

-THE-ECHO-



M. J. McClelland

-THE-ECHO-



MAY, 1909

ALBANY, N. Y.

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THE ECHO

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The Echo

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XVII

MAY, 1909

No. 8

"Les Precieuses Ridicules"

During the reign of Henry IV, social life at the Louvre was characterized by coarseness and recklessness. The king, a soldier by profession and a man of easy morals had introduced into his court the license of the camp. Under these conditions the Louvre could scarcely be an agreeable place for a person of culture and refinement. Among those to whom this society was most distasteful was the young Marquise de Rambouillet. Her father was Jean de Vivonne, Marquis de Pisani, who had been French ambassador to the court of Rome. Her maternal grandmother was a kinswoman of Catherine de Médicis, hence the Marquise was related to Marie de Médicis, wife of Henry IV. Born and brought up in Italy, there was cultivated in her a love for polite society and after having married the Marquis de Rambouillet, she

was unable to enjoy life at the French court. Little by little she began to withdraw from society, giving as an excuse the cares of her rapidly increasing family. This, however, did not isolate her from society, for as she was well-born, talented, beautiful and a natural society leader, the best of society sought her at her home in the Rue Saint-Thomas-du-Louvre.

Thus was established the Hôtel de Rambouillet, which was to occupy a very conspicuous place in French society for nearly half a century. One saw a great variety of people at the gatherings held here, for worth was according to wit and learning not according to rank. Men of letters, whether rich or poor, found a cordial welcome and in their midst we find such noted writers as—Marot, Malherbe, Rousard, Théophile, Voiture and Clement.

These social gatherings dated from about 1620 to 1665. They had readings and lectures. They discussed new works and, indeed, the authors of them might well stand in fear of the judgment passed, such was the culture and influence of these people. They discussed the usage of words, literature, music, politics or current topics. Everything was unreserved and nothing was too serious or gay provided it was not against propriety. Conversation had become an art; it was no longer "mere talk."

Toward 1648, owing to the marriage of Julia d'Angennes, eldest daughter to the Marquise, the death of the Marquis and the disturbances of the Froude, the Hôtel de Rambouillet began to decline. It had exerted its influence upon society and was soon to be only a pleasant memory. We can see the benefits which the Hôtel de Rambouillet conferred upon France. First, careful attention had been given to refinement in thought and speech which found its way into language and literature. Secondly the language had been greatly in need of reform in spelling and pronunciation as well as diction. Lastly, the influence which the Hôtel de Rambouillet produced was in direct contrast to the vulgarity of the court;

as Roederer said "Life at court and life at the Hôtel de Rambouillet were antipathetic."

After the decline of the Hôtel de Rambouillet Mademoiselle de Scudéry and many others had similar gatherings at their respective homes. At these gatherings the "esprit précieux" which had been cultivated at the Hôtel de Rambouillet went astray. False notions of propriety, elegance and love prevailed. Conversation became affected and prudish, and to this was added pedantry. The "bel esprit" became a social "fad," so to speak, spreading from Paris through the provinces. Among the worst of the abuses instituted was the abuse of words. Fictitious names were used instead of baptismal names. Metaphorical terms were substituted for common idioms, as for instance, the teeth were spoken of as "the furniture of the mouth," night, as "the mother of silence," and a hat was "the defier of the weather." The themes of conversation as well as the language used are extremely interesting. They discussed such questions as, should history be preferred to romance, or romance to history and just how much liberty should a woman enjoy. Imagine how the Hôtel de Rambouillet would have received such topics! They made out a manual of conversation and dressed dolls in order to see how the new styles they were going to institute would look. Such was the type of the gatherings supposed to be in direct imitation of the Hôtel de Rambouillet.

