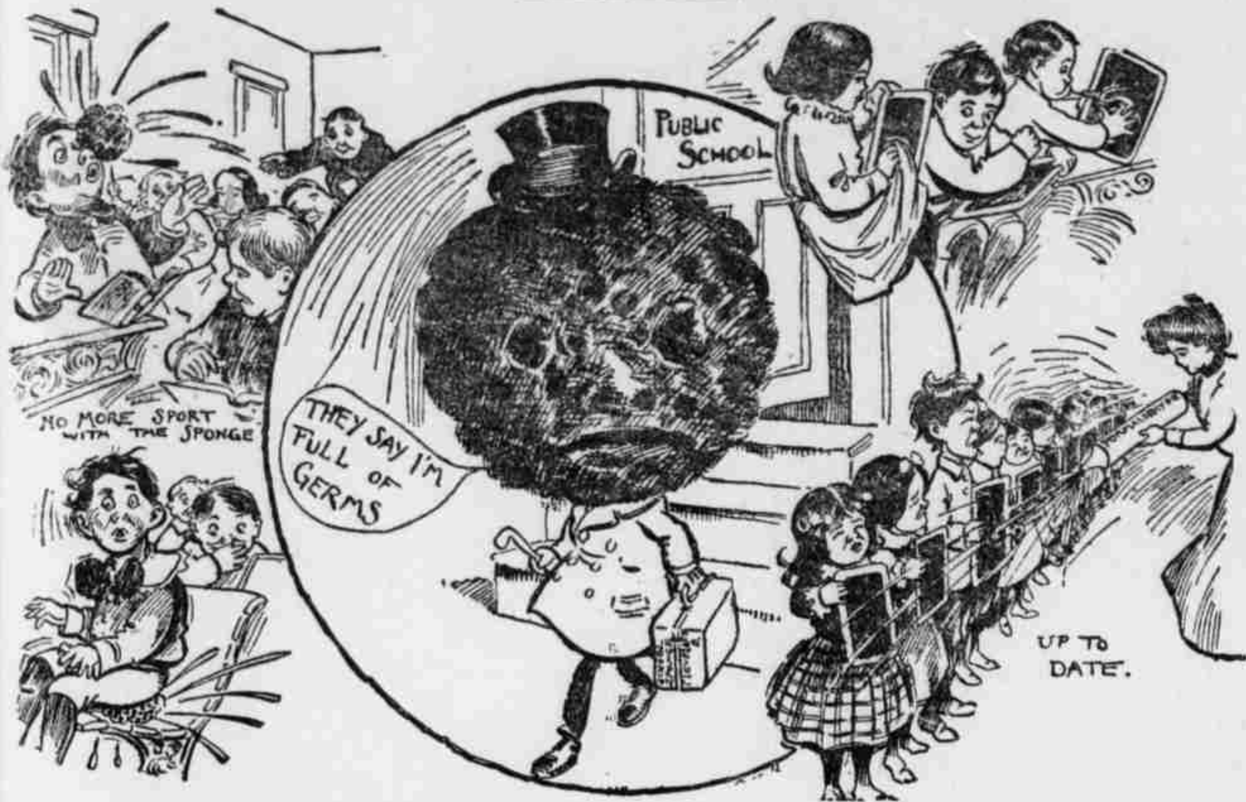
THE SPONGE MAY SOON BE BARRED FROM CITY SCHOOLS.



The sponge is coming into disfavor in the St. Louis public schools.

"There are excellent grounds for the objection, too," says Chief Dispensary Physician Jordan. "They are a good carrier of germs, and extremely liable to be unclean."

"The make-up of the sponge shows the possibility of its retaining germs. For that reason the use of the sponge has been largely abandoned in surgery and absorbant cotton used instead. I should recommend the use of a cloth. One of the most dangerous practices in connection with the use of sponges is by children spitting upon a sponge. Diphtheria, tuberculosis and other communicable diseases may be spread by this means. Especially if the sponge were passed from one child to another. Something less expensive and oftener destroyed, like a cloth, would be less dangerous, I believe."

