish mantle of false shame and dark secrecy that maturity puts on when youth inquires concerning the verities of life shall be cast aside forever. Economic conditions are fast forcing us to safeguard youth with truth instead of fables. The signs of the times augur well for the future.
I have no solution of the problem to offer, but here are some of the questions it involves. Shall the home

or school be depended upon to give this instruction? Is not the parent the logical person to do so? Will parents continue to shirk the responsibility? Are some parents qualified to give such information in a way to create pure impressions? What should the school do with pupils from such homes? Is not a certain amount of instruction necessary before the child is old enough to be in school, in order to protect it from the children of impure mind? It will inevitably meet among school associates? Shall the regular class teacher be depended upon to give required instruction if the subject is introduced into the school? Are all teachers qualified to give such instruction any more than all parents? Should there be one teacher whose duty it will be to work with pupils and students? What about the country schools? Should the schools have in their course of study subjects that will give the pupil a scientific basis upon which the teacher and parent can build? What is to be the line between such instruction in the home and in the school? And there are many other questions involved that are more important than some of these.

There is a work for the schools. While the subject cannot be reduced to the abstractions of a course of study in arithmetic, there is much biological and pathological information and instruction that the schools should be held responsible for. In biology so many parallels can be drawn and so many comparisons traced between the different forms of plant life and animal life and human life that in the hands of a specially trained teacher it becomes a potent force working for right thinking and right acting. There is much that the school can do in pointing out the causes and results of blood infections and the contagious diseases now studied. Along with it all there must be an understanding of the economic conditions that are responsible for much of the social sin that exists. The problem for the home and the school alike is to produce a generation of pure minded and right acting men and women, fired with the resolution to better the economic and social conditions that make it impossible for many people to do right who would do right if they could. Mothers and fathers must shirk their responsibility no longer. The school must perform its legitimate work and do the best it can for the exceptional child. The destiny of our nation and the efficiency of every unit in its composition are go-

ing to be determined, not by the constitutions, charters and statutes, but by the right living, the right thinking and the right acting of the individuals who compose the working force of our nation.

THE COWBOY'S TICKETS.

They Were Good on the Train, but Only For a Little While.

A bunch of old time traveling men were visiting at a Topeka hotel, and talk turned on to courageous conductors "I have known."

A story was told on John Becker, for years a conductor on the Santa Fe. He was practically awarded the palm for being the bravest "con" who ever set foot on a through Kansas train in the old and perilous days.

One day, just after the Santa Fe train had left Dodge City, Becker passed through the car to take up the pasteboards. Two cowboys had boarded the train at Dodge, and Becker went up to them and said, "Tickets, please."

For an answer the cowboys whipped out big revolvers—the Colt's blue steel brand, 44 caliber—and replied:

"Here they are!"
"They're good," said Becker quickly, with a deprecatory wave of his hand, and he passed on through the car. The cowboys chuckled their "irons" back into their holsters and settled back comfortably, thinking that the train was theirs.

Becker walked on back to his little wardrobe at the front end of the next car and, unlocking it, took out a sawed off double barreled shotgun loaded with slugs. He cocked both hammers—for it was before the hammerless automatic days—and, getting the gun properly placed in front of him, he marched back into the car where the cowboys were.

He stepped briskly in front of them and shoved the big gun into their faces, holding it at such an angle that a shot would have swept off the heads of both.

Then he said again, gently, "Your tickets, please."

The hands of the cowboys twitched convulsively toward their pockets, and Becker interjected, "Give me those tickets, please, that have handles and shove 'em at me with the handles toward me—toward me, understand?" he added, bearing down hard with the emphasis on "me."

The tickets came across with the handles in the requested direction.

"Now, dig up the coin," he demanded, "to the next station where we stop."

They dug.
"Now, at the next station you fellows unload. Understand?" The sawed off was still at a dangerous location and the hammers still up.

The cowboys nodded vigorously in the affirmative, and they unloaded quickly and without words at the next stop.

Becker made no fuss over the matter; didn't talk about it at all. He just accepted it as part of the day's business and seemed to see nothing in it that was extraordinary.—Kansas City Journal.

Life Rings on Mountains.

An extraordinary example of the way in which a mountain may afford on a small scale an image of the earth's climates, arranged in successively higher circles, has been found in the San Francisco peaks. These



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ancient volcanoes rise out of a plateau having a mean elevation of 7,900 feet above sea level.

The peaks are encircled with zones of vegetation which run almost like contour lines around them. Between 6,500 and 8,500 feet the yellow pine is the dominant tree. From 8,500 to 10,300 feet the Douglas fir, the silver fir, the cork fir and the aspen share the available ground. Between 10,300 and 11,500 feet the Engelmann spruce and the foxtail pine take possession and ascend to the tree limit.—Scientific American.

Misleading Book Titles.

Some book titles are distinctly misleading. Ruskin's "On the Construction of Sheepfolds" is a famous example of these, and there are others. Mr. Henry James' novel "The Lesson of the Master" has more than once been catalogued as a religious work. The same fate befell Sir Edward Hamilton's "Conversion and Redemption," a highly technical study of schemes for the reduction of the national debt. "Disloyalty; or, The Doubtful Priest," was the title originally selected by Shorthouse for the book we now know as "John Inglesant." It was pointed out to him that such a title would lead people to regard it as an attack on Roman Catholicism, and this induced him to change it.—London Chronicle.

How an Ostrich Shows Temper.
When annoyed or angered by the approach of a human being, says a writer in the Strand Magazine, the male ostrich slightly arches his neck, and, drawing in a big breath, he blows out his neck and issues a three note defiance ("bo-bo-bo-b"). It is in the last prolonged note that his neck

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swells out so abnormally. The hen bird never "drums," as the natives term it, though I have heard of one that tried very hard to ape the male, but the result was ghastly failure.

His Achievements.
"After I am gone," he complained, "people will begin to notice what I have done."
"Well," his wife sadly replied, "if they do it won't take them long."
—Chicago Record Herald

Shrewd Woman.
Howard: I can't get my wife to pay her bills by check. Edward: Was not? Howard: She says that she won't have the moral bank people know what everything costs her. Judge.

Such help as we can give each other in this world is a debt we owe each other. Ruskin

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