These gatherings had spread, as before stated, even to the provinces and without doubt preciosity held greater sway here than at Paris. It was a case of foolish women on the outermost rim of society trying to imitate court ladies. When such gatherings were at their zenith, Molière, the great comedian, and his little band of players were in the provinces. He could not help but come in contact with the "précieuses" and when he returned to Paris he produced a little one-act comedy called "Les Précieuses Ridicules." This was the first time anyone had applied the adjective "ridicule" to the "pré-

cieuses," but indeed at this stage of their development it was not at all far-fetched. The title alone attracted the playgoers and at the first performance all the guests of the Hôtel de Rambouillet were present and heartily applauded the efforts of the actors. After the first performance the piece was withdrawn for a time on account of the sport it made of society. The public, however, saw the worth of the play and when it was recalled the price of admission was greatly increased. The piece not only satirized the foolish women of the time but it opened up an entirely new vista of dramatic art. It was a new type of comedy for which the public had been waiting.

The scene of the play is laid in Paris. Madelon and Cathos, respectively daughter and niece to Gorgibus, a worthy bourgeois gentleman, have recently come to Paris from the provinces. Although they are entirely ignorant of the ways of the world except for what they have read in Mademoiselle de Scudéry's books, the young ladies assume all the affectedness of the "précieuses." Gorgibus has furnished the two young ladies with very worthy suitors, named La Grange and Du-Croisy, who are very desirous to marry and who press their suit immediately. The "précieuses" scorn their admirers for their bluntness, for with Mademoiselle de Scudéry they believe the road to matrimony should be long and strewn with "gallant notes, love-letters, little cares and pretty verses" as depicted in "la Carte de Tendre." La Grange and Du Croisy, enraged at being so jilted by two such upstarts, plan a cruel revenge. They furnish their two valets with all the fine apparel necessary for court gentlemen and send them to woo the young ladies. The two strange visitors introduce themselves as the "Marquis de Mascarille" and the "Vicomte de Jodellet," and are received with all the graciousness due their rank. The conversation, which is mostly of clothes and fashions, is especially pleasing to the ladies. The gallants vie with each other in making witty speeches and in securing the admiration of their hostesses. This talk is at its height and the two

beaux have sent for musicians to provide music for a little dance when La Grange and Du Croisy appear in search of their servants. Imagine the consternation of the two young ladies when their fine beaux are led away disgraced and stripped of their finery! Thus the scene ends, but before the two servants are led away one exclaims, "To treat a Marquis like that! Such is the way of the world. * * * I see indeed that only vain appearance is cherished here and that true virtue is not considered at all."

In this way Molière has painted a picture of so-called polite society. Preciosity had passed all bounds of intelligence, so such a piece could not help but please sane-minded people. But it struck home and "les précieuses" henceforth had added to their name "ridicules." The play sounded the death knell of preciosity both in society and on the stage.

Contemporary writers say that the scene was extremely funny. Molière took the part of "Marcarille" and Jodelet the part of the "Vicomte de Jodelet." The absurdity of their dress added greatly to the ridiculousness of the play. Mademoiselle de Jardins says—"His (meaning Molière's) wig was so huge that it swept the stage every time he bowed and his hat was so small that it is easy to imagine that the Marquis carried it in his hand more than on his head. His cravat suggested a seemly dressing gown; his canons seemed made for children to play hide and seek in" * * * and "a bunch of tassels dangled from his pocket as if it were a horn of plenty."

We must not imagine that this play was meant to satirize the Hôtel de Rambouillet; such, indeed must have been the furthest from Molière's mind. Society at the Hôtel de Rambouillet, we know, was not such as to be criticized or ridiculed, but it was the minor gatherings which had corrupted the spirit of society found at the home of the Marquise. These were indeed ridiculous and even more so than the play represented. In its origin the "esprit précieux" was nothing but

a much needed protest against the coarseness of the manners of the time but the reform was carried so far that it became a much driven social fad which certainly needed the restraining rein of Molière's comedy.

Bertha S. Weaver, '10.

Spring

Somebody told me a secret.
 I wonder if you haven't guessed?
 Over in the green thickets
 A robin is building its nest.

Somebody told me a secret.
 I wonder if someone can't think?
 The apple tree down in the orchard,
 Is a mass of white blossoms and pink.

Somebody told me a secret.
 Do you suppose it's been seen,
 That over the hills and the valleys
 There's a beautiful carpet of green?

Somebody told me a secret.
 Ah! did I hear someone say:
 "The dear little modest blue violets
 Were seen in the meadow to-day?"