"The use of the sponge is passing in the public schools," stated Assistant School Superintendent Murphy. "The sponge in its very nature is uncleanly, and, of course, children cannot be made to keep them clean. For several years we have been discouraging their use."

THE SNOWDRIFT.

When night dropped down, the fields
were dark and dun,
Storm sprites were out—we heard the
north wind blow;
Then when arose the slowly wading sun,
Morning came mantled in a robe of
snow.

White grew the landscape; every field
and knoll
Shone forth transfigured by the snow-
storm's spell;
The trees and fences stood in motley
droll,
Half dark, half whitened by this mira-
cle.

But where the stone wall held its Parian
weight
Of snowdrift, like some Alp or Apen-
nine,
We saw a sculpture man could not create,
Smoothed off and chiseled by some
touch divine.

Mute wonder of the myriad molded snow,
Pure as the stars that sentinel the sky,
What art could improvise and fashion so,
Unless some godlike power sped pro-
creant by!

Here plinth and cornice, architrave and
frieze,
Lift up a beauty to the day and sun,
Amidst the silver of the tinseled trees,
That never Phidias or Canova won.
—Country Life.

A ONE-SIDED WOOING.

He was a big-limbed, brown-faced man, and somehow he looked awkward amid the glittering artificiality of a ballroom. He was just the sort of being one associated with big game hunting and the wild regions of the earth. He seemed as much out of place at a dance as a rice pudding in a Parisian menu.

"Miss Bainbridge!"

"Mr. Carlyon!"

The man's voice was apologetic, the girl's frankly amazed.

"Fancy finding you at a dance!" the girl went on, after the first flush of surprise had died a natural death.

"Yes, it's not much in my line. But the fact is—well, I came to see you."

"To see me?"

"Yes. I wanted to ask your advice on a subject that has been worrying me a great deal. You're about the only girl I know whom I thought I could tackle without fear of being laughed at. Can you give me a dance?"

Millicent Bainbridge could hardly help smiling at the almost boyish manner in which the sunburnt young giant voiced his semi-apologetic avowal.

"I shall be delighted," she said, sweetly. "What shall it be?"

"O, I don't care—I mean I do care, only I can't dance, so it can be polka, waltz, or what you will. But I know you're a good dancer, so it had better be one you don't mind sitting out."

"Shall we say number six, polka?"

Number six arrived in due course. By that time Millicent was devoured with curiosity to know what Carlyon could possibly want to ask her advice about. How big and handsome and frank he was! So different to the usual run of men encountered in a London ballroom.

Carlyon bore his partner away in triumph to a secluded corner of the conservatory. As soon as they were seated he burst out:

"I've fallen in love, Miss Bainbridge. I've known you a good long time, and I want you to tell me how a fellow is to make sure of getting a girl to return his affection."

Millicent's face went crimson. Then the color ebbed away.

"Does the girl know you are fond of her?" she said, after a slight pause.

"She hasn't an idea," answered Carlyon emphatically. "And I'm such a rough sort of fellow I don't know how to begin. Supposing you were the girl, now, how would you like the fellow you were going to marry to behave?"

"O, that is soon told," answered Millicent. "In the first place he must be attentive, my knight. He must be ways courteous, always ready to interpret my every fancy. He must send me flowers and sweets, take me to theaters——"

"Must every man do that sort of thing?"

"DOES THE GIRL KNOW YOU ARE FOND OF HER?"

"Every man who wants to win a woman must be prepared to make sacrifices. Then my lover must study all my whims. He must be able to read me like a book, to be loving and yet masterful, manly yet tender."

Dick Carlyon groaned audibly. "Then it's all up with my ever having a shot at trying to make a girl care for me. I can't do any of the things you mention. I can only be a great clumsy idiot, all right on a horse or behind a gun, but no good at making a girl happy."

