

The High School.

A REPOSITORY OF REFINED LITERATURE, AND JOURNAL OF EDUCATION.

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Liberator a defectioe solum, qui non nititur.

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Written for THE HIGH SCHOOL.

THE POET.

The pensive poet, Nature's dearest child,
Of fruitful genius, and of fancy wild,
Excelling in his wondrous power to paint
In wordy language, beautiful and quaint.
How ardent fancy turns the musing eye
To distant scenes that are beyond the sky.
Are these, when struggling life has ceased its
pains,
To be effaced and never known again?
To him alone belongs the power to rhyme
To suit the measure of the flowing time;
To eye fair Nature in her many ways,
To sing his numbers, and his maker's praise.
Imagination is his safest guide,
With this he rhymes, and stems the strongest
tide.
Often wrecked on criticism's barren shore,
He heeds no wreck, but only rhymes the more;
For 't is the raptured soul, and feeling heart,
That make the poet, not the rhyming art;
And of the essence of a single line
Will show the presence of a soul sublime:
As thus great Dryden his opponents lashed:
"The conscious water saw his God and
blushed."
As nightly meteors shoot across the sky,
So brilliant thoughts arrest the poet's eye.
A quick, bright flash it speeds along—
The quick, bright thought becomes a song.
Poets are meteors in this world of night,
Whose thoughts divine the human mind de-
light.
When dead and buried deep in mother earth,
Some kindred genius finds his hidden worth.
Then, resurrected from oblivion's shade,
The glowing tribute to his name is paid.
If when alive, he bread had asked to eat
With hardest stone he had been sure to meet.
LUU E. LAPE.

Written for THE HIGH SCHOOL.

A VASE AND A JAR.

I was visiting, one dreamy August
afternoon. My hostess had excused her-
self to attend to some domestic duties,
and, in the shaded parlor, leaning back
in the large comfortable rocking chair,
and cast my eyes lazily around the
room. There on the marble-topped
table stood a delicate vase filled with a
beautiful bouquet. The picture it
formed has never been effaced from
my memory; I have only to close my
eyes and in fancy it appears. Please
try to see it with your imagination's
organ of vision.
But let me tell a fragment of its
history first. A bridal gift to a fair
bride—a cherished ornament in the
wife's home—a dying mother's gift to
her only daughter.
The vase was of some delicate, half
transparent material, slender in out-
line, and daintily carved. The beveled
edge bore a rim of gold. Upon it was
painted a pansy—a large purple, vel-
vety one, with a golden heart; grouped
about it were a few green leaves, a
spray of lilies of the valley. These
were lying on a cushion of soft moss.
The artist had done his work well. So
like life were they, that one was car-
ried to the dim forest shades and the
ruins to whose sides the moss clung;
and one could hear the music of the
tiny cascade. Then too, you
were by the side of the cherished bed
of pansies, reveling in their beauty.
The bouquet consisted of a slender-
throated Japan lily, a cluster of scar-
let geraniums, some Phlox Drummondii
and feathery grasses, with several
sprays of ivy twined about the vase
and contrasting with the table.
If you can see it, you will not won-
der I gazed upon it, till it led me into
a reverie, from which I was aroused
by Sadie's voice calling me to come
and taste her cookies. Passing from
the poetical to the practical, I obeyed
the summons.
The tempting cookies were in a
large brown jar, I tested the excel-
lency of said edibles, and I then went
back to finish my dreaming, which had
received a new impulse in the contrast
between the pure vase, so exquisitely
ornamented, and the large brown jar
destitute of all adornment. House-
keepers know how useful they are;
how manifold the contents they enclose.
The brown jar brings recollections
of crisp pickles, toothsome doughnuts

and mince-pies, into which our mother
would never put wine or brandy. I
can see her earnest face as she said if
it did not add to the flavor it was use-
less to put it in, and if it did, she
might be creating an appetite, which
though a slender thread, becomes
strong as a cable.

Some people are like the vase, shel-
tered all their lives from the rude busi-
ness of the work-a-day world—from
the storms and blows which would
shatter the fragile thing. It is theirs
to be carefully watched over and loved
for their beauty and sweetness. Such
persons may be, and often are a source
of happiness to others, for they are all
the time dispensing kind words and
little winning deeds. Are they use-
ful? Yes, like the delicate fragrance
of the flowers, the consistency, the
peace of their lives comes up before us
to confirm our trust in human nature.
Look about you, you will find some
such one, perhaps in your own home.
See to it you cherish her.

