

HESPERIAN STUDENT

LINCOLN,

APRIL, 1873.

THE HESPERIAN STUDENT.—A College paper published monthly by the students of the Nebraska State University. Terms—50 cents per year, in advance. Subscriptions will be received at J. F. Adams' News Stand, next door north of Post Office.

Communications are solicited from all the students and our friends in general. Address the Hesperian Student, P. O. Box 609 Lincoln, Nebraska. H. K. METCALF, Editor-in-Chief. G. A. WATSON, Associate.

The past month has been an eventful one in the history of our University—witnessing several important changes, and one or two welcomed innovations. In the society affairs especially have "Old things passed away and all things become anew."

The town affairs had taken at the close of last term, and the final decision by the Faculty as chronicled in the last issue of STUDENT, resulted in a division of the society—one party withdrawing to form another. Thus the party feuds and strifes that prevailed so long in the "Old Palladian" have given place to friendly rivalry between two distinct organizations. And already are the benefits of this change beginning to appear in the greater interest manifested by the members, both of the Palladian and the Adelpian, and particularly in the improvement of their literary productions.

A new feature of this term is the ladies' society, which has been formed under favorable circumstances and is well sustained. We wish the "Pierian" every good thing, and may its members derive much benefit and pleasure from their new association.

We welcome also a change in the arrangements of the library. For nearly two years this essential part of the University has been an eye-sore to the students and friends of the institution. During that time the use of the library has been limited to the Faculty and the solitary librarian, while those whom it was originally intended to benefit were obliged to content themselves with an occasional peep. All this, however, has been changed. The grumbles of the venerable Seniors and sedate Juniors are to be heard no longer; the usually happy Sophomores are made unusually so by this good fortune; the Freshmen are also jubilant over the prospect of plenty of "posting." To all these is our well selected library invaluable.

But this after all is only half way work, for four fifths of the students are still denied the privilege of drawing books from the library. To them it is as if it were not at all, and not until the advantages of our University are extended to all its children will it flourish as it should. May the time be not distant when this shall be done.

Horace Mann.

No. 3.

Probably no single act of Mr. Mann's career evinced so strikingly the energy of his character and his magic influence over the minds of men, as the establishment of the Normal School.

Our fathers were thoroughly grounded in the belief that teaching was the gift of nature. She made the teachers with less effort and expense of material than in the production of any other of her numerous offspring. They cost neither pang, spasm, relief nor depression. They were as near a nullity as it was possible to get. To ask stereotyped questions and flog their

subjects was the whole duty of those whom Goldsmith described as "arbitrary, tyrannical, storm-faced brutes,"—upon whom our own gentle, genial Washington Irving heaped unmeasured ridicule in the character of Ichabod Cranes—whom Sir Walter Scott pilloried in the person of Dominic Sampson—whose degradation even the kindly Cowper help to proclaim in his well-meant defence wherein he pleads:—

Doom him not to solitary meals,
But recollect that he has sense, and feels!
He deems it hard to vegetate alone.
Pray don't transfix his feelings with an oath
Nor frown unless he vanish with the cloth"—and much more of like tenor.

When Horace Mann became Secretary of the Board of Education in 1837, Massachusetts had between three and four thousand common schools, taught, with rare exceptions, by teachers of this class, teachers who had not a glimmer of the real function of education. Instead of communicating a knowledge and securing the observance of the laws by which health and strength are attained and preserved, by their reckless cruelty and criminal negligence they did more than all other causes, that of climate included, to make consumption the national disease of America.

Instead of training up a nation of strong men, they did all that ignorance, impulse, and unrestrained passion could do to produce a nation of invalids. In like manner, they attempted to build up the immortal temple of the Spirit, without having given an hour of preliminary study to the human mind and the laws of mental development.

They had no idea that the senses, the perceptive and the reflective faculties, and the moral sense needed special training and development. They knew little about them and nothing at all of the order of development of the mental faculties. Their entire stock of knowledge comprehended only an elementary knowledge of the simplest arithmetical combinations, political Geography, spelling and writing.

The most deplorable fact was that these 3,000 conceited blockheads who ruled with despotic sway the 3,000 independent royalties, called school districts, had indoctrinated the people in the belief that they, the masters, were infallible in knowledge and method; and, hence, masters and people arrayed themselves, a mass of stolid conservatism, against Mr. Mann's proposed innovation. He assumed without a moment's hesitation and performed unflinchingly the ungracious, but most necessary, preliminary work of convicting the masters of their ignorance and of the barbarism of their methods. In his first progress through the state, he devoted himself almost exclusively to this thankless duty. Having partially succeeded in this, and having showed, at the same time, that the teacher, like the lawyer, physician, or craftsman of whatever name, needed special preparation for his difficult work, he essayed the more arduous task of trying to induce the people to build and endow institutions wherein teachers could be taught.

We are not surprised that this should have been a most difficult task in view of the skeptical state of the public mind upon the question even now.

