

THE CRETE CONTEST.

The Industrious Preparations of
Two Societies Come to
Nothing.Tremendous Trains—Beaten at Base
Ball—Merrill Hall—The Balm
Blue—Slow Supper.Appreciative Audience—Earnest Efforts—
Beautiful Boquets—Joyless
Judgment.

If Friday the 12th of May was chilly it was not stormy and with thankful hearts fully one hundred and seventy-five students of Nebraska University and their friends were taken down to Crete in the special cars provided by the B. & M. R. R. Yes, it was a merry, light-hearted train load with singing and joking and an occasional stray pun. The Cadet Band set all a roaring by coming on the scene in sober black suits, white ties and gloves and the tallest of "stove-pipe" hats. Drum major Clark shone in a white topper, Hitchcock was out of sight in his, Lichty was just killing, and Dan Wheeler might have been taken for business man of a mastodon minstrel troupe.

Tickets had been issued by the hard worked committee of arrangements (which we think should have a vote of thanks,) and these were punched by conductor Lichty as if he had been on the road for years. We mean to say that the tickets were punched by him. "Now why does he put that hole in the tickets?" asked an innocent Union of her escort. "Why," he replied knowingly, "to let us go through, of course." Groans all around. "Mary's Little Lamb" was sung about until all were tired of her, but other music seemed impossible. The local editor, who has made the crow of the rooster his study for years, piped his clarion whenever there was opportunity, although warned not to crow too soon, etc.

Arrived at Crete we were formed into a procession, headed by the Crete band and ours. Those who wished stopped at the Cosmopolitan, the majority went on to the ball grounds, where the Rising Stars of Lincoln played the Crete club. Our brave little fellows were rash in challenging such a heavy nine, so much superior to them in age and muscle, as the score showed, but they did play well, exceedingly well. Palladians, Unions and Lincolnites had seats on one side of the diamond, Hesperians, Owls, and "Cretannes" (as our folks persisted in calling them,) were ranged on the other. We did not have many opportunities to cheer but it was lusty when it came and our college cry of "Neb-Neb-Neb!" rang upon the air. "If we don't beat 'em at ball, we may to-night at b-a-w-l," exclaimed an ardent Palladian.

The visitors were allowed to ramble over Doane College as they willed. The museum was found to be better than ours in reptiles, shells and curiosities, and in the fact that they were displayed under glass and not packed away in drawers, but the University has the better collection of birds and minerals. The library has a fair collection of books but with many dry titles displayed. The recitation rooms were many and well supplied with apparatus. The view from the cupola was superb and some climbed up there and also out on that cunning little balcony under the bell. They were happy, laughing groups, free from study for one day, seeking amusement and looking eagerly for the night's entertainment.

It had been advertised that boats could be had for a ride on the Blue. Two young men and their ladies, determined to carry out the bill to the fullest extent, made desperate search for the aforesaid crafts and at last succeeded in discovering a flat bottomed affair in which they had a romantic voyage. The gentlemen took turns at rowing and bailing while the girls rhapsodized on the placidity of the water and sang nautical airs. We have since learned that there were a number of boats gathered at another point and several took advantage of them.

Supper was a struggle in which the weaker, and the hungrier, had longest to wait. What one of that starving crowd which stood clamorously outside the Cosmopolitan dining room will ever forget those big brown doors through which not even a glimpse of the laden tables could be had? Or who will forget how unanimously better he felt as he walked out after he had at least been served, and as he emerged, how calmly he bore the taunts and threats of the poor wretches who had had nothing yet? Some, not yet satisfied, made raids on neighboring confectionery stores, and one young gentleman of eminent respectability stole, out and out, deliberately and with malice, a bottle of strawberry pop. We regret to add that the young ladies who aided and abetted him in this pronounced it the best strawberry pop they had ever tasted. In fact, the Lincoln young ladies were quite uncontrollable. Six separate groups of them marched up at six different times and demanded of a bashful young man in a grocery store if he had any gum. They knew perfectly well that he had not a stick of it. When the sixth squad struck him he fainted dead away.

Two hundred seats had been reserved for the Lincoln visitors in the Crete opera house, the rest of the room was occupied by Cretans. The judges of the contest were Hon. W. H. Morris of Crete, Hon. C. H. Gere of the Lincoln *Journal* and Hon. John D. Howe, State Senator from Omaha. Excellent synopses of the var-

ious productions have appeared in the daily papers; we have space only to mention each. Mr. Show, of Doane, in his essay on "The Ethics of Poetry," revealed a scholarly familiarity with the different schools and singled out that of which Mr. Wilde is a representative for a bitter attack, claiming that the æsthetic faculty must be subordinate to the moral. His opponent, Mr. Rich, chose from his favorite field of history Napoleon, whom he characterized as the most colossal figure of history; who became a despot for the glory of France; who had nothing in common with other men, and if they suffered by reason of him, he suffered more by reason of himself. Mr. Rich's sentences were Macaulay like, strong and vigorous, but did not display the thought of the first essay.

By far the best passage in Mr. Avery's oration on "American Women" was the graceful reference to Mrs. Garfield's fortitude at the death bed of the President. Also the passive heroism of the wife who remains at home while her soldier husband goes to battle was well treated, but there were too many commonplaces and too much gesture. Miss Fairfield's subject was "The Women of Shakespeare," one she had chosen for graduation, we understand, and sacrificed for the contest. Miss Fairfield cannot do better than to repeat that upon Commencement day. Passing from one play to another, she commented upon the noble heroines and witty women of Shakespeare, making admirable selections and arranging them in clear and distinct groups. As a composition this was refined and beautiful to a degree seldom seen in schools; as an oration it was most gracefully spoken, and although protracted, received by the audience in earnest attention.

There can be no comparison between the recitations. Although Miss Andrews had become perceptibly stronger since her visit to Lincoln a year ago, she found in Miss Parker a rival who had an innate power of which she herself was probably unconscious, for her lessons in declamation have been extremely few. Miss Andrew's selection was the "Rhymes of the Duchess May," much like the "Jennie McNeil" which she spoke last year, and spoke with the same accuracy and earnestness, but it was not of a grade with the selections from "Lady of the Lake," in the choice of which Miss Parker showed such admirable discrimination. The song and the death of the crazed Blanche of Devon were two pieces of perfect acting, which must have required the severest study in preparation.

The debate was upon the question that the general government should own and operate the railroads of the United States, Mr. Edward Yates of the Palladians upon the affirmative, the negative taken by Mr.