Many people are like the jar. A
jostle here, a jostle there, many a sharp
corner to turn and many a pelting
storm to bear. They are neither parti-
cularly beautiful nor handsome, but so
useful.

Let us of the brown jar class, be
thankful we are strong enough to bear
the burdens; let us bear them cheer-
fully, bravely, finding weaker ones to
aid.

If we cannot please by beauty, we
may easily find avenues to brighten the
lives of others.

Have you thought that children
oftentimes are loved from the pleasing
face; this with fragility sometimes
leads parents to caress that one to the
exclusion of the other children?
Thoughtlessly done, but it sent a pang
to the heart of the freckle-faced child.

Teachers sometimes bestow smiles
and words of praise upon those chil-
dren who are "dear little fairies,"
while as deserving ones, with, it may
be, even rude or coarse exterior, stand
by with swelling hearts, beneath the
patched jackets or dull dresses.

Please remember that the beautiful
vase will always attract attention, but
the unattractive jar may stand unno-
ticed.

Who knows but the child with the
stolid, homely face may, by a loving
smile and a word of yours receive an
impulse to a nobler, purer, more use-
ful life, and also the lonely little
heart be comforted and led to see that
love and sympathy are for all.

MARGUERITE.

WHAT WILL MRS. GRUNDY SAY?

Mrs. Grundy, in common parlance,
is the genius who presides over gossip.
Probably the reason for assigning to
this famous character the title "Mrs."
rather than "Mr." is traceable to the
proverbial inquisitiveness of women.
But, in justice to the sex which Mrs.
Grundy is supposed to represent, it
must be admitted that Mr. Grundy
is, at least, a very willing listener to
what his wife has to say.

It is a somewhat remarkable fact
that, although every one professes to
despise Mrs. Grundy on account of her
gossiping proclivities, she is neverthe-
less, very often the guests of the very
persons who make the loudest outcry
against her. She has such an easy, in-
sinuating manner; such a wise and
mysterious look; and withal such a
wonderful stock of information, that
somehow she generally succeeds in ob-
taining a place at the tea party or sew-
ing circle.
Her fund of knowledge is well-nigh
exhaustable; in addition to which



View of the Omaha High School Building.

she has a very lively imagination, which
readily supplies any missing details.
She knows just how much the Joneses
gave for their second hand piano; how
many times the minister's wife has
turned her silk dress and retrimmed
her old bonnet, and how many cows
the Smiths sold to get money to go to
the Centennial. She knows to a dollar
how much Deacon Small pays the
preacher, and tells you with a glance
out of the corners of her eyes, and a
significant nod of her head, "that the
Deacon took all his family to the last
circus, too." Her insight into the de-
signs and intentions of others is only
less wonderful than her confidence that
she is never mistaken. She knew from
the very first, when the young minis-
ter, who recently came into the place
took Sallie Perkins, the organist under
his umbrella on his way from church,
that Sunday it rained, that that would
be a match, and told all her special
friends that Miss Sallie and the new
minister were engaged, but cautioned
them not to say anything about it.
But when he went off to his old home
and married a girl whom he had known
from childhood, Mrs. Grundy ex-
claimed, "Well, there! didn't I tell
you so? I always knew he didn't
care a straw for that Sallie Perkins and
she was a fool for thinking so."

It is to be regretted that, with her
readiness to jump at conclusions, and
to base the gravest assertions upon the
merest threads of evidence, should
have such a perverted taste as to deli-
ght in scandal. She tells you, with
an expression which is meant to be
one of holy horror, but which illy con-
ceals her pleasure in having been so
shrewd as to find it out, of infamy
enough to make you believe that such
things as virtue and honor have entire-
ly passed out of existence. No one
escapes. It would seem that the
whiter her neighbor's garments, the
greater satisfaction she feels in seeing
them soiled. She appears to take
special delight in telling you that she
has heard that the minister who has
just left the place, beat his wife and
children and turned them all out of
doors. It is never safe to praise any
one in her presence. She listens to
you with a look of pity for your igno-
rance, while you are speaking, and as
soon as you are done, "O yes!" she
says, "but if you knew what I do
about him, you wouldn't speak so high-
ly of him"; and then she proceeds to
lay before you some dark hints and
vague suggestions against your friend's
character. She never fails to tell, how-
ever, in closing, how sorry she is to
find out these things. She may be

often seen thus, holding her nose while
poking about heaps of filth and rub-
bish; and all, she tells you, merely for
the sake of knowing what is going on
in the world.