Somebody told me a secret.
 And I'll share it with you to-day.
 Gentle spring, by all these sweet tokens,
 Tells mortals she's coming this way.

E. F. S., '08.

*General
 Obj. Ch.*

Dusky

At the close of the Mexican war, Craddock and I found ourselves entirely cut off from the associations of the old days and with a decided taste for the danger and freedom of life in the New South West. Consequently, after due consideration, we decided to purchase a ranch in northern Texas and cast in our lot with the land for which we had been fighting.

By a fortunate chance we encountered at Rio de Madras, a Mexican from that region, who was about to return home and who readily agreed to join our party. He knew of a place which he thought would about suit us and offered to guide us there.

On the second day, we camped toward dusk on the border of a clump of cotton wood trees. I was building a fire and Craddock just cutting the tent poles when suddenly a great commotion broke out in the thicket behind us and almost immediately a large grizzly lumbered out, beating the bushes madly with her huge paws. I sprang for my rifle and waiting until she had come to within twenty feet of me, let her have it close to the shoulder. Stopping short, she reared on her hind legs and, with a last mighty roar, toppled over dead.

As we all approached to get a closer view, there followed from out of the thicket a little cub not more than a week old. It stood blinking in the sunlight and swaying weakly on its trembling legs. A feeling of pity for the creature whose mother I had just killed, came over me and I decided to bring it up myself. After a little trouble, it was captured and placed in the wagon. Next morning, finding it still there I fed it some canned beef soup.

So it continued all during the trip. Whether this diet is prescribed for young bears I do not know, but certainly that cub thrived on it, so that by the time we reached our new home, he often walked along by the side of the wagon, clumsily, yet with a certain awkward swiftness.

By the end of a month he was a recognized member of our family of three, eating with us and sleeping just outside my door. He would follow me around like a dog and often accompanied me on my trips over the ranch. With him lying at my side there was not the slightest danger in sleeping in the open, for at the least sound, he would growl and poke me with his muzzle.

So a year went by and we now had some five hundred head of cattle. Dusky, my little cub, had grown into a good sized bear but remained as devoted to me as ever. Visitors were greatly frightened at sight of him as indeed they might well be unless received cordially by one of us; yet he had never attacked any one and his presence about the house was protection against anything.

When he was a year and a half old, I took him one day for a trip to the other side of our ranch. At night I camped on a little hillock and rolling myself up in a blanket, was soon asleep. The plain lay upon every side drear and desolate. No life seemed left upon the earth. Yet suddenly with a smothered cry, I awoke, starting up with a strange fear, my brow dampened by great beads of perspiration. At my side, Dusky stood growling softly, his ears pricked far forward and eyes fixed straight ahead.

Following the direction of his gaze, I could perceive a dark object dimly outlined against a slight roll of the plain. Even as I looked it moved, approaching nearer and nearer. Cautiously I reached for my rifle and was reassured by the cool pressure of the barrel upon my hand. The other hand I laid restrainingly upon Dusky and endeavored to keep him quiet. By this time the dark shadowy object was assuming definite form and in a moment I realized that a puma was wandering over the plain drawn from its mountain lair by the smell of my supper.

I sighted carefully in the darkness and pulled the trigger. There was no report. I shook out the shell and tried the

next. Still no discharge. Gradually a realization of the horror of my position came over me. I had only a useless rifle and small hunting knife to defend myself against the attack of this fiercest of beasts. Crouching there in the darkness I waited its attack.

But suddenly Dusky whom I had forgotten in my extremity, gave a deep growl and rushed at the puma. On the instant the wild-cat with a snarl sprang at the bear, meeting his rush fiercely.

The struggle that followed I shall never forget. The two animals whirled in quick succession never opening to allow me to strike; the puma striving to fasten its teeth in the bear's throat and the bear striking great blows with his paws endeavoring to get his foe in a death-hug. I watched the fight breathlessly, with my life hanging in the balance.

At one time the bear seemed about conquered, the puma's fangs fastening deep into his neck. But with a terrific effort he wrenched himself free and then struck the great beast a stunning blow full upon the head. It swayed for a moment biting and clutching the air; then with an awful scream it sank to the ground. In an instant the bear was upon it, knocking it this way and that, and biting it savagely.

