

# The High School.

A REPOSITORY OF REFINED LITERATURE, AND JOURNAL OF EDUCATION.

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*Liberator a defectione solum, qui non nititur.*

J. F. McARTNEY, Editor and Publisher.

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No. 3.

## CRACK THE NUT AND TAKE THE KERNEL.

What is more enjoyable at any time and especially on a winter's night, than sitting down and cracking and eating nuts, not keeping the enjoyment all to yourself, but dividing generously with friends. But who would be so foolish as to sit for any length of time, say even a few minutes, cracking nuts, finding in them good meats, and then wastefully throwing them away, benefitting thereby neither himself nor his friends? No one, unless he were very foolish would do such a silly thing; he would crack the nuts and take the kernels, or if he did not wish them for himself, leave the nuts for some one else to crack.

We have been told by sages that life is a school, and experience the teacher, and every event that happens, small or great, good or bad, is a lesson assigned us to learn. From earliest childhood these lessons are laid out, at first small, simple ones, but they must be well learned or the after ones will come the harder for their neglect; later they are to be found in the school room, from the stumbling over the A, B, C's away up to the sciences and languages; after the school room is left, and the boy and girl have entered young manhood and young ladyhood, they think they have left lessons behind them forever, and rejoice accordingly; but it is not long before they find them awaiting them at every turn, more difficult than any they have ever before attempted to commit, and made the more puzzling by their former neglect or slighting of school duties. They discover now that they but half cracked the nuts, or if they did so wholly, they left in a greater part of the kernel—every lesson made harder by the neglect of a former one, every duty more unwelcome and difficult from the slighting of its predecessor. There is work in the world for every one and nothing can be gained without patience and labor. He who would sit idly with folded hands, dreaming away his days, wasting the precious moments as they fly, of no more worth than a mass of inanimate clay, a mere blank in existence waiting for fortune and fame and success to come to him, without putting forth an effort for himself and grasping the chances as he meets them, will find to his sorrow that he will have to continue to wait until death comes—the only friend that ever will come without a half-way meeting—and claims him for his own, when there will be no more hope for the improvement of his gifts, and he will have to confess as did the wicked and slothful servant, that he wrapped his one talent in a napkin and buried it in the earth. Even if we do not expect to gain fame and fortune, we do not wish our lives to be failures; we would have some one mourn our loss, some one feel the better and happier for our having lived and the poorer for our having died. To every one is given the ability of gaining friends, and the chances of doing good, and he who has no friends and feels that he stands alone in the world and has made no mortal the richer by his living, has himself to blame. How much more beautiful and enjoyable would his life have been had he remembered that, "companionship teaches men and women to know, judge and treat each other justly."

How foolish are the boys and girls who have the opportunity for obtaining learning and gaining accomplishments to fritter away their precious time and spend the hours that should be devoted to study and the attainment of some good in silly nonsense, deceiving their parents and guardians and friends, who fondly imagine that they are accomplishing wonders, but still these are

better than those who never even make a pretense of laying aside bits of knowledge, for by the hard labor of their patient and much overtasked instructors, they succeed in acquiring at least the skimmings off the surface, while the others have gained absolutely nothing. In after years when these boys and girls become men and women, and go out into the world and mingle in society, coming in contact with business men and gentle, lady like women, with polished gentlemen and refined ladies, with men and women of learning and culture, with well-read and highly accomplished, scholarly people, when the younger generation naturally looking to them for guidance, come to them with questions for help and pleas for assistance, and they find themselves incompetent to assist them, then they feel in truth the bitterness of a wasted life and the stings of the sharp chains of ignorance, and in bitter sorrow they look back upon their wasted boyhood and girlhood; upon the golden days of youth and maidenhood so carelessly thrown away in the intoxicating pursuit of pleasure; upon the years of young manhood and young womanhood which might have been so promising, but in which they had already begun to feel the marks of dissipation, and the woful want in the balance, both social and literary, attendant upon those who possess a mind untutored and a heart untaught, and in keenest agony and repentance they discover how much better it would have been to have cracked and taken the kernel, and not have foolishly wasted the precious meat which now they so long to possess. Truly, "It's less pain to learn in youth, than be ignorant in age." "Where ignorance is bliss it were folly to be wise," has long been a favorite motto, but 'twould seem that at the present day, it would be more sensible to change it into, "In a land where Wisdom and Freedom stand side by side and where learning is so cheap, it is sheer wickedness to be ignorant."

