

FIFTY-THIRD YEAR

CHICAGO'S ANONYMOUS FIEND

Scurrilous Letter Writer Who is Annoying Society.

Members of more than 20 families living in the most exclusive section of the city have been made victims of the most venomous attacks during the last few years, says the New York World.

Now, led by one of the leading physicians of the city, government and city officials are trying to solve the mystery. They succeeded in tearing away the mask which so far has hidden the writer of these letters, which have disrupted families, broken engagements and brought unhappiness to so many people, and there is disclosed a woman of position and wealth.

It will be proved that the attacks on the reputation of people of the highest social standing have emanated from the diseased brain of a less prominent person.

It will be the whole matter be hushed up without the mystery being cleared away. This is said to be the desire of those who have been victims of the scurrilous letters.

For the most part the writer of these scurrilous letters has attacked persons of position, and those who have been attacked have been severely injured. A dozen engagements have been postponed for months because of the letters, and several have been broken off. Families have been disgraced, and the names of people have lived in reproach to their families.

Dr. Fernand Henrotin, of No. 353 La Salle avenue, one of the distinguished physicians of Chicago, has come forth as a leader of an attacking faction. He declares that the writer of these letters has made his life a hell for years.

In answer to a long and circumstantial statement made by Dr. Henrotin, in which he was careful to mention no names, he declared that he had proof that the author of the letters is a young society woman living on the north side. This woman's husband is one of the executive officers of a steel company. She has always borne an unblemished reputation. Dr. Henrotin says this young woman's mind is unbalanced, and she speaks as a physician.

Mrs. Horatio N. May, a woman of wealth and the highest position in Chicago, has said in an interview that Dr. Fernand Henrotin has accused her sister, Mrs. Fannie McIntyre, and that the accusation is as infamous as the letters, and is unsupported by any evidence worthy of credence. Both Mrs. May and her sister have received anonymous letters.

It is none the less the sensation that has resulted from the charges and the denial made by Mrs. McIntyre and her sister that Postmaster General Payne has taken up the matter and ordered that a report be made to the postoffice inspectors giving the fullest details. The postoffice inspectors who have had charge of the investigation is James E. Wilson, and it has been printed that the report upon him for not taking summary action.

While the anonymous letters have been received during a period covering 25 years, activity on the part of the police and the postoffice authorities has been checked the evil, but in the beginning of the present year letters were

sent in larger numbers, and they were even more vilifying.

It should be explained that not all of the letters were unprintable. Some were merely excessively silly, and it is plain that these were written merely to avert suspicion.

The writer displayed an intimate knowledge of the life of some of the victims. The charges occasionally had a foundation of truth. But the writer did not hesitate to accuse young women about to be married of having done most daring things.

Wives were told that their husbands were leading a double life. Husbands were informed of the alleged misconduct of their wives.

One of the victims is Mayor Carter Harrison, who received a particularly scurrilous letter, the contents of which convinced him that only one of his most intimate friends could have been responsible for it. He accused one of these friends and refused to be convinced that he was not guilty.

A prominent Dearborn avenue physician took his family to Canada a year ago and was delayed on the way. When he reached his destination he found that the anonymous writer had sent him four postal cards which the hotel clerk had read and talked about. The nature of them was such that the doctor was forced to leave the hotel in order to escape from the unpleasant comments of the other guests, and his wife was so affected that she suffered from nervous prostration.

Not all the letters have been anonymous; some have been forged signatures. For instance, just before Miss Walsh of Chicago married Graham Duffield, the mother of the latter, Mrs. Henry M. Duffield, received in Detroit a letter making the vilest attack upon Miss Walsh. It was signed "Julia Edson Manierre." Mrs. William R. Manierre was Miss Edson before her marriage. Mrs. Duffield promptly sent the letter to Mr. Manierre and demanded an explanation.

"Even at that time," Mr. Manierre has said, "our suspicions were directed toward the same woman who has been repeatedly connected with the writing of the letters. But owing to her unfortunate physical condition, which we were informed might affect her mental balance, we did not act. It is merely charitable to suggest that the writer of the letters is unbalanced, for no sane woman could write such words."

Shortly before the marriage of Miss Mary Dana to Shepard Stone the families of both received atrocious letters. Judge Kohlsaat received similar ones just before the marriage of his daughter, and former Mayor Hempstead Washburne was made furious by several of these anonymous letters while preparations were making for the marriage of his sister-in-law, Miss Marie Clark to Knappe Smith.

The most recent letters were sent about three weeks ago to Gracie Stewart, whose daughter, Miss Helen, is to be married to Dr. Philip Doane of 10 Astor street, on Jan. 1. Their evident purpose was to stop her wedding.

The worst letters were sent to Dr. Henrotin, his wife, his brother and sister. Their contents cannot even be hinted at. But while the Henrotin family suffered more than any other, the list of the victims is rather a comprehensive one. Here are some of those

Catarrh Rages in Every State in the Union.

Deaths in Each State from Catarrhal Diseases During Last Census Year.

[12th U. S. Census Report, Vol. III.]