I did not dare interfere, for with the taste of fresh blood, I did not know what he might do. A moment longer he attacked the dead puma and then as with a sudden irresistible impulse, turned and was swallowed up in the darkness of the night.

I sat up until morning, my useless gun upon my knee and at daybreak set out for home. I reached there in the middle of the afternoon and was received with startled surprise. Eagerly I told my story to Craddock who was much interested. For a month or more we watched for Dusky but he never came back. The primeval life of his fighting ancestors had claimed its own.

Howard B. Dabney, '12.

Editorial

When the present editors of THE ECHO assumed their duties in February they were met on all sides by the assurance that neither faculty nor students took the slightest interest in the magazine. On the face of it it sounded rather discouraging.

After some thought however we arrived at the conclusion that if people took the trouble to talk about their lack of enthusiasm, they must have some interest in THE ECHO whether they realized it or not. We have been pleased to discover that this conclusion was correct. The faculty have been most helpful, some of the students have offered valuable suggestions and the college as a whole seems to feel that THE ECHO is worth while.

If THE ECHO is to be a success, the college must be ambitious in two directions. In the first place we must strive to make the material as good as that of any other college magazine published. In the second place the management of the paper must be as efficient as possible. It is this second phase of the question which we wish to consider at present.

The Board feels that the present system of election is not a good one. A new board is elected twice each year. That means that each board makes up about four issues of the paper. It takes at least two months to learn exactly how to compile the manuscript properly—editing a magazine being more complicated than one might think—and so each board issues about two numbers that are really satisfactory to itself. Then a new board takes up the process and begins all over again. The result is a lack of unity.

Secondly the editors are elected by the college as a whole. Such a method of election is not apt to prove a good one. The students are not able to judge as to what persons are

best fitted for the places and the personal popularity of the candidates rather than literary and executive ability is apt to influence their choice.

Hoping to make the management for the coming year as efficient as possible, the Board presents to the students for consideration a new system of election which shall be tried for a year. It proposes:

1. That the retiring board shall elect the new board.
2. That the board shall serve for a year.
3. That the new board shall be elected in April of the preceding year and shall manage the two last issues of the magazine under the instruction of the old board.
4. That the new board shall have the privilege of electing one or two additional members in October.

There will be a meeting of the student body to consider this matter and to vote upon it. It is hoped that each student will give the subject serious thought and that no one will allow personal considerations to interfere with what may best insure the success of THE ECHO.

Exchanges

D' Ol' Songs

It kin' o' strange t' heah d' songs
 D' niggahs sing t'-day:
 It mek me sad an' lonesom', too,
 I don' know what t' say.
 F' way down souf in Dixie lan'
 Befor' d' wa' begin
 D' way us niggahs use t' sing,
 O, my! it wuz a sin.
 "Massa's in d' col', col' groun',"
 "I lub my Lindy Lou,"
 "Ma ol' Kentucky home, Good-night,"
 'N "Swanee Ribbeh," too.
 Dem wuz d' songs we lubbed t' heah
 'Fo' Massa went away:
 But don' no niggah sing no mo'
 'N don' no banjo play.
 Dey ain' no songs fo' us t' shote
 Ote neaf d' silb'ry moon,
 F' all de yallah trash know now
 Am dis heah rag-time toon.
 —DENIS A. O'BRIEN, in the *Holy Cross Purple*.

A sea, a sky, a star,
These be God's great three;
The sea for depth, the sky for breadth
And the star for immensity.

A mind, a heart, a soul,
These be man's great three;
The mind for thought, the heart for love,
And the soul for eternity.

—R. J. CLEVELAND, in the *Nassau Literary Monthly*.

The Coming of the Night

The sunset told its message to the sea,
The murmuring sea.
The sea sent little waves ashore
To tell once more
The sunset's message to a whispering tree.
Out in the darkening sky afar
Hung one lone star
To welcome with its silver light
The silent splendor of the night.

—JEAN CHALLIS MACDUFFIE, in the *Smith College Monthly*.