Not in the search for knowledge only is it right for us to get the best of what is to be gotten, but this same rule holds true in all the pursuits of life. In literature we should make the choice of the best books and authors; in art we should select our gleanings from the finest artists; even in common every-day work, amongst men in their places of business, and women at their home-work, chances for self-improvement and ways and means for doing good are put into our hands, if we would only take advantage of them. It is useless to delve and dig if nothing comes of it; foolish to study until our head-aches if we do not put our heart into it and go to work with the steadfast determination to come out victors; perfectly useless to attempt anything of it, and for all such waste of time and talent be it no more than one talent we will surely be called upon to give an account.

The nut is given you, the hammer is raised ready to strike, crack the nut and be sure you take out the kernel.

LOTTIE OBLINGER.

## GRIT.

"Alas! he has not the gift of continuance." Webster defines grit as firmness of mind, courage, spirit, determination, resolution. All men, who have done anything for themselves or the world, have been gritty men, that no lack of success could daunt; no doubt discouragement; no opposition dis-spirit; no work break down; no lack of means destroy their resolve. When Arkwright's mill destroyed all his models and works, he began anew. When Carlyle's first Mill of the French Revolution, was burnt by the ignorant maid-



View of the Omaha High School Building.

servant he immediately wrote it over again. The rats destroyed about a thousand of Anderson's pictures, that had been gathered at great trouble, weariness and expense; he shouted out, thankful, that now he could make much better pictures of the feathered race. A man may have a right estimate of himself, he may be a ready man; but if he would do any thing, he must make others believe in him. How? By his grit. Bulwer published "Weeds and Wildflowers." The poems were a failure. He sent out "Falkland, a novel," and it fell flat; However, he did not sit down and cry, but putting his heart into it, he wrote "Pelham," and then they believed in him. The miner in California who worked three months, made nothing, abandoned his claim, and then found, a few days after, another man had taken out of it \$20,000 in three days had not grit enough.

It seems, almost, as if the first steps of the ladder were rendered difficult so that weak-backed, weak-kneed, no-account kind of folks, should give up. I do believe that the reason we have grasshoppers in Nebraska, in this early settlement of the country, is to keep out of it all those who have no grit, so that the fathers and mothers of Nebraska may leave after them a strong sturdy race of self-reliant, pushing, gritty men and women, everyone of them possessing "the two virtues of a hardy race: perseverance in purpose, and a spirit of conduct that never fails."

A poor workman always finds fault with his tools; the man with no grit is always deploring his lack of means, tools and time, but the gritty man works with what he has, makes his own tools and time. Herschell having neither telescope nor money, made one for himself and that not suiting him he prepared a second, and made 200 specula, before he got one to suit.

Neither does grit become discouraged from lack of sympathy and appreciation. Hunter, Harvey and Jenner, after years spent in studying and certifying their discoveries, when they gave them forth to the world, received nothing but obloquy, and, though the worlds bene factors, were, financially, losers for many years; but they knew how to wait. They had that blood in their veins, of which Montalembert, speaking of the English, Irish and Scotch people in India, during the mutiny, says: "Not one of them shrunk or trembled—all, military and civilians; young and old; generals and soldiers; resisted, fought, perished with boldness and intrepidity that never faltered." The world owes a great deal to these

gritty men. Howe not simply endured until the sewing machine would work, and he grew rich, but mark the stirring of brain in other men, to improve, and the thousands of men employed in the manufacture. Then the rapidity of the work, so that now the ladies are dressed better than the princesses of olden times.

Goodyear not simply found it out, till he could vulcanise rubber, and then by his new industry gave bread to thousands of workmen, but to-day that rubber is one of the necessities of life. Every day finding some new use.

We all admire this grit because in its bravery—no man has faith in a coward. "Be sure you are right, and then go ahead" said the *Western Pioneer*. "Be strong, invincible men." Have true grit.

JAY GEE.

## THE MEN WHO FASCINATE WOMEN.

Who are the real favorites with women, as a general rule? The men of attractive or plain exterior; those who shine or revel in photographs, or those who are averse to them? In our own circle, are the splendid looking fellows the dangerous ones? Have you any fair friends who have suffered sentimentally from regular features, flowing whiskers or exact proportions? Are the emotional tragedies evoked from animated fashion-plates and walking tailor's blocks? Give a man of fine person and presence fervor, sensibility and character to match, and you have been more bounteous than nature who usually bestows with half-open hands. She rarely confers on her sons—generous as she may be to her daughters—the charm of body and the charm of mind. When she does she often revenges herself for a profusion by implanting a weakness, that turns her gifts awry. How many handsome fellows who have had possibilities of merit have been spoiled by their handsomeness? How many more have been without such possibilities, and never missed them, because absorbed in the contemplation and admiration of their physical perfections!

