

STORIES IN PASSING.

He is principal of the high school in one of the smaller cities in Nebraska—a tall, lean, narrow shouldered, unmarried man, who of late years has studied much, exercised little and rather fallen out of the habit of giving much attention to his personal appearance. When he came up to attend the university summer school some one persuaded him to enter the "gym. class," open to both ladies and gentlemen. So the second day of the school he dropped into the armory at the hour of the class and was somewhat taken back to find about thirty lady teachers, in the gymnasium costume, receiving the preliminary remarks from the instructor. He asked if this was the general class and was answered that it was. He signified his intention of entering and was given a place in the line of young ladies. After the first few remarks, the instructor gave the explanation for the first exercise.

"You may remove your coat," she said to the principal from the small town. The man did not obey but appeared ill at ease, and the instructor repeated the command. Still the principal made no move nor said a word.

At the third command the man left the line and walking across to the instructor, whispered blushing: "I must be excused this time. The whole arm of my shirt is ripped loose and I'm afraid the pin at the shoulder will never hold."

The man spoke in a whisper, but those experienced school teachers were accustomed to whispering and heard every word. And amid a perfect chorus of laughter the principal got out of that armory and has lost all interest in physical culture.

They were sitting in the hammock out under the apple trees, watching the sun sink behind the hills.

"Surely you don't mean that, Mary?" he said in a slow, low voice, facing about toward her.

The girl looked out toward the sunset and was silent.

"You can't mean it, Mary," the fellow went on passionately. "You don't know what you are saying. You don't know what it will mean to me. Why, it means everything. I can't stay here with you so near and know that everything has changed. It means that I must change my plans—give up my position, which I had depended on to take my sister through school, and hunt up something else. It'll be a little hard on my mother, too,—and—but we'll not speak of those things. You mean it? Very well. I'm glad you've told me now. You shall always have my respect for doing so—if you think that way. I shall remember you always and—and—good-bye." And the young man turned and left her, but his face was pale and the lines of his mouth hard-set.

And sitting there in the hammock with the sinking sun just catching her wavy hair with a touch of gold, she listened silently and let him go.

There is a man down in Plato, Nebraska, wherever that it, who has a great future before him, as a liar. He is already launching into newspaper work, and thus his success is assured. A little yarn that he sent to one of the state dailies gave him a reputation at once. It was to the effect that on April 23rd a heavy hail and wind storm occurred near Plato. Much of the hail was as large as tin cans and in the gullies and ravines was covered out of sight by leaves and rubbish blown about by the wind. Last week two boys discovered some of this hail in a ravine, enough to freeze a gallon of ice cream. Since then boys and men have been

beating the entire county and selling hail to farmers and business men in lieu of ice, which was short last winter. It is expected that the hail is there in quantities large enough to freeze all the picnic cream for the Fourth of July.

Such a correspondent cannot afford to be left unnoticed.

Are you awakened by the seven o'clock whistles in the morning? Most Lincoln people are. But did you ever notice how differently suggestive they appeal to you as you lie there half awake? The shrill Journal whistle generally sounds the prelude. But perhaps you do not hear it. It is not a very strong whistle and scarcely reaches much past the business part of the city. A factory whistle, louder and deeper, answers and is followed by one down in the railway yards. Then the city whistles, which are supposed to run on accurate time, turn loose—the South street water station starting, low, distant faraway, as if of some hidden locomotive among the hills south of town. The M street pumping house takes up the refrain—one long, high strain that awakes the whole of East Lincoln to consciousness—and then passes on the sound to that of the F street station. This whistle is one that once heard is never forgotten. I heard that whistle as a boy years ago, and went away and long after came back and its first sound awakened the memories of ten years before. It has a low, vibrating, far reaching voice of its own, that reminds you dreamily of a steamboat whistle far up the river near your Mississippi home. This whistle, acting as a sort of a last call, sounds twice and is heard over all the city and far into the surrounding country. And then just as its voice dies away, from out the distance toward the Havelock shops comes a low, faraway whistle—the echo of the morning melody. And as it dies away in your ears you turn over for a half hour snooze before the breakfast hour.

In the library of the fraternity house was a large blue print of some mountain or other, framed in gold and white and making a very pretty effect. But the print had faded a little and was not very distinct, just the white outline of a peak standing up above the range, with a dark, indistinct base that might stand for a valley, a bay, or a simple plain.

"That's Pike's Peak," said one of the young men to the blonde young lady in white organdie at a party they were giving at the house. "You see the peak covered with snow—print was taken in winter, you know. The cog winds right around this knob here, and you strike Windy Point. About here is where I fell down a ravine and nearly cracked my head on a boulder. Right below here is Manitou and farther out on this plain is Colorado Springs. Yes, it makes a very pretty picture and its about the only one of the Peak taken in winter that I ever saw. Somebody gave it to Baldy when he was shooting geese around there."

The couple passed on and presently another young man stopped before the picture.

"Have you seen this blue print of Baldy's. He picked it up back east somewhere this summer. Its Mount Washington, you know. Here are the hotels down here, you see, in the valley, with the mountains at their back standing high up, even above all the other mountains. Its all too far away to see anything distinctly, but it makes a grand old sight, just as it is." The young lady in white smiled appreciatively and they began the waltz.

Later in the evening a third young gentleman explained the picture to a lady friend.

"You've been abroad? No? Then you don't recognize this as Mount

Vesuvius—Vesuvius by moonlight. See how silvery everything is about the top and dark down along the coast. You can just make out a ship or two here in the bay. I like it because it gives the old volcano as inactive. Generally the pictures have it smoking away or covered with the lurid glare of the glowing water. But this is just as I remember it that night in June, two years ago, when the Professor took us all up. Just as the party was breaking up, the young lady in white organdie caught Baldy (Baldwin Alvard is his full name) and led him to the picture in the library.

"I'm so interested in this blue print," she said sweetly. "It reminds me so much of some mountain or picture of some mountain I've seen or heard about. Won't you tell me what it is? There is no name on the print."

"That—that—a mountain!" said Baldy. "Why, that's a hill back of our house at home. I took it not long ago when I was down. I got too near or got the focus wrong or something, and that's what makes it loom up so big. This dark is the orchard and these white dots down here in the foreground are stone benches under the trees. How'd you ever think it a mountain." And the blonde young lady in the white organdie went home wondering greatly in her mind.

A tramp had applied just at noon at the boarding house, and, being given something, sat down on the rear side-steps to eat it, where he could be seen by those in the dining room.

"We've got a new boarder, I see," said the talkative young man in the crash suit to the student on his right.

The strange young lady who had just come in as he ceased speaking looked up quickly and then her eyes fell consciously. But the young man did not observe and went on.

"Yes, we seem to be over stocked with this kind, now. No end to them this time of the year. If I were landlady I'd fire 'em bodily—coming especially at this hour of the day, just when everybody's busy with regular boarders."

The young lady across the table blushed and moved uneasily, helping herself to the potatoes nervously and almost timidly.

"Nobody ever seems to refuse that kind of boarder, either," went on the young man. "Easy way of getting through the world, isn't it. When we're broke, Will, we'll have to try it. We ought to beat our way as easily as these 'outside boarders' that make this house."

Just then the stranger opposite dropped her head, arose hastily, and alternately blushing and turning pale, left the dining room, while the tramp moved off down the ally.

HARRY G. SHEDD.

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