"But don't be so downcast, Mr. Carlyon! After all, I've only given you my view. Perhaps the other girl——"

"There is no other girl!"

Again Millicent's face became scarlet.

"Why, what do you mean?" she cried.

"Well—I—O, what an ass I am! I thought—I hoped perhaps you'd give me a lead. It was you I'd fallen in love with, Miss Bainbridge!"

Millicent could hardly keep from bursting into a peal of merry laughter.

"Why on earth didn't you say so at once, Mr. Carlyon?" she cried roguishly. "It would have saved such a lot of trouble. Why, there's the music for the next dance."

Carlyon rose somewhat heavily.

"Ah, well, he cried, "I've made an idiot of myself for nothing."

"For nothing? Am I nothing?"

The young man paused. Something in Millicent's dancing eyes awoke comprehension in his mind, absolutely unused as he was to the bewitching coquetries of the sex capricious.

"You're not laughing at me, Millicent?" he asked soberly.

Millicent grew grave in a moment.

"No, you dear, darling old simpleton," she answered in a voice that made Carlyon's pulses quicken; "there, how does that strike you for a lead?"

And that was all Dick Carlyon's wooing.—Chicago Tribune.

Proud of His Position.

One of the Scottish regiments in South Africa has for its regimental pet a huge male ostrich, which has proved itself on several occasions a friend indeed. Its first appearance came about in this way. A party had been sent to destroy a farm house that had been the hiding place of the assassins of several of the men, and, when the house had been emptied of its occupants, the horses and cattle driven off, a fearful noise was heard coming from a little outhouse at the other end of the house. On opening the door, out stalked the huge bird quite bewildered. Some proposed shooting it, but by general consent it was to be allowed to go. It followed the party, and at once installed himself as one of them. They fed him with part of their own rations, and petted him all round. He loves to march at the head of a party of the regiment, and if the regiment is on the road he is sure to be at the head of the column.

On outpost duty he is a valuable scout, and gives timely warning of approaching danger. Twice has he saved the picquet from being cut off, and he is looked on by all as a real hero.

He had been christened by the name of "Bobs," and knows his name well. The regiment does not know what to do with him when the war is at an end, but hope to bring him home.

Unexpected Erudition.

An absent-minded professor of languages dropped into a restaurant one day for a luncheon.

"What will you have, sir?" asked the waiter.

"Fried eggs," replied the professor.

"Over?" said the waiter, meaning, of course, to ask whether he wanted them cooked on both sides or only one.

"Ova?" echoed the professor, surprised at his apparent familiarity with Latin. "Certainly. That is what I ordered. Ova gallinae."

This the waiter interpreted as meaning "extra well done," and that is the way they came to the table.

He Could Wait.

"Here's the devil to pay," exclaimed the old man, coming in with a handful of bills.

"Don't worry about him, dear," said the wife. "He knows that you'll settle with him hereafter."—Atlanta Constitution.

Not to Be Expected.

"I don't see how he can expect to succeed as an author. Why, he can't write common sense."

"He doesn't have to. All his stories are in dialect."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

A STUDY IN EXPRESSION.

The Editor: "Your story—— is excellent—— and we'll—— give you $11 for it—— when it is printed in 1901."

FORTY-SECOND COUSINS.

According to the Professor It Is the Remotest Relationship.

He was professor of mathematics in one of our women's colleges, middle-aged, fond of a joke and given to reducing the things of common life to formulas, partly for the fun of it and partly to bring mathematical truths closer to the minds of his pupils. One day, just before the lecture began and as the professor came in, he overheard one of the girls say, with a sigh: "Oh, he's some forty-second cousin, I believe, and I suppose I must show him around."

"You should be careful," interjected the professor, with a fairly successful effort to appear solemn, "you should be more careful in your use of mathematical terms. Are you sure you are strictly accurate when you say 'forty-second cousin?' He may be a closer degree of relationship."