No healthy mind can or does despise beauty in any shape; but between beauty and brains there is only one choice. And it does seem, generally, in spite of many exceptions, that the two are at variance in our sex, so much does one encroach upon the other—not necessarily, but commonly. Beauty, of course, is here understood conventionally, as it is applied to women—including delicacy of feature, softness

of complexion, harmony of color, exactness of proportion. There are some hundreds of fine-looking, actually handsome men who offend aesthetic canons; who, judged by the ordinary standard, are plain, perhaps ugly, and who never acquire the reputation, popularly at least, of being handsome. A man may be admirable in *physique*; he may have a face artists would love to paint, a figure sculptors would delight to model, and be as strong, broad and efficient as if he turned mirrors to disfavor. Beauty cannot be harmful to a man by whom it is regarded as an accident. Considered as an essential, it enervates and undermines him. Numbers of the world's heroes have been physically magnificent; but they have determined to be magnificent in performance, as well. But he who is ever conscious of personal attractions, and shows his consciousness, tacitly admits that they are the best of him, and becomes emasculated. His shallow vanity makes him womanish, and no womanish man can awake a grand passion in the breast of a womanly woman. Self-delight with the body and all that belongs to it, a certain self-stimulation of sensuousness, a sovereign satisfaction with form and feature set off to the best advantage, and distinctly feminine traits, and the man who shares these cannot expect to share anything else woman has to give. She naturally looks to him for what she has not and cannot get from herself; and, finding her pleasant and piquant vanities refracted as weaknesses and follies in him, she turns from him and from them in contempt.

When a woman has once been charmed by a man—for this seems to be the effect often produced upon her—she loses her power to judge of him rationally. She remembers but vaguely how he appeared to her before her heart had taken fire. Since then he has been transformed; he has taken on the hues of her fancy; he is woven into the woof of her life. However plain he may be, he does not seem so to her, since the glamour of passion is on her eyes. If he were handsome as hyacinthus, he would show to her no better than were he commonly endowed; so that his looks would avail him nothing.

Pietro Aretino, celebrated as a writer in the sixteenth century, who was as devoid of comeliness as decency, was a wholesale heart breaker. An illegitimate child, all of his pleasures and most of his pursuits were illegitimate. Corrupt even for Italy and his epoch, he was so clever with his pen, so ready with his tongue, that he won princess and princesses to his support and his arms. His biographies, produced by Berni, Dujardin, and Mazzuchelli, are extraordinary comments on the manners and customs of Southern Europe three hundred years ago. He seemed to have nothing to recommend him but talent, and that he prostituted whenever and wherever occasion offered. Compelled to leave his native city, Atezzo, by reason of writing a sonnet against indulgences, he went to Perugia, and supported himself by selling books—almost the only honest calling he is known to have had. Such plain business irked him; he walked to Rome and got employment in the service of Leo X., and of his successor, Clement VII. Certain licentious writings compelled him to retire; and, having set out once more to wandering, he arrived in Florence and attached himself to Giovanni de' Medici, who, two years after, died in his arms from a wound received in battle. The author himself had been stabbed, meanwhile, by a rival in an ardent attachment to a bewitching cook, and became so incensed

at the Pope for his unwillingness to punish the would be assassin, that he swore he would never forgive him. Aretino was indiscriminate in his gallantries until the frolic of his blood was somewhat tamed—saucepans being as alluring to him as coronets and pedigree. He painted and carved with skill; he fared sumptuously; the noblest beauties of Venice melted at his glance. Still he was a coarse scoundrel. He was a glutton, a sensualist, a blackguard, and not unfrequently he was waylaid and beaten, and several times nearly murdered, for his transgressions, literary and moral. He was designated as the scourge of princes. Why some of them did not have him put out of the way in that era of easy poisoning and poniards passes comprehension. G. D.

## MORALS AND MANNERS.

The common schools would be more useful if some attention were paid to morals and manners. We live in an irreverent and self-sufficient age, and in a peculiarly irreverent country. The young man speaks of his father as the "old man;" of his mother as the "old lady." Scholars call their teacher by his given name. The minister of the gospel, whose calling was once venerated and respected to a degree that is hardly credible, is not now treated with the deference that is due to him.

In many schools the intellect only is cultivated. The astronomer who can calculate the perturbations of the heavenly bodies, and by analysis locate a hitherto unseen world, is respected and praised for his great achievement, but no commendations are heard for the moneyless senator who refuses a hundred thousand dollar bribe. The metropolitan speculator who makes a fortune is extolled, but the country store-keeper who sells a good article and does not overreach, is called a slow-coach.

