

THE DAILY NEBRASKAN

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The debating season is on full blast. The arrangements which have been made for the handling of the contests has never been so complete and the preparation never so thorough as this year. As has been suggested before the character of the debates will in no sense be "talking matches." They will be intellectual contests worthy of the effort of the best students in the University. It might be suggested here that those outside the regular classes who intend to try for places on the teams might familiarize themselves with the work which is being done by attending the classes and listening to the remarks of the critics. It is to be hoped that all those interested in the work will embrace this opportunity of keeping in touch with the work and those in charge of it.

A RARE WORK.

Professor Bessey succeeded a few days ago in buying a copy of a rare old book entitled, "Botanirani Parisienne" by Sebastian Vaillant. It was published in 1727 and contains descriptions of all the plants growing at that time in the vicinity of Paris. The work is voluminously illustrated with copper plates done by Claud Aubriet, a noted artist of that day. It is a small quarto volume with the pages 10 by 16 inches and is bound in vellum. Although the book is 174 years old it is in perfect condition.

Through the efforts of Professor H. H. Nicholson, a number of important pieces belonging to the core of the test well at Lincoln, have been collected and added to the state museum. This test was bored to a depth of 2,463 ft., at a cost of \$20,000, the object being to determine the question of coal, oil and natural gas in Nebraska. As the cores were taken out they were distributed for examination. The scattered pieces of this core have been coming to the museum for the past ten years until the record of the strata is nearly completed.

100 copies of Tumble Weeds will reach Lincoln by express today. None of these will be placed on sale, however, as this number will not nearly fill the advance orders. Another shipment is expected in a few days.

The Engineering Society will indulge in a "smoker" in the near future. This will be the first social gathering that the engineers have ever participated in. If it turns out as successfully as prospects seem to indicate it may be made a permanent thing similar to the monthly "smokers" given by the engineering faculty of some of the eastern universities. The name of the entertainment signifies its nature merely in that it indicates comfort and informality.

THE AUTOMATIC PISTOL.

The latest in small arms is the pistol which has just been adopted by the Swiss government and has lately been tested by the United States war department. In speaking of it in the American Machinist, G. H. Powell calls attention to the fact that the limited range of the revolver is largely due to the escape of the powder gas about the cylinder, and then says: "What is known as the automatic pistol of today seems almost a perfect realization of the ends sought. Though called automatic, this weapon is in reality only semi-automatic, as successive pressures on the trigger are necessary to its operation."

"This weapon is a repeating arm in which the force of the expansion of the gas—the recoil, or 'kick'—is utilized after each shot to open the breech-block, extract the empty case, cock the firing-pin, and, by means of a recuperative spring, charge the pistol with a new cartridge, the operator merely having to press the trigger for each successive shot." In editorial comment the journal just referred to remarks: "The performance of this Luger pistol is remarkable, as shown by tests of army boards. Twenty-four



SECTIONAL VIEW.

shots were fired from it at the rate of 116 a minute. This included the time of removing two empty magazines and inserting two loaded ones, so that the rate of firing one magazine charge, or eight shots, must of course be considerably faster. In the accuracy test the mean deviation of the shots was shown to be slightly more than 0.5 inch at a range of 75 feet. It was taken apart in 3 3/4 seconds and reassembled in 12 1/4 seconds.

"It also stood the remarkably severe dust and rust tests very well and gave every evidence of being the very best military pistol presented before the trial board. After being immersed in a solution of sal ammoniac and allowed to remain until thoroughly rusted, it was without cleaning fired as a single breech-loader, and after being simply oiled, without disassembling, worked automatically as before. It is thought probable that the United States army authorities will adopt it for army use, in which case it will be manufactured here."

THE TIGER'S EYES.

Mr. Beddard of the London Zoological Society calls attention to a peculiarity of the ears of tigers, which he thinks may be classed under the head of "protective markings." On the back of each ear is a very bright white spot, and when the ears are directed forward these spots are conspicuous from the front. Mr. Beddard suggests that when the tiger is sleeping in the dim light of a cave or thicket the spots on its ears may appear to an enemy, looking in, as the gleam of its watchful eyes, and thus save the sleeper from an unexpected attack.

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