"Why! He's no relation at all, if it comes to that," said the fair student.

"It is," resumed the professor, imperturbably, "as you doubtless know already, a question of the powers of 2. We all have two parents, four grandparents, eight great-grandparents, sixteen great-great-grandparents, each figure being a power of 2 and in —N— generations consequently we have a grandparent with (N—1) greats in front of the title. It also obtains inversely. All who trace to the same parents are brothers or sisters, to the same grandparent are cousins, to the same great-grandparent are second cousins, to the N—G grandparent are (N plus 1) th cousins.

"The powers of 2, however, reach astounding figures rather quickly. We have 1,023 (9—great) grandparents each, for example. Going back twenty generations, we have each a little more than a million 19—great-grandparents, over a billion 29—great-grandparents, and in the forty-third generation we have each about 1,438,800,000,000 42—great-grandparents, and all who trace back to any one of those 1,438,800,000,000 are forty-second cousins.

"If you consider a moment, you will see that at each of this thousand billions is a progenitor, that there is little room in the world's population, as at present constituted, for the mob of cousins. There is a saving clause, however. This would only obtain if everybody was careful not to marry in the same line of descent.

"In practice we usually object to marrying cousins and some people draw the line on second cousins, but to make the above statement come true we should object to, say, forty-second cousins, which is impossible, practically. We cannot, in practice, draw the line on twentieth cousins, for example. If two twentieth cousins marry, it throws out one from the million of nineteen great-grandparents to be considered, and so with the other degrees. Probably in practice that is what we are always doing—when we marry. We are almost undoubtedly marrying at least a twenty-fifth cousin, and everybody in the world is at least a forty-second cousin and probably somewhat nearer in relationship."

"Gracious!" said the original offender, a blonde, by the way. "If I am born in St. Louis and a young man is born in Newton—at—at—well, about the same time—are we related?"

"Certainly," responded the professor, with a grin. "You are (N plus 1) th cousins, having descended from the same N—g grandparent, possibly along where N is less than 30 at least."

"Gee," said the tall brunette of the class, who had been listening, as she felt of her back hair and helped herself to a caramel, according to the Boston Herald, "he would be an n—g grandparent all right."

A CHINESE STORY.

Public Frightened by Mysterious Chalk Marks Made by a Boy.

A strange state of mind evidently prevailed in Pekin during the Boxer outrages outside the walls—outrages which were momentarily expected to be repeated within the city limits. Everybody was preparing for a catastrophe, and nobody could be sure why. It all seemed like a huge practical joke, which could not be taken seriously, and yet it was serious, and everybody knew it was. There was apparent peace, with a certainty of coming trouble. The foreigners were gathering in places of safety, and the compounds they had left remained unmolested.

One incident curiously shows the combined lightness and frenzy of the public mind. On a certain evening a boy of about sixteen walked down a street, marking a door here and there with a circle of white chalk, before which he bowed solemnly.

Presently all the people came to their doors in a great state of excitement, and began to discuss the proceeding and debate as to what it might mean. The marked houses might belong to the friends or foes of the Boxers, the saved or lost.

Suddenly a man went up to the boy, seized him by the pigtail, and asked him what he meant. The bystanders were amazed at a courage which dared interfere with an emissary of the Boxers, and the boy himself tried to swagger a little, and brazen it out.

"What were you doing it for?" insisted the man. "Tell, or I take you to the police station."

Then the boy fell on his knees and owned that he was only doing it for a joke, to frighten the people. His success had exceeded his hopes.