The plain preacher, the honest mechanic, the conscientious teacher, pass away and are forgotten; but the brilliant scholar, the magnetic orator, the rich capitalist, the successful soldier, are held up as models for the young, and their names are graven on brass and marble. We would not belittle intellectual education, but we would raise moral education to its proper level, and we would begin in the common schools. If we would have moral education in the common schools, we must introduce a carefully prepared text-book on morals, and give systematic instruction. We must teach that it is better to be honest than to be intellectually brilliant. A little time should be devoted to the study of civil government, say ten minutes daily.—*Educational Weekly.*

## A WORD TO THE YOUNG.

We would say to every young person, decide early upon an object in life. It helps a man or woman greatly to have some definite and fixed purpose. The successful people in all time have been those who had an object to carry out, and who made up their minds at an early age what they wanted to do. The first and most certain sign of what we call genius is the having a strong bias or bearing in any direction. Watt, even in childhood, began mechanical experiments; Mozart turned toward music; Napoleon to Military study; Horace Greeley drifted to newspapers and types; and Faraday to science. Sometimes a man does not develop the special talents with which he is endowed until late in life. Washington and Cromwell were men of peace until quite an advanced age. A. T. Sewert disliked finance in every form in his youth, and James Gordon Bennett tried a dozen occupations before entering journalism, for which he had such a special gift. Many other similar examples might be cited. The principle first stated is, however, still true and the sooner a man can find out what he is specially fitted to do, and makes up his mind that he will do that thing, the better are his chances of success.

# The High School

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THE HIGH SCHOOL is published every month, TERMS—\$1.00 per year; 50 cents for six months; single copies, 10 cents; delivered by carrier in the city or postpaid to any part of the United States. The paper will be sent until ordered discontinued and arrearages paid.

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Address all communications to

J. F. MCCARTNEY,

Editor and Publisher, Omaha, Neb.

It is proposed in the New Jersey Legislature to furnish every school-master in the State with a rawhide or rattan for purposes of juvenile castigation, with directions for using them to accompany each instrument. The object is to prevent the use of rods and other more cruel weapons of pedagogical warfare.

We are glad to announce that the threatening cloud that hung over the educational welfare of this State has been dispelled. The measures for the abolition of the county superintendency, and the discontinuance of the agricultural college were both ignominiously defeated in the State Legislature.

The *Holton (Kan.) Recorder* commenting on an article relating to compulsory education that appeared in our last issue says: "What is said by the *High School* of Michigan and *New York* might truthfully be said of Kansas. So far as our observation has extended, in not a single instance have the provisions of the compulsory education-law been enforced. The law is a dead letter in Kansas, and had as well be stricken from the statutes. It is just as impracticable to attempt to compel people to become educated, as it is to compel them to become religious or refined."

We thank our numerous exchanges for the many complimentary notices they have recently given THE HIGH SCHOOL. Our proverbial modesty has ever forbade us to quote any of those notices, and it is under a strong protest from that delicate factor of our organization that we here reproduce one selected from a large number. It will serve to show that THE HIGH SCHOOL is appreciated abroad, as well as at home.

THE HIGH SCHOOL, a monthly periodical published at Omaha, Neb., is one of the most creditable papers of its kind in this broad land. Its typography is superb, its editorial discussion of school matters, college news, art and society gossip, talks to and about young folks, and a general mélange of news that cannot fail to interest, makes it at once an indispensable adjunct to teachers and the more advanced pupils of both sexes in our high schools and academies. Mr. J. F. McCartney, its editor and founder, is a young gentleman whom we have known since his babyhood. He was born and raised on the borders of Iowa, and is thoroughly imbued with all the vim and brains, and progressive energy, that characterize the best type of a Western man. Subscription price, \$1 per year.—*Atlantic (Iowa) Democrat*.

## UNWISE LEGISLATION.

The manner in which the State legislature cut and slashed the various appropriation bills during the close of the session has been a source of general regret, and not a few of the senators and representatives have since become ashamed of themselves for the parts they took in this matter. It seems that every country grocer and back county politician who was sent to the Legislature got possessed of the idea that he must reform something, and with this idea uppermost, each item in the estimates of the officers of the various State institutions was clipped down a little. The estimates for the Deaf and Dumb Institute in Omaha, furnished by officers of the Board, who knew just what was needed, were almost entirely disregarded; and we learn that one of the best members of the

Board, who has worked faithfully for the interests of the institution, is now so completely disgusted (yes, disgusted) that he will be glad when his term expires. The appropriation item for the State Penitentiary was a gross injustice to the best interests of the State, and necessary expenses of the institution cannot be furnished for the next two years without an extra session of the Legislature. An extra session will cost the State a large amount, and the consequence is that instead of reform legislation it has been ruthless extravagance.

