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THE NORTHWESTERN

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More Fully Explained.

Our article last week under the caption of "Town Talk" has incurred much displeasure of a few of the members of the school board and a few of our citizens directly interested in the graduating exercises; it has also met the approval of nine-tenths of the citizens of the town, and especially the patrons of the school. And because of this displeasure it will be only proper in this connection for us to more fully explain our position in the matter. In the first place we do not wish to be understood as having any personal grievance because the printing of the program was done in Fremont instead of Loup City. It is only the principle involved therein: That of expecting the local papers to do such work as can be done free, and giving the work that would be a source of income to the printer to outsiders. Neither do we wish to be understood as casting any reflections upon the graduates. They are all bright students and from what we can learn have applied themselves well to the studies which they have been permitted to take up. But the main point is in the system in which the high school is conducted.

The rule now applied will not permit anyone of the pupils of this room to attain a full knowledge of some of the lower branches which is of great importance. For instance, when a pupil takes, and passes an examination in the grammar department they are then promoted to the high school room. They pass from the grammar department perhaps half way or two-thirds of the way through their arithmetic, and know but very little of book keeping. Now the objectionable feature is that both of these studies are dropped in the high school, and Latin and other high studies are substituted, and in that condition the student is permitted to graduate.

To promote a scholar from a lower to a higher room is always good, if they can pass the required examination. It gives them hope and encouragement to work for something higher. But to drop the studies which they have not mastered is bad, and results only in embarrassment and discouragement when they pass on to something higher. A child can't read in the first reader without first learning his A. B. C's, neither can a student completely master Algebra without first acquiring a thorough knowledge of arithmetic, and so on from one branch of study to another.

Both arithmetic and book-keeping is being continued in nearly all the high schools and was in Loup City until conducted under the present management, and it does seem that it could be now with only an average attendance of twelve or thirteen pupils, while the other rooms are handling from 30 to 50 each. Again we are reliably informed that neither elocutionary exercises, composition work or Friday afternoon exercises of any kind have been had for the two years last past. The high school course in both the ninth and tenth grades, which are being taught in our high school expressly says that both Latin and English Composition and Elementary Science is required. What the Northwestern suggests is that the patrons petition the management of our school affairs for another year, and thereby insist that these well established rules in the high school principles be carried out.

The Sixteenth Annual Session of the Crete Chautauque Assembly will be held June 23rd to July 3rd 1897. A varied program of instruction and entertainment has been prepared, and the beautiful grounds on the Big Blue river afford unrivaled facilities for pleasure, rest and recreation. Programs may be had by addressing: MISS W. BALDWIN, Sec. Crete, Neb.

JOHNSON'S LETTER.

Last week I tried to show how the quarrelsome disposition on "Whiskey Ridge" had the effort to make the people there unhappy and their community disreputable. No good man coming into Iowa to make his home wanted to settle for life on "Whiskey Ridge." The soil was just as good there; the gentle rains fell and the warming sunlight shown down there just as in other localities.

The trees put out their leaves to make cool shade for the tired man. The blue grass spread out its soft green carpet for the children's tender feet. The decorations of flowers and foliage were wrought out with such skill as to cover up and hide all the scars on nature's breast and make it pleasing to the eye.

Cool springs bubbled up everywhere and sent their little babbling streams along the country roads, suggesting to the people all the time that it would be better for them to drink spring water instead of "fighting whiskey." The birds held their May festivals of song, out in the open air where all could hear, as if they wanted to wean the people from their fueds, to lull their turbulent spirits into peace, that they might realize how sweet life is in this good old world.

But it was all to no avail. The feuds had been established in the early days of the neighborhood, and the people would not break off the quarrelsome habit. Even their religion was full of bitterness. The old hardshell baptist preacher who came once in two weeks, with his doctrine of hate and hell, with his stiff jointed old horse that was always tired and hungry, with his wrinkled and crinkled old leather saddle bags, as faded as weather-beaten, as harsh as his theology, with his dry frizzly white whiskers and his old-fashioned front flapped blue jeans pantaloons, always "opened the meeting" in the old log school house with that foreboding psalmist hymn.

How vain are all things here below! How false and yet how fair! Each pleasure hath its poison, too, And every sweet, its snare.

The old man with his doctrine, that "Many are called, but few are chosen," with his whang boodle, pessimistic hymns, had taught the people to shun every pleasure in life, to suspect nature of some trick, to distrust mankind, to think of God as a monster of whims and arbitrary power, and so they went about with their suspicious eyes peeping into this and into that; expecting at every turn to find a snare set for them, and their long sharp noses were forever sniffing about for poison.

TWENTY YEARS AGO.

How beautiful Nebraska was to us who came then! We come in the spring with our hearts full of hope. We saw all the beauty and heard all the harmony that was around us.

As the train moved slowly across the Missouri river bridge, now eagerly we looked out to get the first glimpse of the new state, to drink in all the new sights, and to put ourselves in harmony with all the best promises of the future. The broad plains opened up before us, the great panorama of activity and development spread itself out to view and what an interesting scene it was!