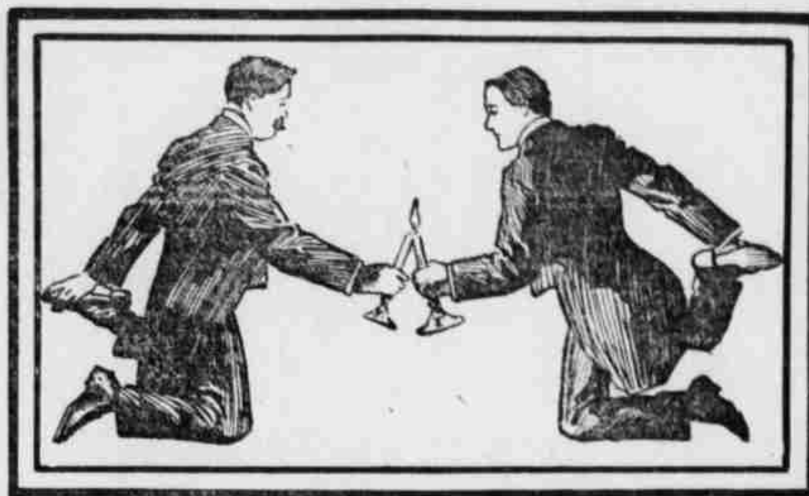
Expensive.

Mr. Binwed—I'd like to have hold of the fellow who invented those long coats for women.

Mr. Nebb—Why?

Mr. Binwed—Why? Great Scott! they cost twice as much as one half as long.—Boston Post.

NEW GAME PLAYED WITH CANDLES.



Here is a novel trick and one which never fails to afford much entertainment at an evening party. Two persons kneel on the ground at a distance of about three feet from each other, and to each is given a candle, of which one should be lighted. The right or left foot of each, as the case may be, is then to be held by his free hand, the result being that the entire weight of the body will rest on the other knee. The person holding the unlighted candle must then try to light it at the other one. That this is no easy task can very easily be ascertained.

JOHN BROWN'S BIRTHPLACE.

Movement Started to Perpetuate Old New England Farmhouse.

An association, called the John Brown Association, has been formed for the purpose of purchasing and preserving the old homestead at Torrington, Conn., where John Brown, the noted abolitionist and martyr, was born. The house has stood untenanted for many years and relic hunters have carried away many of its fixtures, but an end is to be placed to this vandalism by the association.

The Brown homestead has been in existence a century and a half and has been the dwelling place of many families who tried to eke out an existence

JOHN BROWN'S BIRTHPLACE.

from the stony and stubborn acres attached to it. In 1798 Owen Brown, father of the abolitionist, moved into it after having tried to make a living in other parts of New England. Here in 1800—on May 9, to be exact—the future martyr was born. The first five years of his life were spent within its shelter. The Browns had more or less claim to the title of sons of New England, no less than six generations having tilled its soil since the coming of the Mayflower nearly two centuries before.

In 1805 Owen Brown forsook the East and settled in Hudson, Ohio, where his son received his early education. In 1812, securing a contract to supply the army with provisions, the Brown family took up its abode in Detroit. Later the son settled in Richmond, Pa., where President Jackson appointed him postmaster.

In the subsequent stormy years of his life John Brown settled for a time in Massachusetts, but Torrington and its vicinity knew him no more. Now the people are aroused to retain the fame which the accident of birth conferred on Torrington.

DU MAURIER'S NOVELS.

Harry Furniss' Talk an Indirect Cause of Their Creation.

Henry Furniss, the caricaturist, writes as follows in Harper's of his acquaintance with George du Maurier:

"It is a curious fact that I really never had a seat allotted to me at the Punch table; I always sat in Du Maurier's, except on the rare occasions when he came to the dinner, when I moved up one. It was a great treat to have Du Maurier at 'the table.' He was by far and away the cleverest conversationalist of his time I ever met; his delightful repartees were so neat and effective, and his daring chaff and his criticisms so bright and refreshing. * * *

"Du Maurier's extremely clever conversation struck me the moment I joined the staff of Punch. As I went part of his way to Hampstead, we sometimes shared our cab, and in one of these journeys I mentioned my conviction that he, in my mind, was a great deal more than a humorous artist, and if he would only take up the pen seriously the world would be all the more indebted to him. He told me that Mr. James had for some time said nice things of a similar character.