The highest ambition of the society going individual, is the attainment of popularity; and if that can be gained the cost is seldom counted. Popularity, like all other commodities of today, is current, and its cost in almost every instance is cash. To such an extent is this true, that a faultless attire and a long credit column with the banker, would induce society to clasp hands with a corpse. And yet social reformers are declaiming against the evils of the age, and loudly clamoring for remedies. They cry out against the want of culture in society, and proclaim reformation without taking even the first step in that direction. Whatever is demanded as the price of popularity will be paid, and while it is held at cash rates it must go to the highest bidder. In England at a time when every acre of land and every pound of wealth descended directly from generation to generation, a landed title was a tolerably sure indication of respectability. But with an age in which aristocratic inequality in rank are removed, when wealth follows enterprise as a natural result, the tendency is toward the accumulation of wealth at the entire cost of intellectual attainments. If intellectual attainments, truth and honesty—if real merit be the cost of respectability and the standard a high one, no amount of real estate churlishly hoarded can be taken as its equivalent.

## EDUCATIONAL.

THE COMMON SCHOOLS.—The common school, as an American institution, will live while America lives. Not only this, but the signs are unmistakable that it is to be more far-reaching in its efforts and results than it ever has been. Popular education is one of the primary functions of the State's life. No democratic government can long exist without it, and our best people are thoroughly confirmed in this conviction. We have taken up the subject simply to show that the State cannot "go back on" its record without the surrender of the policy which grows out of the instinct of all living organizations for self-protection and self-preservation. To surrender this policy would be not only foolish, but criminal; and there is not one American institution that American people would sooner fight for and die for, than that which secures an educated and intelligent nationality.—*Dr. F. G. Holland*.

Prof. David Kirk, of Minnesota, strongly urges the importance of instructing common school students in hygiene. He says: A few minutes daily devoted to this branch would be worth more than the hours given to arithmetic and grammar. The time may never come when we can dispense with the services of specialists in medicine and surgery, but we look for a time when men will know better than to go to sleep in a small room as tight as the "black hole of Calcutta," and then try to purify their poisoned blood by nostrums whose base is poor whisky, and whose principal ingredients are poisons. A thousand reforms in dress and diet are needed. If the study of physiology cannot be thorough and extensive in common schools, it will at least be suggestive.

## ENEMIES.

Have you any enemies? Upon receiving your answer to this question we will venture to tell you who you are even though we have never seen or heard of you before. If you have enemies go straight on and mind them not. If they block up your path, walk around them and do your duty regardless of their spite. A man who has no enemies has no friends, and is generally good for nothing. He is made of that

kind of material which is so easily worked that every one has a hand in it. A sterling character—one who thinks for himself and fearlessly speaks what he thinks—is always sure to have enemies. They are more a blessing than a curse, for they keep him alive and active. They do him a great favor when they show their colors, for then they furnish him an opportunity to draw a line of demarcation. They then furnish him a formidable weapon of defense. This is all he needs, all he would have, if he is our ideal man. The only real danger we stand exposed to is the stealthy thrust of a concealed foe. A celebrated character who was surrounded with enemies used to remark—"They are sparks which, if you do not blow, will go out themselves." Let this be your feeling while endeavoring to live down the scandal of those who are bitter against you. If you stop to dispute, you do but as they desire, and open the way for more abuse. Let the poor fellows talk; there will be a reaction if you but perform your duty, and hundreds who were once alienated from you will flock to you and acknowledge their error.

## OUR WASHINGTON LETTER.

WASHINGTON D. C. Feb. 20.

The city for the past month has been aglow with excitement occasioned by the Presidential problem, and to keep pace with the times the society life has been equally lively. Lent does not appear to have caused much cessation of pleasures, in fact the season exists only in name. The present time above all others is the one when receptions, balls and dinner parties cannot well be dispensed with, for you doubtless understand that there is generally an object in view aside from pleasure in giving these, and that object can only be accomplished when Congress is in session. The past week and the current week, being the last two of the official term, not only of the President, but most of the members of his cabinet have been the gayest of the season. Society birds have been out in full force, and the cabinet receptions on Wednesdays have surpassed in interests, attendance, and grandeur all their predecessors. The greater part of the afternoon Mrs. Fish's parlors were thronged, and regrets without number were heard on all sides that the time was so near at hand when we should have her no more in Washington. Long years after she has been laid to rest will her name shine brightly on the pages of "Society Life in Washington," for not only has she peculiarly graced the high position to which she has been called, but, seemingly engrossed with her social duties, time and money have systematically been given to certain charitable objects, which will ever hold her in grateful remembrance, and many will rise up and call her blessed. Another objective point was the residence of the Secretary of War. It is so novel a thing to see so young a mistress at the head of a house of a cabinet officer, that many were imperatively drawn to see how this maiden of eighteen would do the honors that are trying and irksome to the experienced matron. We found her in a steel-colored silk with pink facings and trimmings, very courteous, dignified and genial—fully equal to the arduous duties resting upon her. She is tall and rather slender, light hair and blue eyes and a lovely complexion; has younger brothers and sisters who look up to her for guidance and direction, and all her housekeeper's cares, resting upon her. It is unfortunate that so young a life should have thrust upon it the responsibilities and burdens that properly belong to those of much maturer years. Rumors have been in circulation of the Secretary's matrimonial inclinations, but they are discredited. Thursdays belong to the wives of the Senators and the residents of I street.

