

he grasped at the idea, and the remaining two years of his life were chiefly marked by his pursuit of one rich woman, and then another. He was first engaged to a Mrs. Whitman, a "poetess," who "always dressed in white," but on the eve before his wedding-day he delivered a lecture which so filled his audience with enthusiasm that an admiring crowd followed him to his hotel, and insisted on a convivality before which Poe soon fell, to the destruction of his matrimonial plans.

He now returned to Richmond, where for a few weeks he appears to have enjoyed life again. He became the fashion, was feted and petted, and, using the powers of fascination so characteristic of him, soon became engaged to an old friend, now a rich widow, Mrs. Shelton.

Chancing to go to Baltimore, however, the old curse of weakness and misfortune again overtook him. A municipal election was on; he fell into the hands of unscrupulous politicians, was drugged, dragged to the polls, and made to vote, then, becoming unconscious, was thrust into a cab and sent to the hospital, where he died, without regaining consciousness, on October 3rd, 1849.

In the Baltimore cemetery, a fine monument has been erected to the memory of Poe. Upon it might have been written, "He fell a victim to weakness of will"—the curse of disposition, perhaps inherited, that dogged him all through life and into his grave.

And now that he has been long dead, men say of him, as said Prof. Richardson: "Here is one of the most distinct and unquestioned powers in the history of American intellect." Truly, his contribution to literature has been unique—his tales either of weird and ethereal beauty, or of a horror that fascinates; his forty poems, whose reputation "has slowly and steadily advanced in many lands without successful challenge from the critics"; his touch everywhere powerful, artistic, almost unfailingly so. "With Hawthorne, Emerson, Cooper and Whitman," says Prof. Richardson, "he stands isolated"—a distinct voice in New World literature.

His best works are his short stories, *Ligeia*, William Wilson, *The Fall of the House of Usher*, *The Gold Bug*; and, in poetry, such gems as *To Helen*, *Israfel*, *Ullalume*, *Annabel Lee*, *For Annie*, *The Bells*, and, above all, the famous *Raven*, referring, as some have argued, to his wife, and yet others, as is more probable, since his wife was still living when he wrote the poem, to the Mrs. Stanard of his childhood. It is more likely, however, that "lost Lenore" was an abstraction. Poe considered the death of a beautiful woman the most poetic, the most haunting and the most melancholy occurrence in nature, hence the finest of his poems deal with that subject.

The Windrow.

President Braga, of Portugal, is the first college professor who has been placed at the head of a Government.

A novel, "The Trail of Ninety-eight," by Robert W. Service, is among the new books on the market this fall.

Joseph Brucker, a journalist, is fitting out an airship expedition, which will start westward over the Atlantic from the Canary Islands in February.

Mark Twain's daughter, Mrs. Ossip Gabrilowitsch, wife of the Russian pianist, is sole heir to his estate, which has been valued by appraisers at \$611,136.

John D. Rockefeller has added \$3,820,000 to his previous gifts to the U. S. Institute for Medical Research—making a total of \$8,240,000. At present, the Institute is studying infantile paralysis, pneumonia, and heart disease.

The Roundabout Club

Reopening of the Literary Society

Again it is time to reopen our Literary Society. As usual, contributions will be considered and subjects will be assigned; some purely literary, some bearing upon practical or current topics. Prizes, consisting of leather-bound classics and well-illustrated nature books bound in cloth, will be given as heretofore, for all essays written on specified subjects.

To begin, then, let us try something easy:

Describe briefly: (1) The man you like, and the man you dislike. (2) The woman you like, and the woman you dislike.

Remember, your description must not be a mere catalogue of qualities. Originality, humor, strength, clearness, the "literary touch"—all of these may appear in the working out of just such a subject as this.

Kindly send all essays so that they may arrive at this office not later than November 25th.

Finger Rings.

THE HISTORY AND ASSOCIATIONS CONNECTED WITH THEM.
(By Scholasticus.)

The wearing of finger rings is an interesting topic, and affords a far more valuable subject for thought than many who have never considered it may imagine. History, romance, poetry, tragedy, are all associated with finger rings. The love of them seems innate in the whole human race, and they go with us almost from the cradle to the grave. The young child makes rings of grass or small flowers; the maiden looks with pride, joy and affection upon her engagement ring of plighted troth; the wife never removes her wedding ring, and it often rests on her finger when the loving, active mother's hands are folded together in the long last sleep. Poets weave beautiful thoughts around this subject, as:

"Cling closer, closer, life to life;
Cling closer, heart to heart;
The time will come, my own wed wife,
When you and I must part.

"Let nothing break our band but death,
For in the world above
'Tis the breaker Death that soldereth
Our ring of Wedded Love."

It cannot be otherwise but that with every ring, whether worn by man, woman or child, there is some story, some association connected. Vulgar ostentation may in some few cases be the cause of their being worn, as when Tennyson writes: "And barbarous opulence, jewel thick, sunn'd itself on his breast and his hands"; but probably the truest, and certainly the most charitable, reasons to find are that they are used for their associations and for their beauty.

One has only to go to a good museum to see how long the use of finger rings has been customary. There you will find that as soon as man began to make anything rings were one of the first things made, and we have no reason to have any doubt that both men and women wore them. Probably this gave rise to the term "barbarous custom," but notwithstanding this wrong use of an approbrious term, the custom has survived, so far as can be judged is increasing, and is likely to continue to do so. Very curious and very interesting are some of the early rings, being made of all kinds of materials, and carved in all sorts of designs; and it is to be observed that the cases in which they are displayed in the museums are attractive. The attraction is by no means confined to the fair sex.

No one seems to question the propriety, the grace and the wisdom of the fair sex adding to the natural beauty of their shapely hands those to be obtained by the glistening charms of these ornaments. Some people, however, appear adverse to their use by men. There are many who have not the slightest appreciation of jewels in any form, and are utterly unable to understand the fascina-

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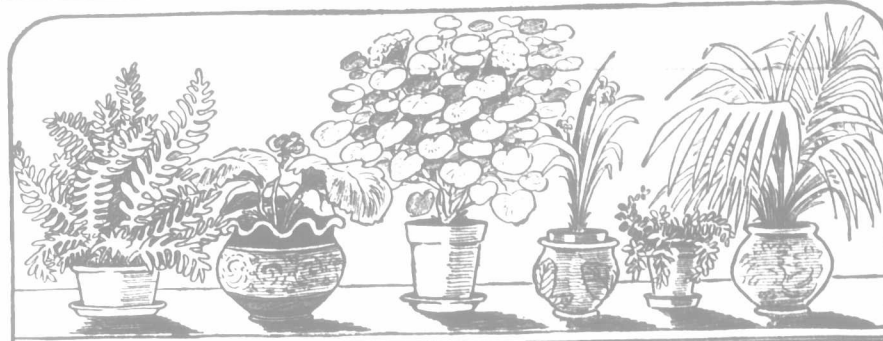
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