EDUCATIONAL COLUMN.

B. S. RAMSEY ..... Editor.

Communications on Educational Topics, Reports of Educational Meetings, &c., are respectfully solicited for the Educational Column, and may be addressed to Educational Committee Box 36, Rock Bluffs, Nebraska.

B. S. RAMSEY,
Ch'n Editorial Committee.

EARLY EDUCATION AMONG THE EGYPTIANS.

The early education among the Egyptians, according to the most authentic annals, seems to have been father of an exclusive character. The more favored classes enjoyed the best educational advantages the state of Egyptian society afforded, while the masses of the people were carefully excluded from the higher schools. The more privileged of the Egyptian people were divided into three classes, viz: "the priests, warriors, and professional men, including judges, architects, writers, and perhaps physicians."—These classes enjoyed the best advantages of education, and upon them was bestowed "most of the education of the country." This education consisted of two kinds, viz: *exoteric* and *esoteric*.

The exoterical system of education was that system by which teachers gave instruction publicly; and the esoterical system was secret, mysterious, or of an acromatic character. The same systems of instruction seem to have been adopted by Pythagoras, the latter comprising that instruction which this distinguished teacher gave secretly.

Among the Egyptians the exoterical education included a knowledge of the domestic system of writing as distinguished from the hieratic or hieroglyphical, or system of sacred writing. This hieroglyphic writing was regarded as too sacred for the masses to learn and was confided to the priests, and therefore included under the esoteric system.

The children of the priests enjoyed the advantage of this esoteric education, and hence were instructed in hieroglyphic writing as well as in the sacred mysteries, and in the higher mathematics.

The frequent inundations of the Nile renders a knowledge of mensuration and geometry an absolute necessity, and hence we do not wonder that the Egyptians became to a great extent proficient in the science of geometry.—The construction of the pyramids would seem to warrant the presumption that the Egyptians not only possessed a knowledge of geometry, but that they had made great advancement in architecture. These silent monuments of antiquity on the sandy wastes of Africa, admonish us that this presumption is beyond the possibility of a doubt.

But the lower orders of the Egyptian people were carefully excluded from the temple of learning. Education was too dangerous a weapon to be put in possession of the masses. Its power would in the hands of the downtrodden of Egypt impair the despotism of the Shepherd kings and the Pyramid builders, and curtail the influence of the priests.

During the reign of the Shepherd kings the masses of the Egyptian people were kept in the most servile degradation, and thus the succession was the more surely perpetuated. The artificers, agriculturalists and herdsmen were denied education, except that which they received from their parents and near relatives. But they were not entirely cut off from education like the Sudras of India, but were allowed to learn the domestic system of writing, and were even permitted to learn the rudiments of arithmetic.

But there was one class of herdsmen that was entirely prohibited from receiving any education, viz: the *Pariah* or swineherders. This class was even prohibited from visiting the temples and hence was cut off from all human sympathies! How sad to think that even in the benighted annals of Egyptian grandeur, there was a class of mortals so completely severed from the more tender emotions of humanity, and cast away with the swine! But at a later period in the history of Egypt we find the condition of the masses materially ameliorated by the introduction of the improved Greek civilization. The Greeks had originally received their rudiments of civilization from the Egyptians, and under the philosophers and law-makers of Greece this civilization had been materially improved.

This introduction of the improved civilization was made by Alexander the Great and his successors, and Alexandria soon became the seat of some of the finest institutions of learning in the country.

Thebes, Memphis and Heliopolis had been renowned for the schools of the priests, but the cities of the Delta soon became as renowned for their schools of philosophy and science as the former had been during the former history of Egypt.

The Ptolemy dynasty is said to have been a great patron of letters and learning, and the vast libraries of Alexandria—those of the Bruchion and of the Serapeum are among the most remarkable of this period of Egyptian history.

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MISS LAURA KEENE.

I suppose you knew Miss Laura Keene?

Very well.

Would you object to giving me some particulars in regard to her life?