College News

“Miss E. Helen Hannahs, University of Chicago, A. B., and at present instructor in Albany Normal College, has been appointed assistant in psychology at Adelphi College, to take the place of Dr. Edwin C. Broome, who has resigned to accept the superintendency of the Mt. Vernon schools.”—*The Evening Post*.

Junior Notes

The members of the Junior Class have returned to the S. N. C. very much rested by their vacation, and are ready to put forth their best efforts during the few remaining weeks of this semester.

Miss Mary Harpham, who was taken ill before college closed, is somewhat improved. We hope to have her with us again soon.

Miss Louise Koon was the guest of Bertha Weaver during vacation.

On April 19th, several members of the Junior Class were entertained at the home of Miss Purdy in Schenectady.

Sophomore Notes

All of our girls report a pleasant time during the Easter vacation.

We are very glad that Miss Wilkinson's visit to the college on March 31st was followed by her return to college work.

Miss Bessie Deegan visited friends in Troy, March 27th and 28th.

Miss Sarah Trembley recently entertained Miss Mabel Hughes of Utica.

Miss Lillian Wittmeier of Schenectady was entertained on April 5th by Miss Florence Wittmeier.

Miss Marie Phillips on April 5th entertained Miss Helen McCann of the Albany Training School.

Miss Helen Black of Yonkers was the guest of Miss Sarah Trembley, April 13th.

The class of 1911 gave its annual reception to faculty and students on March 19th. The primary chapel was beautifully decorated with ferns and white carnations. Zita's orchestra rendered a pleasing program during the earlier part of the evening and later made dancing possible. Those receiving were the Misses Trembley, Bennett, Deegan and Scott.

Freshman Dates

A regular business meeting of the Freshman Class was held Friday, April 2nd, in the grammar chapel.

A regular meeting of the class was held Friday, March 25th. After the business was transacted, a social program was enjoyed.

Miss Margaret Lakin visited her sister in Albany, April 21st.

The Freshman Class enjoyed a visit to the State Legislature, Monday evening, March 27th.

Y. W. C. A.

The Y. W. C. A. girls have all returned from their respective homes, after their Easter vacation, with greater zeal for work in this association.

Miss Mabel Tallmadge led the meeting held on Wednesday, April 7th. The topic, "Profit," was found in Math. 16:26. The leader clearly explained how our own profit is not the most important thing in our life. John D. Rockefeller was given as an example of a person who has fully realized this fact.

Forgiveness was the topic of an interesting meeting held April 21st, led by Adele Le Compte. Instances of forgiveness in the Bible were given such as the forgiveness of the multitude by Christ at His crucifixion, and the forgiveness of Peter by Christ. Mary Norton added much interest to the meeting by reading an extract on forgiveness from a sermon which was delivered in the chapel at Harvard.

Cabinet meetings have been held as usual every Monday at five, at which the future work of the association has been discussed.

Delta Omega

The engagement of Miss Mary F. Stebbins of Little Falls to Mr. James Nesbitt of Ilion was announced March 30th. The many Delta friends of Miss Stebbins wish to extend to her their best wishes.

The annual play, entitled "Breezy Point," was given May 1st. The clever characterizations caused much merriment and the impersonators received many congratulations upon the success of their efforts.

The members of the Delta Omega Sorority wish to express their sense of deep personal loss in the withdrawal of Dr. E. Helen Hannahs from our college faculty. Dr. Hannahs carries with her the appreciation of every girl who has come under her instruction for the inspiration which she has given through her strong personality and her earnest, helpful work.

Eta Phi

A regular meeting of the sorority was held on April 3rd, at the home of Miss Springsteed. The social hour was devoted to a program of Eugene Field and to music. The selections were as follows:

Life of Eugene Field.....	Miss Willcox
"The Duel".....	Miss Koon
"Ballad of the Waller Lot".....	Miss Keller
Solo.....	Miss Burchard
"The Rockaby Lady".....	Miss Raynsford
Duet	{ Miss Burchard and Miss Stephens
Field's Child Friends.....	Miss Hunter

A linen shower was given at the home of Miss Agnes Stephens, on April 24th, in honor of Miss Jane Doyle, whose engagement to Mr. Bell, of Norwich, has recently been announced. In addition to the active members of the sorority, Miss Hannahs, Miss McCutcheon, Miss Clement, Miss Bryce and Miss Cook of the faculty, and Miss Beutler of Albany were present.