It is said nothing was made in vain.
Even the filthy vultures serve useful
places in the economy of nature as
scavengers, and quite likely meddle-
some Mrs. Grundy accomplishes some
good. The person who is meditating
any dishonest or unjust measure knows
how difficult it will be to keep this in-
quisitive dame from finding it out;
and the young man who is trifling
with the affections of an honest-hear-
ed maiden knows very well that Mrs.
Grundy will be certain to express an
opinion of his conduct. But no one
would think of making a household
pet out of a turkey buzzard, and we
may well be excused for saying that
we wish some higher standard for the
regulation of our conduct than what
Mrs. Grundy will say.

W. R. M. in *The Jewel*.

TO YOUNG LADIES.

The pastor of a church in one of our
largest cities, said not long ago: "I
have officiated at forty weddings since
I came here, and in every case, save
one, I felt that the bride was running a
fearful risk. Young men of bad habits
and fast tendencies never marry girls of
their own sort, but demand a wife above
suspicion. Some pure, sweet women,
kept from the touch of evil through
the years of their girlhood, give them-
selves, with their costly dowery of
womanhood, into the keeping of men
of base associations, who have learned
to undervalue all that belongs to them,
and then find no time for repentance in
the sad after years. There is but one
way out of this that I can see, and that
is for you, the young women of the
country, to require in association and
marriage, purity for purity, sobriety
for sobriety, and honor for honor. There
is no reason why the young men of this
Christian land should not be just as vir-
tuous as its young women, and if the loss
of your society and love be the price they
are forced to pay for vice, they will not
pay it."

CONVERSATION—If you would trace
the faults of conversation up to their
original source, most of them might
be resolved into this—that men would
rather appear shining than be agree-
able in company; they are endeavoring
to raise admiration, instead of gaining
love and good will; whereas the latter
is in everybody's power, the former in
that of a few.

Written for THE HIGH SCHOOL.

A PLEA FOR POLITENESS.

A little brief authority is apt to
make petty tyrants out of small men.
This truth finds frequent illustration
among subordinate officials in railway-
stations, ferry houses, public offices, and
elsewhere. Not many days ago, a case
came under our personal observation
which may serve as an example. A
laboring man inquired at the railway-
office when the next train would leave.
He was told by the dignified official
that "the company advertised its time-
table, and he had better look at one." Two
minutes afterwards the same in-
quiry was made by a young man in a
silk hat and kid gloves, and the digni-
fied official replied graciously: "At
five-twenty, sir!"

Somebody once wove into rhyme
this very excellent definition of a
much misunderstood word:
"True politeness is to do and to say
The kindest thing in the kindest way."

Too little politeness of this sort is to
be found in every-day life. Our dig-
nified official at the railway-station,
who snubs the man in the woolen
shirt, and gives a courteous rejoinder
to a new hat and kid gloves, mistakes
his duty—he is paid to serve the pub-
lic, and he ought to remember that the
public is a diversified unit; its various
heads cannot all be covered with glos-
sy hats, nor its multitudinous hands
be all encased in kid. With all our
boasted democracy, we have not yet
learned as a people to disassociate the
outward appearances of a man from
the amount of respect to which he is
entitled. We have not yet learned to
treat the poor man as politely as the
rich. Kindness is a coin which passes
current everywhere. It wins hearts
and softens hard natures. It secures
obedience, where threat or force would
fail. You meet a bootblack whose
Arab existence has not tended to bring
out the better qualities of his nature,
treat him politely, and mark how
quick he is to appreciate courtesy. He
will put a brighter polish on your boots
for a pleasant word. The laborer who
carries a hod feels his manhood when he
is treated like a man. The shop girl
aims to become a nobler woman when
she finds that her womanhood is re-
spected. It is a very serious mistake
to suppose that the poor are insensible
to rebuffs because they are accustomed
to receive them. And it is a still more
serious mistake to reckon that man a
gentleman who treats his equals or su-
periors politely, and acts the part of a
ruffian towards those whom he con-
siders his inferiors. Such Pecksniffian
politeness which fawns before pros-
perity and freezes in the presence of
adversity, is to be held in greater con-
tempt than open handed barbarity.

