

THE ALUMNÆ NEWS

Published Monthly by the Associate Alumnae of Hunter College of the City of New York

(Entered at the New Rochelle Post Office at the pound rate of postage.)

VOL. XXVI

NEW ROCHELLE, N. Y., MARCH, 1921

No. 3

MEETING OF THE SCHOOL NATURE LEAGUE

On the evening of February ninth the School Nature League held its first public meeting, Mrs. John I. Northrop presiding. The success of the event in interesting the public was indicated by the large attendance, which, in spite of the stormy night, filled the assembly hall of the American Museum of Natural History. Certain it seemed that these six hundred people carried away a strong regard for the value of nature study in the school curriculum and an enthusiasm for the work of the League, whose slogan is "A Nature Room in Every School."

President Henry Fairfield Osborn of the Museum opened the meeting with a brief exposition of the fundamental value of an interest in, and a knowledge of, nature, and especially the wisdom of introducing a child early to its wonders.

Mrs. Northrop then sketched the growth of the League from its beginnings in the Natural Science Committee of our Alumnae Association, which thirty years ago opened at the college the first wild flower show ever held in New York City. Years of semi-annual flower shows followed, augmented by frequent distributions of nature material for teachers in our public schools, so that the "nature" named in the course of study might be demonstrated by some bits, at least, of the objective realities. Within the past few years several permanent shows or nature rooms have been maintained by the League, notably one in that congested district served by P. S. 75, at Norfolk and Hester Streets; also those cheery corners filled with plants and birds in the school for the deaf and crippled children. The room in P. S. 18 at 121 East 51st Street is under the special auspices of the Alumnae of Hunter College.

Mrs. Northrop's lantern slides attested the deep delight the children of the world of brick buildings and hard pavements take in the woodsy appearance and the fragrance of the nature rooms, where they are free to see, to touch, to smell, to exclaim, to ask questions.

Mr. Thornton Burgess, the well-known writer for children, then expressed his belief that nature study is the most important subject in the school curriculum, as it furnishes practical knowledge and is of great value in the development of the spiritual and moral character of the child under the happiest auspices.

The next speaker was Professor Hugh Findlay of the School of Agriculture of

Columbia University. He talked on the necessity of educating our future citizens in wise measures for conserving our natural resources for all time, and emphasized that the best way to do this is to inform our children of the ways and powers of nature so that they may use their adult influence intelligently.

The meeting was closed by the exhibition by Mr. George H. Sherwood of the educational department of the Museum of most interesting biological films, including motion pictures of deep sea life photographed at the Marine Biological Laboratory at Naples. These were greatly appreciated by the audience.

The campaign of the School Nature League to increase knowledge of its aims and accomplishments, and to enlarge its membership, is gathering momentum. Teachers are invited to become teacher-members and the recipients of nature material for their classes, on payment of dues, fifty cents a year, to Miss Jessie Rosenfeld, Treasurer, 119 West 87th Street. Others may become associate members, who pay no dues but agree to send monthly to the nature rooms any suitable material. The "gentle reader" is cordially invited to visit any Tuesday or Thursday afternoon one of the nature rooms, where she will realize that even the simplest material, such as a handful of acorns, is full of delight for the eager children who frequent these charming fairy places.

D. S.-H.

COLLEGE NOTES

The beginning of the new term at College was occupied by two events representing unfinished business of the preceding semester.

One of these was the initiation into our Phi Beta Kappa Chapter of the new members elected from the class just graduated. Five members of the class of January '21 were deemed worthy of this, one of the highest honors that can be bestowed upon any student; they are Loré B. Luks, Lillian M. Johnson, Dorothy Vera Bernstein, Sarah F. Borock, and Viola I. Schmid. The initiation, which was followed by a tea, took place on February second. The time-honored ceremony was made doubly impressive by the fact that all the faculty members present wore academic costume.

Also as an aftermath of the previous term's activities came the announcement that Hunter's contribution to the relief fund for the professors and students of Central Europe, amounted to \$1,200. This