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CURRENT REMARK.

There is at least one thing needed in Lincoln; that is paved streets. It seems as if our streets could be paved as easily as any in the world. They are graded nicely and are comparatively level. Perhaps we long for graded streets more now that it is muddy, than we otherwise would, but we certainly ought to have at least some of the principal ones fixed, so that the mud would not be more than a foot deep.

The custom of sending valentines is dropping off very rapidly these years. It used to be a pretty thing, this sending valentines to our friends, and it is too bad that it is going. The disuse of the custom can be traced to the comic penny pictures which are so common now-a-days. Of course nice ones can be procured now, and are, but the great majority are those senseless things that some fool thinks appropriate for some other fool, and so sends it to him. Such practices have killed the older and better idea of St. Valentine's Day.

Washington's birthday was not observed by the University, coming as it does so close to our own birthday, but the city schools were closed and the day otherwise observed as it should be. A few people think that we are getting to have too many holidays, and that with one or two exceptions they should be done away with. But fortunately the great mass of people, both employers and employed, recognize holidays as beneficial and welcome them, and it is a poor stick who will not give his employees a rest on legal holidays when his business is such that he can without great loss.

We have had a holiday, and we liked it. It seems a little strange that students think they are getting ahead of the faculty whenever they get a day off. Some students miss recitations and delude themselves by thinking they are "working" the Professor. Of course this is wrong, but there is no use of saying so, for the same idea will continue as long as colleges exist. It is human nature to shun work of any kind, and students, contrary to public opinion, are human. So they will keep right on thinking that holidays and recitations missed are so much lost by the faculty and so much gained by the students. "What fools we mortals be."

The old question of whether the class valedictorian is ever again heard of bobs up serenely. This time it is *The Blackburnian* which vigorously combats the charge. It strikes us that it is unnecessary to agonize over the subject. There will always be persons who make it their especial business to pick flaws in our educational system. Such people have always existed and the before-mentioned charge has always been their knock-down argument. Nevertheless it is all bosh. Grit and pluck and brains will always lead in or out of college. The fellow who deserves the honors of his class has qualities which will bring him to the front in business life.

The shutting down of the McCormick machine shops was a great blow to the so-called guardians of labor. They thought

to coerce the firm by threats of a strike, as so many have done. However the shops were closed before they could strike, to save them the trouble, as the firm stated. And now hundreds of them are out of employment. Of course it is hard for crowds of men to be dependent on one or two, but if the crowds had good sense they would see from the experience of others, that threats and strikes are of more damage to them than to their employers. For so long as a firm has money it can get laborers; and, while it may cause them embarrassment and perhaps even failure, it is sure to be ruinous to the strikers themselves.

It will probably not surprise anyone if we say that the skating rink rage is no more, for everybody knows it. This might have been predicted from the first. We are an enthusiastic people, and go in for a thing with all our might while it is new, but by the very nature of our enthusiasm we ensure the end. It is only those amusements that have a steady growth that last, not the ones that turn the heads of people till it seems as if their senses are gone for good. These never last. Roller skating is over, and no one mourns. Those who opposed it and believed that the influence of the rinks was bad are glad that their attraction is ended; those who skated have had enough. So the rage is being left behind us in our onward march, and no one is sorry.

Every season Lincoln is favored with some good plays. Barrett, Keene, Maggie Mitchell and the like were here and drew fair houses, not large. So Lincoln people have an opportunity to see good acting, and some improve it. But it takes such attractions as *Bison William* to draw a crowd. It is only these blood-curdling things, or something less worthy behind the footlights, that draw such a crowd that the Opera House will not hold it all. This shows, either that the greater number of our citizens do not care for anything good in the line of acting, or that none but the poorer care for any. Theaters are run to make money, and as long as genuine actors will not be patronized, we cannot complain when the lower and more harmful ones are palmed off on us.

Again the country is favored with the interesting discussion of the Fitz-John Porter question. The arguments are being rehashed, pro and con; friends and foes are becoming excited; and the valuable(?) time of Congress is being wasted. It is to be hoped that the bill will carry; for whether he ought to be punished or not, whether he was and is a traitor or not, life is too short to waste months of each year in discussion of the question. Indications are that he will be reinstated, if not this time, some other year, for as long as he lives, this question will be brought up, until it carries; and if he should die the question might be brought up by some enthusiastic friend. The one thing illustrated by the case is the tendency of American custom to allow a person convicted of anything trial after trial till he is acquitted. If enough trials are granted this will always be the outcome, because the facts and circumstances grow cold, and we are apt so say that perhaps he was not so far wrong as we or our fathers thought at the time.