Kappa Delta

“The stove is standing by the door;
We eat our breakfast off the floor;
Before the house there stands a dray;
By these signs shall ye know 'tis May.”

The Kappa Deltas have survived the strenuositities of moving and are now pleasantly situated in their new home at 82 North Allen street.

The regular bi-monthly meeting of the sorority was held at the K. Δ. House, March 31, 1909.

The suit-case brigade was given a very pretty luncheon by Miss Isabella Knapp, April 5th.

Miss Gertrude Cox, of Bates College, was the guest of Miss Fitch and Miss Stillman, April 5th and 6th.

Miss Ione Schubert returned April 1st from New York where she attended the reception given by the U. S. S. Connecticut.

A spread was given at the house April 5th, in honor of Miss Stillman's birthday.

Psi Gamma

The Misses Wittimeier and Hotaling entertained the sorority, at the home of the latter, at luncheon, March 23rd.

At the meeting, held March 30th, the literary program consisted of the study of the lives of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, their works and a comparison of their individual styles of writing.

The Misses Sarah M. Wilson, '00, May Marsden, '07, Kathryn Ostrander, '07, Mabel Roosa, '08, Emma Krennrick, '07, and Marion Mackey, '07, visited Albany during vacation.

Miss Mabel A. Tallmadge was the guest of Miss Marion H. Mackey of Coxsackie, April 15th to 19th. Among the guests at a party given in her honor, were the Misses Elizabeth Sherman, '07, Viola Carnrite, '08, and Evelyn Austin, '10, K. Δ.

The Gamma girls enjoyed a course dinner at 7 p. m. Tuesday, April 20th, at 124 Jay street. It was a delightful glimpse of the anticipated sorority-house life.

The New York branch of the Psi Gamma Alumnae Association will hold its annual dinner at one o'clock May 8th, at the Hotel Manhattan, New York City.

Phi Delta

We rejoice that owing to his father's recovery, Mr. Fitzpatrick was able to return to college after the Easter vacation.

The majority of our members has been suffering from severe lameness, due to a too strenuous interest in athletic sports.

Mr. Case seems as much of a "case" as ever, though tempered somewhat by sad experience.

We were very glad to see in town recently several of our former members, Messrs. Brown, Brunson, Randall and Patrie.

Newman Study Club

A regular meeting was held April 22nd. An interesting program was rendered, and the business transactions were lively.

We are glad to have Miss Wilkinson with us again.

Miss Fitzpatrick was unable to return to college until April 21st, on account of the illness of her mother.

We have begun the study of Newman's one long poem, "The Dream of Gerontius." This poem is the subject of an oratorio by the famous musician Dr. Elgar.

Alumni Notes

Sarah M. Wilson '00, visited her sister in Albany recently and called on college friends.

Miss May Marsden '07, Emma Krennrick '08 and Miss Mabel Roosa '08, visited the college recently.

Mr. A. Z. Boothby '00 of the Rensselaer High School called at the office April 22nd.

During the Easter vacation, Miss Mabel Hall '01, spent several days in the city and called on college friends. Miss Hall teaches French in the Hoosick Falls High School.

It is with the deepest regret that we record the death of Miss Cleo Casler, of the class of 1899. Those who remember Miss Casler will mourn with us the loss of one of our most lovable and popular young women. She was an earnest and successful teacher both in Little Falls and in Port Chester. Her death occurred March 23rd, and was caused by heart failure following an operation for appendicitis.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Peck, of Worcester, Mass., are rejoicing over the birth of a daughter April 5th. Mrs. Peck was Miss Juliet Murdock.

Miss Elizabeth K. Macmillan, '07, who has completed her course in practice teaching at Oneonta, has accepted a position at Coeymans.