"About ten days afterward I received a letter saying that my conversation has had an effect upon him, and that he was starting his first novel. So perhaps the world is really indebted to me, indirectly, for the pleasure of reading 'Peter Ibbetson' and 'Trilby.' The fact is that he had, with Burnand and myself, just visited Paris, the first time he had set foot in the gay city since his youth. Many things he saw had impressed him, and 'Peter Ibbetson' was the result."

HOW THE OTHER BAND WON.

They Made the "Silent" Member of a Rival Organization a Noisy One.

"I once belonged to a country band when I was a youngster," said the talkative man. "It was great sport, and no man has really lived unless he has belonged to such an organization at some period in his life. There was a great rivalry between the band that I was a member of and one in an adjoining town. When the rivalry was at white heat a band contest was held in a neighboring town. We were both entered in the same class, and only asked for a free field and no favors.

"Now, the class that we were entered in called for bands having at least sixteen members, and the best we could do after scouring the town for talent was fifteen men who understood how to push wind through brass instruments and have it resemble music. We were in despair, until I conceived a happy idea. There was an odd character living in the town whom every one called George. He was only half-witted, and had attached himself to our band, making himself generally useful by carrying our music and taking care of our band room. My plan was to fit him out with an instrument securely corked, and trust to luck that the deception would not be noticed.

"But the plan proved a most disastrous one. A member of the rival band seeing the youth proudly carrying a horn, mistrusted what we were up to, and, getting the boy aside, he discovered the cork and pulled it out.

"When we started playing in the great contest," continued the talkative man, according to the Detroit Free Press, "I became aware at once that some one was making horrible discords, and, turning around, I discovered to my horror that the half-witted youth, immensely proud of his position, was filling his instrument to the full extent of his lung power. It is hardly necessary to state that we did not win the contest."

"Moral Suasion."

A youthful supervising principal, who does not believe in corporal punishment, but in moral suasion, was summoned the other afternoon to the classroom of one of his teachers. Johnny and Tommy, the teacher complained, had been throwing pencils at one another, and she had been unable to make them stop.

"Then I will try a little moral suasion on them," the supervising principal said. "I will take them into my office, sit them down before me, and from now till half-past 5 I'll keep them throwing pencils at each other. I will also make them write the word 'pencil' 500 times, and I will make them hand me in a 300-word composition on pencil throwing."

The teacher approved with a respectful smile of this ingenious punishment. It was then 2 o'clock, and at 5 she made ready to go home. Her way led her past the principal's office, and she looked in. He sat reading at his desk, and Johnny and Tommy, the two boys, stood about seven feet apart, throwing pencils at one another with a weary, bored air.—Philadelphia Record.

Turned Over to Mary.

A recently published story of the late Lord Morris illustrates his scorn of red tape and petty details.

A question had arisen as to the cost of heating the Irish law courts, and a consequential treasury official was sent over from London to Dublin on purpose to investigate the matter.

When he introduced himself and explained his errand, Lord Morris smiled with suspicious blandness and said:

"Certainly, I will put you in communication with the person immediately in charge of that department."

Then he sent out a messenger, and presently there entered an old charwoman. Lord Morris arose and left the room, saying as he did so:

"Mary, here is the young man to see about the coal."

Diminishing in Stature.

When a man ceases to grow he begins to diminish. Such is the conclusion at which a German physician has arrived, after several months' careful study of the subject of human height. Men, so it is asserted, begin to grow smaller in their thirty-fifth year, and they lose a little before they are 40. Men, however, stop growing when they are 30, and for five or six years their stature remains stationary. Then it decreases, at first very slowly, but afterward more rapidly.

Patient Jane.

"Jane always looks under the bed for a burglar."

"Did she ever see one?"

"No. But she lives in hopes."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

What has become of the old-fashioned child that "made faces?"