Friday has this year been claimed by Mrs. Grant, and the West End was wide awake, for the residents of F and G street were at home to their many visitors, who divide their time between these streets, the White House and the Smithsonian Institute, where the ladies of Prof. Henry's family welcome many callers, and are known for the very select gathering. One meets

at their home the most distinguished of the residents and strangers to be found at the national capital. Saturday has recently become interesting from the weekly hops that have been started at the arsenal, given by the officers temporarily stationed here. The event of the week was the magnificent *fete* given by Senor and Madame Mantilla, the Spanish Minister and his handsome wife, in honor of the second anniversary of King Alfonso's accession to the throne. One thousand invitations were issued, making the House which is sufficiently spacious for ordinary occasions quite inadequate to the comfort of the many guests, who represented social, political and diplomatic circles, the ladies appearing in the richest and loveliest costumes seen this year. Madame Mantilla was attired in a charming toilette of creamy silk, almost completely covered by falls of elegant lace and relieved by garlands of tea rose buds, the corsage cut very low, displaying her beautiful neck and arms, and the superb diamonds, of which every man, woman and child in Washington has heard; no lady can even approach her in these priceless gems. In her ears, large solitaires glittered, and on the white neck, a magnificent necklace, reaching to the waist, composed of costly jewels, sprays of leaves and flowers shown with great brilliancy. All gazed in wondering admiration at these peerless creatures surrounded with so much dazzling beauty, in the rich and gay toilettes, and the exquisitely beautiful floral decorations, which were of the most elaborate character, and seemed as though the realm of fairy land had opened upon us. The recess under the stairway was filled with orange and lemon trees bearing their golden fruit; the hall and stairway were a mass of flowers, while the mirrors were surrounded by large and lovely garlands of flowers, and all we can say of the table and music is that it was in keeping with the features of the entertainment already mentioned. Mrs. Hickox, the niece of Fernando Wood who is presiding over her uncle's mansion this winter, wore the most beautiful and effective toilette, a white silk, with white crepe lisse overdress looped and trimmed with silver, and silver wheat. Commissioner and Mrs. Phelps gave their daughter, Miss Sallie, a lovely party on Thursday evening, only for young people, an innovation upon the social ideas of Washingtonians that was not received with as good favor as the esteemed parents deserve, and thirty regrets were sent by maidens whose fastidious parents would not consent to the acceptance to a party where no chaperones were invited.

As I write, great preparations are going on at the White House for the last reception of the season. After this Mrs. Grant, who has admirably fulfilled the exacting duties incumbent on a lady in her position for the past eight years, will retire to private life. A great deal of speculation is rife on how the next lady president will behave in this exalted position.

LUCRETIA.

NEW YORK, Feb. 12, 1877.  
145 East 21st Street,  
(Gramercy Park.)

To the Editor of THE HIGH SCHOOL.  
DEAR SIR:—In the very kind review of "Our First Hundred Years," in your Feb., number, I notice an inaccuracy which I should be very sorry to see go uncorrected. You speak of the university edition as an *abridgement*. This impression would mislead the reader, and wrong the author and his publishers. The matter is explained in the following note addressed "TO THE EDUCATORS OF AMERICA," Feb. 1st, which I hope you may find room for:

"Many of you who had seen 'OUR FIRST HUNDRED YEARS,' as it appeared in its first edition last year, in two octavo volumes, asked me to prepare an *abridgement*, since so expensive a work—\$8.00—could not be generally introduced into the American System of Education.

This I could not do, for the work itself was but an epitome. I had used, or wasted, half a lifetime in trying to write so brief a *Life of my Country*, that if any man asked me to abridge it I should have to say, as Macaulay did to his Publishers:—"Yes I can abridge my History of England, as you would

your favorite pointer: cut him in two, and let you take which part you choose; I should only be sorry for the dog—and his purchasers."

But I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the kind suggestion, and I have hit on a plan which will meet your wishes, I hope, and save the dog and the buyer, too.

