

wished, but students of the University of Nebraska have not yet reached this stage of development, and until they do, the thesis work at best will be elementary and of little practical value. It should be borne in mind, however, that this plan is new with us. Before many years the standard of our school will be much higher than it is at present. Better and riper students will be graduated and then undoubtedly as good original work can be done, as now is in any of our eastern colleges.

WE certainly live in an age of progress and it is interesting to reflect on the various ways in which human ingenuity manifests itself. As civilization advances the needs of man increase. Easy and complete international relations have been much hindered by the differences in languages used by various nations. But the enterprising spirit of our age has attempted to overcome even this difficulty. A language that could be made universal would indeed be a novelty and at the same time a means of great utility. There are many difficulties in way of universal acceptance of this scheme. A language that would suit America would not be accepted by France. Volapuk is the name of the new language that is now being put forward to meet this long felt want. The American Philological Society has recently appointed a committee to investigate the merits of this new tongue. They reported that they thought it unpracticable but that the time had come for the promulgation of such a scheme. We have every reason to believe that this plan will furnish a basis from which others can be deduced and put into successful operation.

MANY of the students are looking forward to the time when there will be facilities for muscular as well as mental training. It is generally understood that the "Grant Memorial Hall" will be furnished with the much needed apparatus, but such is not the case. In the specifications according to which it is being built there is no provision for a gymnasium. We question the wisdom of the faculty in once more denying us of the means of manly exercise. A lack of funds is one excuse given for the present arrangement. It is true that great improvements have been made this year; and the legislature, when it meets again, will find that the appropriation made last session has been well spent. However, the expense of the proposed gymnasium was not so great as to warrant its total rejection. How much longer will this institution continue to send out its round shouldered and pale faced graduates simply because the muscular development is neglected? Ample opportunities for moral and intellectual training are now offered to both sexes and it is but just that they demand the third essential element of a complete education.

JOSEPH PRIESTLY.

A very peculiar character in the eighteenth century was Joseph Priestly. He was both a scientist and a theologian, a philosopher and a politician. He was born and bred in Old England, but he taught and died in New England. When he was a boy of six his mother died and his father was too poor to properly educate the boy; a paternal aunt gave him a home and sent him to a grammar school. He was taught Latin and Greek and during his vacations, he was taught Hebrew by a dissenting minister. When he had acquired some proficiency in this last branch, he took up the study of Chaldee, Syriac and Arabic. Later he took up French, Italian and German. At the age of nineteen he became a theological student in the dissenting academy at Daventry.

His parents and aunt were Calvinists. But their free discussions and prejudices led young Priestly to a systematic examination of the various creeds. To the surprise of his friends he soon avowed himself a believer in the doctrine of Arminius. At the academy he found professors and students equally agitated. Liberty and necessity, the sleeps of the soul, etc., and all the articles of theological orthodoxy and heresy were topics of animated and frequent discussion. The spirit of controversy thus excited was in some measure fostered by the plan regulating their studies. Certain works on both sides of every question the students were required to read and take full notes of for future use "The Extreme Heresy," Priestly observes, "was Arianism, and all of us, I believe, left the academy with a belief, more or less qualified, of the doctrine of the atonement."

But his waywardness did not interfere with his graduation. In 1755 he became assistant minister to an Independent congregation in Suffolk. Here he became unpopular by renouncing the doctrine of the atonement. In three years he left, going to Nantwich, but his unpopularity followed him. He next engaged in teaching with some success, so that he was finally chosen professor of belles-letters in Warrington Academy. During the succeeding ten years he busied himself by writing half a dozen works on varying subjects; he also delivered political lectures, becoming very famous in this line.

Upon a visit to London he met Dr. Franklin to whom he communicated his idea of writing a historical account of electrical discoveries. But being too poor to purchase the requisite books Franklin procured them for him. Before the end of the year Priestly sent him a copy of "The History and Present State of Electricity with Original Experiments."

A disagreement between the trustees and professors of the academy cancelled his appointment at Warrington, 1767. His next engagement was with a large congregation at Mill Hill Chapel, Leeds. His home was near a brewery. Its chemical workings engaged his attention and became the stimulus for the study of pneumatics. In 1772 he brought out as a result of these investigations a pamphlet on "Impregnating Water with Fixed Air" and the same year he communicated to the Royal Society his "Observations on Different Kinds of Air," to which the Oopley medal was awarded in 1773.

Priestly originated other modes of investigation, and, indeed, nearly all that is now known of the gases has its foundation in the discoveries he made. His discovery of oxygen is unrivaled in importance except by Newton's discovery of gravitation. The pneumatic trough, by which the gas is collected, was also invented by Priestly. He experimented untiringly and published a detailed account of every experiment he made. He was the idol, not only of the scientific