In looking over the subscription list of THE ECHO, we find that one hundred and twenty-one of the Alumni subscribers have not yet paid their subscriptions for this year. No periodical, especially no student periodical can exist unless the

subscriptions are paid. We receive very prompt complaints if THE ECHO does not reach our Alumni, but from the printed notices sent out with the last issue we have received responses from just two subscribers.

The price of subscription is only one dollar, and eight of the ten numbers for this year have already been delivered. Please consider! We cannot exist much longer on nothing. Kindly give this matter prompt attention.

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At Albany

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CHARTERED AS A COLLEGE 1890

REORGANIZED 1905.

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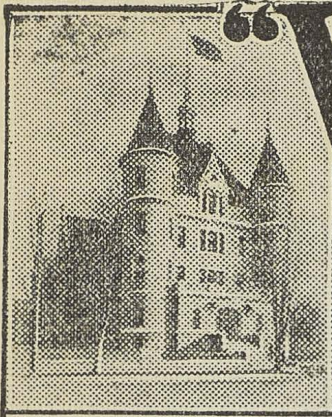
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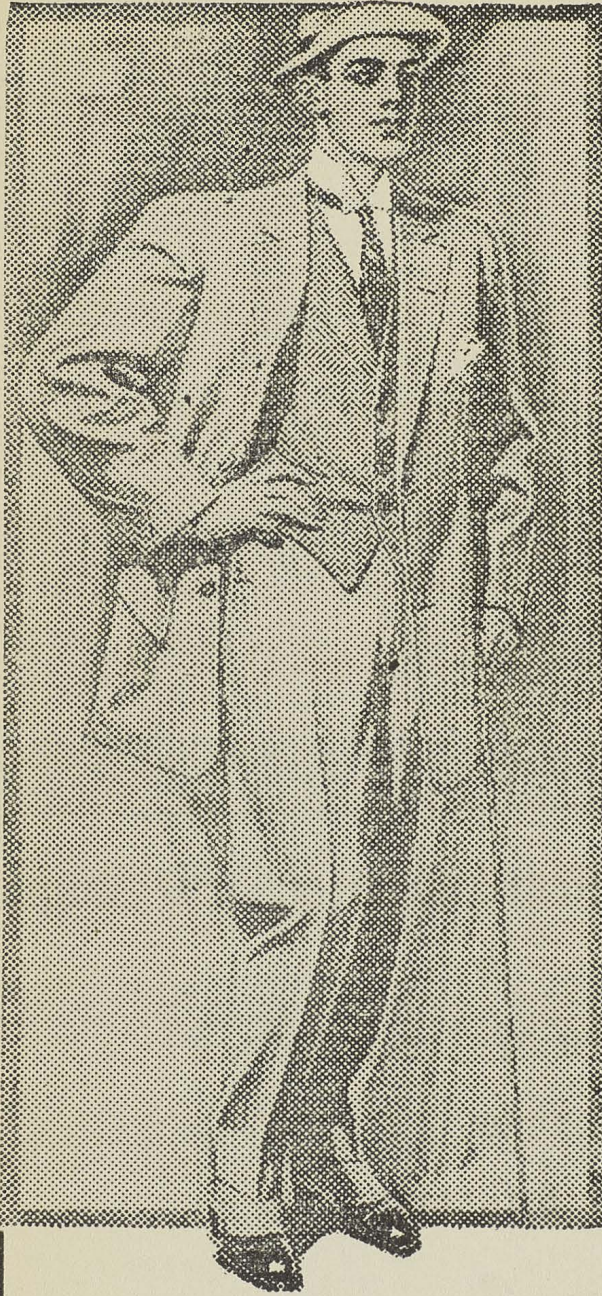
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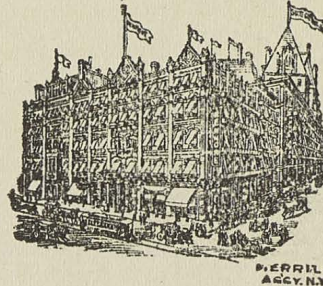
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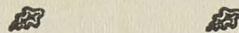
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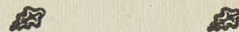
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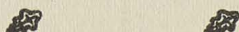
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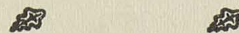
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