I sat down with my publishers [among the very best men of their class], and we made a close calculation on the lowest possible price for which the *entire work, unabridged, printed from the same stereotype plates*, could be sold to Schools of Learning, Libraries, Teachers, or anybody else, in one finely printed and substantially bound volume of 1,000 pages, and it was agreed that it could be sold for two dollars and a half (\$2.50) per copy, *prepaid to any address*. As a matter of course nobody will grow rich on this plan. But I hope you gentlemen who have sent kind messages to me from so many portions of our beloved land, about "Our First Hundred Years," will see that I have done what I could to meet your wishes.

The patience of school boards has been worn out by persistent importunities of agents, and the education funds sadly reduced or squandered by the exorbitant prices charged for school books we determined to have nothing to do with agents but to deal directly with board trustees and teachers themselves—thus saving all commissions, and furnishing the cheapest school book ever produced. The plan has proven a perfect success.

Truthfully yours,

C. EDWARDS LESTER,  
Author.

THE inflammatory articles which have recently appeared in one of the daily papers are productive of much harm to many worthy teachers in the Central and North schools. Upon inquiry of good authority we learned that there was no child beating, and nothing that could create any excitement, unless facts were perverted, and there was a disposition on the part of the writer to create a sensation. There never has been any occasion for complaint on the score of cruelty to children in Omaha, or THE HIGH SCHOOL, which is strongly opposed to the rod in school, would certainly have found it out and condemned it.

The Nebraska State Teacher's association will meet at Fremont on the 27th of this month, and continue three days. Addresses will be delivered by Chancellor Fairfield, Dr. Curry, State Supt. S. R. Thompson and others. It will be an instructive meeting, and every teacher in the State should be present.

## JOHNSON'S NEW UNIVERSAL CYCLOPEDIA.

We call attention to the advertisement of this work in another column. Having examined the first volume, we think it has the following claims to public favor:

First, It is very comprehensive; when completed it will contain, in four volumes, over 7,000 closely printed pages, and it will treat of nearly 100,000 different subjects, at least 20,000 more than any other encyclopedia in existence.

Second, It is compact and thoroughly condensed; there is no waste of words. We have the *solid facts*, or as Horace Greeley expressed it, "the facts boiled down."

Third, It is *fresh*, and fully up to the times. The articles are not mere compilations, full of old and obsolete matter, but *new creations*, the work of first-class brains, and give the latest results of investigation.

Fourth, It is very convenient for reference. The longer and more elaborate articles are treated analytically, with italic sub-headings, so that in looking up any specific point one has only to glance at the headings. In this respect it is far superior to any other encyclopedia.

The work is finely illustrated. The maps are not only accurate but very beautiful, and the wood-cuts are abundant and appropriate. Any one wanting a first-class encyclopedia at a moderate cost, cannot fail to be suited with Johnson's.

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## DINNER TABLE ETIQUETTE.

The following need not be read by those who "knew it before," and we will premise our remarks by stating that our main object in this article is to furnish our younger readers with that information which must be acquired sometime. It is one of the objects of THE HIGH SCHOOL to educate the rising generation in the great West on all those fine points of etiquette which are indispensable to the ambitious student, not of his text book, but of the world at large, its manners and its customs.

If you should happen to meet with an accident at table, endeavor to preserve your composure, and do not add to the discomfort you have created by making an unnecessary fuss about it. The easier such things are passed over, the better. A very accomplished gentleman when carving a tough goose, had the misfortune to send it entirely out of the dish and into the lap of the lady next to him, on which he very coolly looked her full in the face, and with admirable gravity and calmness, said, "Madam, I will thank you for that goose." In a case like this, a person must necessarily suffer so much, and be such an object of compassion to the company, that the kindest thing he could do was to appear as unmoved as possible. This manner of bearing such a mortifying accident gained him more credit than he lost by his awkward carving.

Such presence of mind as this we do not expect from very young persons; but even they may refrain from all exclamations when anything is spilt on their clothes; and refuse all such assistance, in wiping the place, as would derange the company or interrupt the conversation. If you break anything belonging to the person you visit, you should express regret and blame your own awkwardness; but even then take care not to say too much about it. What is the loss of a tumbler or wine-glass, compared with the discomfort of a guest, or the interruption of conversation?

