

the music lovers of southeast Nebraska congregate to hear good things.

One of the most notable events of this enterprising city was the production of the opera, "The Isle of Tæboni," the director, Mr. E. L. Fulton, being also the author of the new piece. The first production was given about a month ago, and a number of Lincoln musicians who were present speak well of the new opera. The performance will be repeated on the evening of May 30th.

The scene of the opera is laid on a cannibal island, where there are several interrupted feasts and plenty of romance. The comedy parts are taken by two American tramps who are stranded on the island. While there is much opportunity for individual work in the score, the strong feature of the new opera is the chorus.

Nebraska musicians may well be proud of a little city like Pawnee, where good music is produced, and where good music is also written.

### MAY BASKETS.

[KATHARINE MELICK.]  
For The Courier.

This one is of lilac and white crepe paper, with dried violets hanging over the edge. It has a twist of the white for a handle. There were ten of them, and they were hung very quietly without any knocks or rings. But they were not hung by the hands that made them.

It was a small, bent woman with a black shawl over her white hair, who went softly from door to door in the soft May twilight that was flickering into moonlight. Fingers that trembled with sorrow and pain put every one of the ten just where Wendla's dead fingers would have hung it. They were for Wendla, whose flaxen head was covered over out there on the hillside, seven days ago, and whose sad-eyed Swedish mother would have it no other way.

"When I first t'ought of dem, I must call out loud. I can not keep still. I can see her sit on de bed to make dem. But after while I know it is someth'ing I can do for her."

"Mice shall be kept, always, for little Wendla," I tried to say. "You are sure she meant it for me?"

"Oh yes. She have said the names to me many times."

Then while the mother hid her face, and while I thanked heaven for the tears that eased a heart too near breaking I looked out over the terrace, at the six blue-eyed Rudeens, tumbling in their hammock, and tried to shut out the picture of the one ewe lamb sacrificed. Still I saw that vision of the child Wendla, dragged at the hoofs of a terrified horse to her death, and the hawthorne on the terrace sending its breath through the empty rooms, made me faint.

"I have done my work today," said Wendla's mother. "I can not do no'ting before. I can only wish to go wid Wendla."

"But when I gad'er de lilac an' de violet, an' de red hickory bud, I fin' also dose small green lurch leaf, an' de pine dat grow in Sweden. Den I remember how many times I have been under dose large trees in d' old country, an' t'ought if Emil can live long wid me, I can not never be sorrowful. So I remember he is here."

"But it is when I have carried de baskets, I know some more. Because one shall go to a house dat have never been any children, never, to be remembered in dat house. I have more left dan she have. An' one must go to a house dat have many children—more dan de mod'er can know to keep. She mus' be help. So I come home and work."

A picture of Emil comes before one—stolid, discordant Emil, whose color scheme of roose pink and auburn so

completely quenches that of his mild-toned wife. But I know as I walk home in the light lacy shadows of the young elm sprays, who has read the message of May time in the "old country" and the new. No spring tide but shall bring her—the brave Swedish mother, with her blue eyes looking out from the head-shawl of her fatherland as she walks through the moonlight of memory, hanging baskets for Wendla.

### The Forest Trees of the Plains.

On the great plains of the middle United States, stretching in a broad belt, 300 to 400 miles wide, nearly 2,000 miles, from Texas to the Saskatchewan, with the one hundredth meridian approximately in its centre, there are many more species of trees than is commonly supposed. In its central portion, crossed by the Republican, Platte and Niobrara rivers, there are between sixty and seventy different kinds, and while this number is somewhat reduced as we go northward, it is somewhat increased in going southward.

In this central portion the trees are found as belts along the margins of the streams; these belts being wider as we go down the streams, and narrower as we go up, until finally they disappear altogether. Along the eastern edge of the plains the eastern forest trees have come up the streams in considerable numbers, while along the western margin some species have crept down from the Rocky Mountain forests. Among the eastern trees are the common Red Cedar, half a dozen arboreous willows, one Cottonwood, Basswood, three Elms, Hackberry, Mulberry, three Ashes, Wild Apple, four Hawthorns, Juneberry, Wild Black Cherry, Choke Cherry, Wild Plum, Kentucky Coffee tree, Honey Locust, Sycamore, Silver Maple, Box Elder, Black Walnut, Butternut, five Hickories, nine or ten Oaks, Ironwood, and a few others of less importance. These have pushed out from the eastern forests which have worked their way westward along the Missouri river and its tributaries, and observations made by the writer during the past sixteen years show that many if not all of them are still pushing up the streams, and taking possession of ground which until very recently they had not previously occupied. In other words, the natural forests are still spreading where the conditions due to the occupation of the country by man are not so unfavorable as to overcome this tendency.