The public spirit of Edmund Dwight of Boston accelerated the gratification of Mr. Mann's ardent wish. He offered the state ten thousand dollars upon condition that it should add a like sum and devote

it to normal school instruction. At Mr. Mann's earnest entreaty the proposition was accepted and the beginning was then and there made of normal instruction which in one form or another is justly occupying so much attention throughout the land. That its inception is due to Mr. Mann, no one can doubt. The germinal thought was his; whether it is to be further developed in the direction of *distinct institutions endowed and officered by the state*, is another thing. We judge not. In Michigan they have a good Normal School; but very little of the Normal School work is done there. It is mostly done in the union schools throughout the state. In nearly all the towns which support a good Union School, there is a normal or teachers' class which is trained in the methods of teaching and the members of which are from time to time allowed to put in practice their knowledge in the lower departments of the school under the eye of accomplished teachers. To do in distinct Normal Schools the work that is here done in the Union Schools and at no greater expense to the teachers themselves, would require the indefinite multiplication of these institutions and a direct outlay that would be intolerably burdensome to the people. Normal instruction must be given in every town. It can be given in every good Union School with positive advantage to the school. We are much mistaken if this shall not every where prove, and most happily prove, the solution of the Normal School difficulty. At the best, most of the work that is done in these schools is the same as that done in any good school in any of our larger towns. It will not be difficult for the High School to supplement its work by the special training of the Normal. G. E. C. (to be continued.)

Reminiscence of '49.

It was during the earlier days of the excitement about the gold of California and Pike's Peak that I joined a party who were leaving their homes in Illinois for the mine-regions.

Arriving safely at St. Joseph, we proceeded to make the necessary preparation for crossing the plains, by purchasing a wagon and four mules, together with sundry indispensable articles called food. Then attaching ourselves to a train that was destined westward, we commenced the routine of camp life, which, pleasing and exciting at first, before the end of a long journey, becomes very wearisome.

After being out from the settlements six weeks' some of the party began to tire of the monotony of the prairie, and hunting the bison and antelope which were to be found in abundance. We wanted an incident; it came. One day a solitary horseman was seen far out on the prairie, riding toward the train. Of course it was supposed to be an Indian; and it was well known that there were other Indians close by in some of the benches which are to be found every mile or so in certain of the prairies. Then the men of the train, in every direction, were to be seen loosening their revolvers, and taking down their rifles from their fastenings in the wagons. But as the adventurer approached, he proved to be a white man dressed in the usual western garb. He stood a little above the medium height, and might have been called handsome but for a disagreeable expression of his mouth.

Being asked how it was he was so far

away from the settlements, without companions; he said he had been on the plains many years, and was accustomed to all the arts of Indian life and warfare. He requested permission to accompany us, for he said he wanted to try his luck farther west. There seemed no good reason why he should not join his fortunes with ours.

Shortly after, a party of Indians came into camp and begged fire-water, which, sorry to say, was given to some of them in trade for robes. Our new man who could talk their Indian language fluently, conversed with them as though he himself was one of them.

Among the women belonging to the train were the wife and daughter of an officer, who were going to join him at some western station. Our new acquaintance soon became known to the ladies, and having a light tongue and an excellent voice, made himself agreeable to them. Ere long he was on intimate terms with the daughter. They would sometimes ride a mile or two in advance of the train, and at other times ramble away over the prairie while every body else was in camp. The stranger having become acquainted with the affairs of the train, began to make suggestions that were displeasing to the men who were accustomed to cross the plains, but which were likely to be met with favor by those who had never crossed before.

And once, when we were nearing the cross roads, he counselled the wagon master to take the lower trail; for said he, "the Indians are hunting along the northern; besides the southern is nearer and perfectly safe." But the wagon master said he had received news from a train a week before, that the northern route was safe, and he hinted that he himself was running the train and that the unskilled adviser, had better take care of his business. Seeing that nothing could be done with the wagon master, then the man commenced to create an excitement about the unsafety of the northern road among the owners of the wagons accompanying the train.

When we arrived at the cross-roads, a halt was called; then a general consultation ensued; but no one knew what was best to be done and only two persons were decided, and these two were the new-comer and the Train Boss. So we camped there that night, and the next morning the Train Boss ordered his train to prepare to go forward, and all those who were disposed to follow him were invited to do so. Then he mounted his horse and started off, one hundred and five wagons following him. Thirty-five wagons remained behind, doubtful which way to proceed; but finally they slowly moved away on the southern route, with the stranger for their guide. As the lower trail was somewhat shorter, our party had concluded to take that route and trust to providence.

C. H. D.

(to be concluded.)

"Deal gently, deal kindly, deal lovingly, and there is not a wolf in human shape but will be melted to kindness; and there is not a tiger in woman's form but will break down and sue for pardon, if God should bless the love that is brought to bear upon her by her friend."—Spurgeon.

It is the greatest courage to be able to bear the imputation of the want of courage.—Henry Clay.