Some persons at a dinner, are so engrossed by the good eatables, that they care not for conversation; others are so occupied with talking they forget to eat; the first annoys the company, the latter your hostess, so it is better to avoid both extremes. If conversation flourishes among the elders of the company, and you wish to listen to it, you may do so with propriety, provided your countenance shows that you are an attentive and pleased listener; but to sit silent and with forbidding looks, or a dull, tired expression, is a trespass against the social feelings of all present. To yawn, or gape, is an unpardonable rudeness. When you send your plate for anything, whether by the hand of a servant or friend, take off the the knife and fork and lay them down on the cloth, supporting the ends on your bread, or else hold them in your hand in a horizontal position. But if the dinner be a grand one, you will have no occasion to send your plate, as each dish of the various courses will be passed in turn. Even family dinners are frequently served in this way. It is well to take something at each course, as very young persons are apt to be embarrassed when unemployed. When you have no further use for your knife and fork, leave them placed parallel upon your plate, with the points of the forks downward. Never cut your bread or bite it at the dinner table, but always break it, and use a piece of it in your left hand, when you are not holding your knife, to assist your fork in taking up your food. It looks very awkward to see one hand under the table while eating, and still worse in seeing it employed in playing with your bread, glass or napkin ring when not eating. Avoid blowing your nose at table, or touching your hair, or adjusting a comb; these are, in some person's eyes, great offences. There is nothing which marks the lady or gentleman more than manners at table, unless, indeed, it be their mode of writing a note. But while there can be an excuse for sending a slovenly note, there is not one for destroying the comfort and pleasure of a dinner by disregard of manners which are of more importance than some are aware of. In the eyes of the initiated they are so many proofs that very little pains have been bestowed upon the education.

## THE FASHIONS.

[Gleaned from the most standard authorities by our fashion contributor.]

Trailing skirts are more lengthy than last season.

Elizabethian belt buckles are of black Russia leather, mounted with gold or silver. Broad elastic bands are better than strings to tie back skirt and polonaise draperies.

The popular combination for skating costumes is navy blue and cardinal red.

Antiquity is to be revived in the shape of shawls for the coming spring.

The wide-brim hats are much affected by young girls, but in full dress the tall peaked crowns and narrow brims are more in style.

The newest pocket handkerchiefs are of cream or ecru silk, with initials or monograms artistically worked in blue, red or brown silk.

The appropriate flowers for this month's evening dresses are Christmas roses, hyacinths, chrysanthemums, snow drops and crocuses, and leaves and berries of holly, ivy and mistletoe.

The latest evening dresses from Paris show only one color. A light allowance of trimming of a contrasting shade is seen, but the fashion of one fabric is coming back again, for evening dresses at least.

For mourning handkerchiefs there is no departure from the plain linen cambric ones, with plain black hems or borders, and the initial or monogram is black in one corner.

The Josephine style of evening dress is to be revived. This consists of a white, satin-finished silk, plain, gored skirt, trimmed with three or more rows of white lace, put on as ruffles and finished at intervals with satin bows. There is no train in the skirt which scarcely more than touches the ground at the back, and is so narrow that it needs no tying back. The bodice is low and trimmed with ruffles round the neck, short sleeves. Gloves reaching above the elbow are worn with it. The hair with such a costume is worn high and arranged in pufts and little curls. Shoes with excessively high heels are worn.

Plain cassimeres and tweeds for gentlemen's suits will prevail during the coming spring and summer. The tendency in colors is decidedly in favor of the dark modest ones. Fancy plaids will not be worn. Pants will be cut in a pattern about midway between the extreme wide legs and the former spring bottom. The Prince Albert coat is a permanent fixture and is always in fashion.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

One of our ex's informs us that "Eve was the first swearer on record" and adduces the following in proof of the assertion. "When Adam asked her to let him kiss her she said "I don't care A—dam if you do." *Univ. Press.*

Little Robbie went to a show, and saw an elephant for the first time in his life. When he came home his mother asked him what he had seen. "An elephant, mama, that gobbled hay with his front tail."

A Chicago man who was detected in an attempt to conceal a deep excavation in his front yard by a thin covering of lath and snow, finally admitted that he was building an Ashtabula bridge for his mother-in-law.

TEST OF AMBITION.—When great men suffer themselves to be subdued by the length of their misfortunes, they discover that the strength of their ambition, not of their understanding, was that which supported them. They discoverer, too, that, allowing for a little vanity, heroes are just like other men.—*Roche foucault's Maxims.*

THE BEST FRIEND.—The most agreeable of all companions is a simple frank man, without any high pretensions to an oppressive greatness; one who loves life, and understands the use of it; obliging all alike at all hours; above all, of a golden temper, and steadfast as an anchor. For such a one we gladly exchange the greatest genius, the most brilliant wit, the profoundest thinker.—*Lessing.*

EVERY MAN is said to have at least one chance to acquire wealth. In the case of a newspaper man, this opportunity comes on the 29th of February every year, except leap year.

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Is the best route between Chicago and La Crosse,  
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Green Bay and Marquette Line  
Is the only line between Chicago and Janesville,  
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Is the only route between Chicago and Elgin,  
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