When Charles Dickens was giving
readings in this country for the last
time, he appeared one night in a town
not many miles from New York. At
an early hour in the evening a poorly
dressed man applied at the box-office
for admission. He told the ticket-sel-
ler that he was somewhat deaf, and
wanted a seat near the stage. The
officious dispenser of tickets—a local
agent who had been secured for the
evening, and who was deeply impressed
with the importance of his position—
informed the applicant that there were
no front seats to be had. His remark
happened to be overheard by Mr.
Dickens himself, who stepped forward
and led the deaf man to the best seat
in the hall, while the chagrined ticket-
seller was left to meditate on the ad-
vantages of speaking the truth. The
master of English fiction did not hesi-
tate to treat a stranger courteously,
albeit that stranger wore a shabby
coat.

The plea which we would put forth
is one for a proper consideration of the

feelings of the poor—a plea for cour-
tesy to all men, whatever their station
in life; a plea for politeness which
shall not be tempered by the social
position of the recipient. Those who
have it within their power ought to
treat all men with civility, whether
they meet them in a drawing-room or
in a tenement-garret. Arrogance is
always the outgrowth of a small na-
ture; while politeness, in the truest and
best sense of the word, is but the
practice of charity. To do the kind-
est thing in the kindest way is the
mark of a gentleman. Let no one
fear lest his seeds of courtesy shall fall
on stony ground or be choked by the
tares of indifference. The poor are
quick to recognize true sympathy, and
equally quick to detect hypocrisy. He
who snubs a man because of his
poverty, has not learned the alphabet
of politeness. JUNIUS BRUTUS.

SUCCESS A MEASURE OF ABILITY.

It is the universal tendency of the
human race to judge of a man's ability
by the degree of success he attains.
Men in blind dogmatism measure the
correctness of a theory by the result
when reduced to practice, and the ter-
mination of a project is always an in-
dex of its merit.

John Fitch invented the steamboat;
his theory was correct, but his pecuni-
ary circumstances did not permit the
consummation of his plans. Fulton
borrowed the idea and perfected Fitch's
scheme. To-day Fulton is lauded to
the skies, and poor John Fitch fills an
unknown grave.

There are men living and acting
upon the same stage with us to-day,
whose mental capacities are unsur-
passed; who possess the requisite
ability for any undertaking, yet they
have never risen above mediocrity,
simply because a series of misfortunes
have weighed them down, have effect-
ually barred their progress to success
and wherever they turn they are met
by discouragement and failure.

Our legislatures and halls of con-
gress are not graced entirely by men of
the greatest mental vigor; on the con-
trary, they are generally mediocre.
Around us on every hand, lie shattered
columns of noble lives. They began
to rear their monuments with wonder-
ful aspirations; with strong hearts
they toiled on toward their goal; but
they were unsuccessful; the world
failed to recognize their ability, and
despair with its clutches seized upon
them—their weary arms fell lifeless—
their fingers relaxed the firm hold
upon their trowel—the mortar grew
dry and hard and left an incompleated
shaft. Some are broken near the base;
some midway up; while others tower-
ing aloft, are crumbling at the top.

A skeptical race, it is hard for us to
believe a thing can be done, unless
convinced by a practical demonstration.
If a theory is successful when put in
operation, we recognize its merit and
honor it accordingly, but the ultimate
rule of reasoning would be no conclu-
sive proof of the author's ability, with-
out the attendant fact that his achiev-
ments had attained success.

Two men stand face to face in the
political arena, candidates it may be
for the highest honor a nation can con-
fer. To-day they may be equal; to-
morrow's issue will make a marvelous
change; one will be enrolled among
his country's great, the other will be-
gin a gradual decline and soon be for-
gotten. If Napoleon's reinforcements
had reached him a few minutes sooner
at Waterloo, who would have remem-
bered Wellington?

Success wreaths the laurel around a
man's brow—builds monuments to his
memory—cherishes mementoes of him
and in the world's eye is indubitable
proof of ability.

—*Westminster Monthly.*