Everything was new. Everyone was busy. Every face was radiant with hope. Every heart was full of song, and every cup of expectation was bubbling over at the brim. You opened the car window, as the train swept along, and leaned out to get all the broad view. You should see farther than you ever saw before but still you wanted to look out of both sides of the car at the same time, and you felt your self being ushered into new conditions whose possibilities seem as boundless as a dream.

Now call up the memories of that first ride into Nebraska and let the old picture move by once more.

There's a new settler who is turning the prairie sod with a bright new plow.

There's a wagon full of men riding briskly over the roadless plain, talking loud looking far, gesticulating this way and that, searching out corner stakes, trailing out section lines, considering this spot for a building site, this for an orchard, this for a barn and feed lot, and that other sweep of smoother land for the grain field.

But no sooner has this scene been interpreted to our mind than another comes into view.

Out on the higher ground is a pile of clean new lumber brought only yesterday, but the frame of the little new house is already taking form, and the old fashioned home song of

the workmen mingles with the music of hammer and saw.

Near the little white tent which is pitched close by, and which is the temporary shelter, sits a woman, watching the men at work while she mends the children's clothes.

As her nimble fingers ply their skill her mind weaves out the plan of the new home. There'll be trees for shade, there'll be a garden spot for vegetables and there'll be flowers that will climb up about the doorway and peep in at the windows.

Now the train slows up, and the little new town comes in sight. There's a group of people waiting on the depot platform. How eagerly their eyes scan the face of each new comer. That sunburned woman, holding up the child in her arms, has come in from the sod-house home out on the prairie yonder, and you know by the emotions which play upon her face that some one has written a letter that they will come.

"There's mother!" you hear her say, as she gives a sudden start, and the tears of the young mother, mingled with the tears of the old mother, fall like a baptism of love upon the babies face. The tears that were shed in those days were tears of joy, for it was the time of coming, and each comer brought with him a contribution of new hope and expectation which added to the general sun of happiness.

Well what's the matter with Nebraska now? It is a hundred fold more beautiful than it was then. There's more to make us happy now than there was then. The brown prairie has been turned into a green wheat field. The little sod house here has been turned into a frame house, and the little frame house there has become a large roomy home with carpets on the floors, pictures on the walls and music from the cabinet organ. The trees that the woman dreamed of have come, the flowers are peeping in at the window, the orchard is blossoming out there, and all the sweet voiced birds have come to join in the May festival of song. Then, what's the matter with us? Bud Blithers of "Whiskey Ridge" used to sulk. He would refuse to join in at singin' school, saying "I don't want to sing." He used to sneak out at night and cut the harness of his rival in love, hoping the team would run away and kill somebody. He was jealous and disgruntled.

The spirit of "Whiskey Ridge" has come into this state and that is what's the matter.

There's a lot of us that don't sing because we "don't want to." We're mad and jealous and we want to fight somebody. We have failed in some things and we want everybody else to fail. We want to cut the harness and let the team run away. We're fighting from the Ridge and we want everybody to know it. Nearly every law passed by the last legislature has more malice in it than practical good. The deficiency judgement law helps nobody. Debtors as a rule, have paid nothing on deficiency judgments, and creditors have expected nothing. Then where is the benefit in the law? It helps no poor man and hinders everybody. It will charge no dollar out of this pocket and into that. It is simply an official manifestation of hostility and bad temper toward eastern capital, and that is all. It is the sign of repudiation. It is a suggestion of dishonesty. It is a voice from "Whiskey Ridge," which announces to every low rate money lender, to every insurance company and every savings bank in New England that Nebraska people hate the men and the money that helped them in the early days and would repudiate every obligation if she could. The leaders knew that the retroactive feature of this bill made it unconstitutional, but they wanted it so. The passing of the act will still further arouse the hostile spirit which the leaders are fostering among the people and the declaring of the law unconstitutional by a Republican supreme court will give the old hardshell prophet of evil another minor chord which he will weave into his whang boodle hymn of distrust. Three years ago farmers in eastern Nebraska and Kansas were able to borrow money at six per cent, the same rate which was then paid by the farmers of Ohio, Indiana, and Iowa. Now, the competition between conservative leaders to get out of Nebraska and into Iowa has reduced the rate there to five per cent, while the conditions here have been changed so that a prominent leader tells me that he could easily place money here on good security at nine and ten per cent if the eastern people would consent.

"You can have a half million at once to place in Iowa at 5 per cent,

but not a dollar for Nebraska on any terms," was the answer to a prominent broker in this state who recently visited New England in search of money. That's the effect of such vicious and senseless legislation as the deficiency judgement bill. But we're fightin' men from the Ridge," and what do we care for the respect of New England. The leaders have their hands in the public pocket and the railroad passes in their vest pocket, and what do they care for the financial effort, if the political effect is to hold their crowd together?

Shame on the long faced demagogue, who plays upon the prejudice of the masses, to feather his own particular nest, while his splendid state that ought to be beaming in the sunlight of happiness at home and respect abroad is sitting in the ashes of disgrace, gnawing the bitter herbs of pessimism and discontent.

J. W. JOHNSON

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