On the westerly side of the plains there is also an encroachment of certain mountain species, as the Bull Pine, western Red Cedar, four species of Cottonwood, Buffalo Berry, a Maple and two Birches. The mountain trees do not so readily come down upon the plains as the eastern species push upward. The reason for this is not easy to make out. It seems reasonable to assume that the distribution down the great slope from the mountains, with the stream current, and in the general direction of the prevailing winds, is more easily accomplished than up the slope, against the stream currents and against the general wind direction, and yet the fact remains that more than six times as many of the eastern than of the western species have entered this portion of the plains. It must indicate that the conditions on the plains are more nearly like those prevailing in the eastern forests than in the Rocky Mountains. This conclusion is sustained by other elements of the flora of this region more herbaceous and shrubby species being identical with those occurring eastward than westward.—By Professor Charles E. Bessey, in Popular Science News.

Where anything is growing, one form oratory is worth a thousand reformatories.

### LINCOLN LETTER.

Lincoln, Nebr.,  
May 20, 1901.

Dear Penelope:

There is a vase of yellow roses on the table beside me, silently filling the room with fragrance, and bringing a message of love and of patient devotion to duty, to an impatient world. What a striking example of independence, of single-mindedness, of the power of an all-pervading idea, do we find in one single rose! One duty alone it owes to itself, and to the world—the duty of growing and developing and enriching with its beauty and perfume a certain amount of space. In a palace or hovel—the rose spreads fragrance. Its duty is to itself, and environment and circumstances are powerless to interfere with the accomplishment of that duty. How different in this respect is the rose from the average human being! Man is essentially a creature of circumstances. He is indeed little more than the animate product of his surroundings. Contact with the world inevitably wears away his individuality of thought and expression. Mr. Emerson realized the fact when he said: "It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the rush of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude."

But I am only writing a letter, Penelope dear, and not composing an essay on physiological psychology or psychological physiology, which ever you may prefer. There are too many abstract theories and too little practice, too many young men with limited brain power who have an idea that it is beneath their dignity to perform any form of labor with their hands. To these the advice of Aristotle applies: "An action and not a thought is the end of life." Many years later the poet Whittier emphasized the same idea when he said: "Speak out in acts; the time for words has passed, and deeds alone suffice."

You doubtless heard rumours of the Delta Gamma convention last week. It was a very successful week of functions. The Nebraska chapter has been preparing for the occasion for two years, and with the customary foresight of high-minded girls, their assessments were paid in before the convention assembled. Their bills are all settled and the young women are resting from a week, which was, socially, the most brilliant of any recent period. The Kappa convention, which was held two years ago in August, assembled equally pretty and clever girls, but it was held in a socially quiet time, the local chapter was obliged to depend entirely on its own exertions. On the recent occasion the Kappas themselves gave a brilliant reception at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Whedon. The Pi Beta Phi's gave an elegant tea at the home of Mrs. Stuart. Kappa Alpha Theta gave a lawn party on the grounds of the chapter house, Tri-Delta gave a reception at the home of Mrs. Bonnell and Phi Delta Theta gave a lawn party on the Raymond grounds which were illuminated by half a hundred electric lights and set with rugs, chairs and canopies. The ensemble of the week, therefore, was composed of the most gracious efforts of the other fraternities in residence as well as the utmost that the Delta Gammas could do. There are a number of very pretty Omaha girls who are Delta Gammas, so that you must have heard the echoes and detected a faint fragrance of the ball, teas, etc. With the bills all paid Delta Gamma may draw a long breath with the consciousness of the successful culmination of two years' economically expended effort.

Penelope, I wish you would write every week. Your letters are really interesting, mine are deadly dull, but I

am obliged, it seems, to get up one of these soporific effusions to strike sparks from you. It reminds me of the steel hammer which hits the powder; it is not the metal which contains the fire, but it seems to be necessary to the action. With increasing devotion,

ELEANOR.

### LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY.

(Percy Bysshe Shelley.)

The fountains mingle with the river,  
And the river with the ocean;  
The winds of heaven meet forever  
With a sweet emotion:  
Nothing in this world is single,  
All things by a law divine  
In one another's being mingle,—  
Why not I with thine?

See, the mountains kiss high heaven,  
And the waves clasp one another;  
No sister flower would be forgiven  
If it disdained its brother;  
And the sunlight clasps the earth,  
And the moonbeams kiss the sea,—  
What are all these kissings worth  
If thou kiss not me?

When the Toledo plan of church consolidation, according to the suggestion of this religious organ, takes place there will be cause for rejoicing. When the time comes there will be much less of disputation on the non-essentials which divide the different sects and more harmony on matters of great import, for the promotion of which all churches are organized. People will go in greater numbers to sit in the sanctuaries to listen to the expounding of the good old gospel, for the expounder will be a man who will not have to live on potato parings and pie plant and be pulling greens to sell when he should be in his study communing with his Maker and the great masters of thought. Congregations can then hear preaching that is preaching, for there will be suitable rewards for talented preachers who do the preaching. There will be a large central church with a high grade choir and attractive surroundings. There will be vast crowds which will increase and grow, because folks like to be seen where there is plenty of company. It will be so much more popular to worship then. There is no inspiration in a small congregation, while there is in a large one. Let the syndicate plan be tried. One "Long Tom" gun bombarding the breastworks of satan will do more damage than a dozen little popguns.—Fremont Tribune.

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