Certainly not. Miss Keene, before she went on the stage, was a bar-maid on the Surrey side of London. She began her career in amateur theatricals, and finally went upon the stage and played two or three times in London. She was a failure, and so came over to America. She made the acquaintance of Mr. James Wallack, the elder gentleman of that name, who was greatly struck with her appearance, for she was, at the time, a young and beautiful woman. He took the trouble to teach her parts, even taking pains to correct her pronunciation, and she proved to be a great success in New York. Her first marriage in England had been an unfortunate one, her husband, a man by the name of Taylor, having had occasion to go to Australia for prudential reasons. When at the zenith of her popularity she married a gambler named Lutz, who leased the St. Charles Street Theater in Baltimore. This soon became the most fashionable place of amusement in that city, and she was much encouraged by her success that she returned to New York, where her husband, aided by an architect named Trimble, built a theater on Broadway, which was called by her name. This was in 1860, she having been in Baltimore about two years. It may be said, perhaps, that she began the era of the spectacular drama in New York by producing, as she did, in rapid succession, such ill-conceived plays as the Seven Sisters, the Sea of Ice, and Dreams of Delusion. Her subsequent history is reasonably familiar to the public.

HOW DUNDREARY WAS CREATED.

I believe you became connected with her company about this time?

Yes; when George Jordan, her leading man, left, I joined the company as leading juvenile man and low comedian. That season opened very badly. About this time she obtained a piece called "Our American Cousin," from Tom Taylor, for which she paid $1,000.

At the reading of the piece Jefferson was given "Asa Trenchard," he being the comedian, Mr. Couldock "Abel Murcott," and to Mr. Sothern "Lord Dundreary." At the conclusion of the reading, which was in the green-room of the theater, I put my part on the table and walked out of the room. As originally written by Taylor, it contained not more than twenty-seven lines. There was no clue to the character except a memorandum by the author, to the effect that the actor who assumed it might, if he chose, imitate the lisp of Sir Frederick Blunt in "Money." Miss Keene sent Mr. Burnett, the manager, to me, asking me why I would not play the part, I positively refused to entertain the idea, but just as Mr. Burnett was leaving the room, I said to him: "Stop one moment. If Miss Keene will permit me to alter this third or fourth-class old man in any way I choose, and to write in my own scenes, and elaborate the parts of those who play with me I will accept the role." She eventually agreed to my proposal. I wrote in scene by [illegible] me as I watched the rehearsal of th[illegible] piece. The conception of the chara[illegible] was entirely the same as it is now [illegible] except that it has been polished [illegible] by many repetitions. When [illegible] ally played each act was in fi[illegible] six scenes. It has since been e[illegible] constructed. It is now in [illegible] acts, one scene in each. The ori[illegible] of the best scenes were what w[illegible] called "carpenter scenes," that is to sa[illegible] while he was acting in them close [illegible] the foot-lights, with the scene in fro[illegible] the carpenter and property men were [illegible] hammering, away behind preparing for the next scene. Thus at the commencement of the run of "Our American Cousin," my best scenes were accompanied by a chorus of carpenters and property-men rattling their tables and other paraphernalia about the stage. It took five or six weeks for the people of New York to grasp the satire. They simply saw the absurdity of the thing. But by degrees those who had traveled saw that the piece contained the most

GENUINE SATIRE

on a certain class; they saw the representation of a man with all the advantages of birth, education, association and travel; a man by no means of limited abilities as far as reading goes, but who simply never could hold on to an idea.—*Interviewing Southern.*

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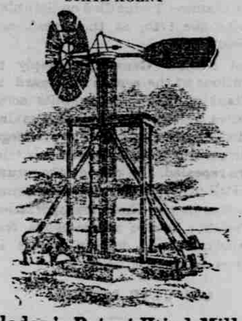

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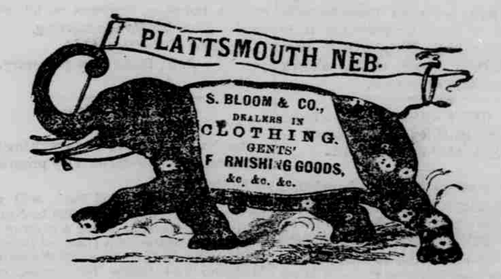

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