

INDECENT AND CRUEL JOURNALISM.

From a Letter in The Evening Post.

Sir: Is there no one to cry shame on the recent proceedings of certain newspapers of the metropolis for the indecent and cruel treatment of a worthy family in this community which has recently been bereaved of its head?

A gentleman dies, leaving a will, and in that will it pleased him to make certain dispositions in regard to a certain member of his family. The family is one which, though wealthy, has never obtruded itself upon the public notice. Not from the public press, but from many a private person and from many a home, you could learn of deeds of kindness performed in a delicate and unpretentious way by some one of the members of this family. But now, in the hour of grief, when, all this world over, decency and respect allow a few days of quiet withdrawal from the public gaze, these newspapers invade the very chamber of death, and without regard to the bereavement of the widow or the modesty of the young woman, they catch up a clause of the will, without stopping to learn its meaning, and begin to print recklessly all manner of things, which, whether true or false, do not concern the public. Then follows a course of persecution such as is known to only two institutions—the Holy Office and Modern Journalism.

Reporters swarm like Pharaoh's plague of frogs, which came up into his house and into his bedchamber and upon his bed and into the house of his servants and into his ovens and into his kneading troughs. Nothing and nobody escape them. They hunt up in city and country the relatives and friends of the family. They lie in wait for the manager of the premises, for the butler, the gardener, the people of the village, and even for the young ladies of a neighboring school. If nobody will tell a story, a story must be made up. Privacy must be invaded, secrets must be unlocked, and the young lady must suffer cruel indignities. She must see in print her name attached to all kinds of rumors and guesses and suggestions. Pictures, purporting to be of herself, but as much like her as Erebus is like Aurora, accompany the big headlines until the purveyors of gossip can, by hook or by crook, secure a genuine photograph. Here is the hodgepodge which is dished up to the public:

Chapter 1. The father wishes to bribe his daughter, by a liberal provision in his will, to marry the man of his choice.

Chapter 2. No, that is not quite right. Rather, it is quite the other way. The father cuts off the daughter with the proverbial shilling if she does marry the gentleman in question.

Chapter 3. The gentleman to whom the young lady is engaged is discovered in St. Louis, but he is already the husband of one wife.

Chapter 4. No. We have it flat now. The St. Louis man has nothing to do with it. We have talked with the real man at his club in another city.

Chapter 5. Big sensation! The young man and the young woman met on a journey, something over a year ago, and were then and there secretly married.

Reporters are sent out everywhere, and to everybody, to ask what they think about it. They ask various members of the family, the village people, and the schoolgirls if they think it true.

Is it any wonder that the next announcement should be that all this is killing the widow? And how the ghouls gloat over this last piece of news! Their torture has brought the woman bereft of her husband to death's door, and how gleefully they tell that all this publicity (all, too, of their own making) has produced a satisfactory result—furnished their columns with sensational copy.

The papers themselves aside, is there not a confessed degradation in a public which craves such stuff, half concocted and half obtained by a prying curiosity and by a disregard of every sense of shame or of human sympathy? Is there not a deep pathos in the answer sent to the reporters by the young woman: "I should be very thankful if people would leave me alone"? NASH.

Dobbs Ferry, April 29.

GIFTS TO COLUMBIA LIBRARY.

Ancient Book and Manuscript Presented by Samuel P. Avery.

Two rare and valuable books have been added to the Columbia Library during the past week through the generosity of Samuel P. Avery, the founder of the Avery Architectural Library at the university. The first is an uncommon edition of the "De Rerum Natura" of Lucretius, printed in Paris in 1593. It is beautifully bound in calf, and bears the royal arms of King Charles IX. The authorities of the library do not think that the binding is original, but that it is a clever imitation of the work of Hagué. The decorative design is the Lyonnaise scroll.

The second gift of Mr. Avery is a Spanish manuscript of the sixteenth century granting three patents of nobility. The manuscript is written in the Spanish calligraphic handwriting, and will be valuable for pallographical purposes.

A very valuable manuscript by Gasparinus, the famous scholar, has been purchased by Dr. Simkovitch for the Latin department. It bears the title "De Orthographa et punctuatione," and has twenty-seven large illuminated initials. It was written about 1430-50, and was formerly the property of Sir Thomas Philipps.

Annual Dinner of Lecturers.

The eleventh annual reunion and dinner of the corps lecturers, Superintendents, and operators in the Board of Education Free Courses to the People at the Hotel Manhattan next Thursday evening will be of more than ordinary interest. Supervisor Henry M. Leipziger will present a summary of the results of the year, with some exposition of the plan and prospects of the work, at the dinner on Thursday evening, and among the speakers will be the Rev. Edward Judson of the Judson Memorial Church, whose hall on Washington Square is one of the "centres"; Prof. H. C. Bum-pus of the American Museum of Natural History, President O'Brien of the Board of Education, State Superintendent Charles R. Skinner, and Controller Coler.

German Charity Ball's Funds.

The German Charity Ball, which was given at the Waldorf on Jan. 31, netted over \$8,000. The amount realized from the ball was distributed on May 1 to the following hospitals: German Hospital, \$1,400; St. Mark's Hospital, \$900; St. Francis Hospital, \$900; German Polyclinic, \$900; German Aid Society, \$1,000; Isabella Home, \$900; Wartburg Orphan Asylum, \$700; German Ladies' Aid Society, \$650, and the German West Side Dispensary, \$650.