

NEW YORK FASHION LETTER

New York, Aug. 27.—The mysterious disappearance of the Italian boy who disappeared about three weeks ago, and was said to have been kidnapped by members of the Black Hand, seems to have been spun concerning the action of the Black Hand with Mannino's disappearance, that public was beginning to be alarmed. But, since the boy's doubts have arisen and now are inclined to believe that the Black Hand really exists only in the imagination of certain yellow-reporters in league with the and anxious to keep up the Black Hand scare for their own benefit that of the police.

There are a great many features in the kidnapping story, which call for an explanation and which are too inconceivable to be accepted as true without proof. There is no doubt that the boy was gone about 10 days and his parents did not seem to know where to look for him, but that the Black Hand or any other secret organization had anything to do with the disappearance, is by no means certain. The peculiar manner in which the boy was restored to his family has aroused the suspicion that a member of the Manning family must have known more about the case than the family was willing to admit. The public began to suspect some time ago that the boy returned that there was a colored gentleman in the woods and jumped at the conclusion that the father of the boy was in direct contact with the members of the Black Hand and was negotiating with them. The heads of the detectives entered with the investigation of the case.

Everything is considered, it must be admitted that up to the present no actual proof of the existence of the Black Hand has been offered by the police and that, for that reason, the theory is quite plausible that the boy was laid at the door of that mysterious organization were really perpetrated by individuals independent of the secret organization.

There may be a scarcity of money

in other parts of the country, but surely not here. The New York banks are nearly suffocating in their own fat, so to speak. They have more money on hand than they know what to do with, and there is so little demand for loans that to obtain relief the banks are willing to accept an almost ridiculously low rate of interest. It is a remarkable fact that the City of New York the other day borrowed \$5,000,000 in Wall street for three months at the rate of two per cent. Of course, the city's credit is good and the 500 special revenue bonds which the city issued as security are strictly gilt edge, but, after all, two per cent. is a very low rate of interest, and it is safe to say that it is many years since a loan under so favorable condition has been made.

If the suit for \$200,000 damages, which the Italian sculptor, Ernest Biondi, threatens to begin against the Metropolitan Museum of Art ever comes to a trial, it will undoubtedly become one of the causes celebres of this country. Biondi modelled a group of statuary, entitled "Saturnalia," which was exhibited at the Buffalo exposition and attracted considerable attention there. According to Biondi's statement the directors of the Metropolitan Museum of Art contracted with him for the exhibition of the group in the Metropolitan Museum, but failed to keep their contract. When Biondi came to New York a few months ago, he discovered that certain prudish members of the board of directors had objected to the character of the group and, instead of exhibiting it, had buried it in the cellar of the museum. Biondi claims that the action of the directors has injured his reputation to the amount of \$200,000.

Many subtle and interesting questions are involved in that case and the jury will have no easy time in deciding the merits of the case. This is not the first time that the directors of the Metropolitan Art Museum have rejected a work of sculpture, the character of which offended their moral sensibilities. There is a strong suspicion that the wives of some of the members of the board have more to do with the rejection of Biondi's group, than the members themselves, just as they had in the case of Macmonnies' Bacchante, which was rejected by the Metro-

politan Museum and afterwards made a triumphal tour through the country. What Biondi and a great many other artists would like to know is whether the prudish directors were prompted by hypocritical reasons, when they rejected the group, which was greatly admired by thousands who visited the Buffalo exposition.

The trouble between the employers and the employees in the allied building trades still continues, but there is good reason to believe that a settlement is not far off. The unions have been losing considerable ground during the last week or two and many of the unions have already withdrawn their allegiance to the alliance and have returned to work. If the employers are victorious, it will mean a severe defeat of the union cause and a general recognition of the open shop principle.

Children and dogs are tabooed in nearly all the better class apartment houses in New York, and in many cases the tenants practically forfeit their lease if they allow themselves the privilege of an increase of family without the consent of the landlord. Many couples with children find it almost impossible to secure apartments in any part of the town. Under such conditions, the action of William C. Smith, who has nearly finished a six-story flat building on Anthony avenue, deserves unstinted praise and admiration. He is very anxious to get families with children into his flats and offers special inducements to families that are still on the increase. He offers one month rent free to any couple to whom a child should be born while living in one of his flats, two months for twins, and from three to six months for triplets. He has provided a play ground with swings and sand piles in the yard and an enormous playground on the top floor, where the children of his tenants can play in cold or rainy weather.

Irish League Convention.
New York, Aug. 27.—All arrangements have been completed for the second national convention of the United Irish League of America, which is to be held in this city during the coming week. The prime object of the league is to obtain home rule for Ireland. It was organized in Boston two years ago and has branches all over the United States and Canada. The convention will be attended by a delegation representing the Irish parliamentary party and headed by John E. Redmond. A public reception in honor of the members of the delegation will be given in Carnegie hall tomorrow.

Famous French Band Coming.
Paris, Aug. 27.—The famous band of the Garde Republicaine of France sailed from Havre today for New York en route to the St. Louis exposition. The appearance of the band at the exposition is by special permission of the French government.

The band is acknowledged to be one of the first military organizations in the world. It is composed of 58 brass pieces, with an auxiliary of 40 string and wood. The members of the band are all musicians of recognized ability, and they are recruited from the foremost advanced scholastic ranks of the Paris Conservatoire, their military training being a secondary requirement.

Bids Opened for Navy Yard Dock.
Washington, D. C., Aug. 27.—Bids were opened by the Bureau of Yards and Docks, navy department, today for the construction of a drydock for the New York navy yard. Bids were opened January last, but were in excess of the money available, and were rejected. The plans have been changed position is by special permission of will remain the same as before.

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