EDUCATIONAL COLUMN.

All communications for this department will be addressed to Editorial Committee, box 632 Plattsmouth, Nebraska.

B. S. Ramsey,
Gertie Johnson, } Editorial Com.
T. H. T. Sahm,

For the Herald.

THOROUGHNESS.

The question of thoroughness is one among the first which demands the thoughtful consideration of the teacher, yet is one among the many to which a large proportion of educators in our common schools give but little attention.

By the term "thoroughness" we would not be understood to say that the student of our common schools shall master or understand *everything* connected with the different branches of study pursued, but rather that he shall be required to approximate, at least a commendable degree of thoroughness.

How very often do we visit many of our schools and perhaps the first recitation to which we listen is one in English Grammar; the class close books, and the teacher with book open before him (or her) asks the questions which the members of the class have committed to memory; answers are all given, perhaps, just as they are printed in the book; "the lesson was well recited," says the teacher, and dismisses class with a great deal of praise. But after awhile when class is about through the book, Mr. Thoroughness steps into the schoolroom and applies his "test."—Miss Mary, apparently the most intellectual and intelligent of the class, is requested to name the "parts of speech" in a sentence; Miss Mary hesitates, stammers, and finally, with a melancholy smile, says—"I can't." Now the fact is Miss Mary told the the truth, and more, she was not to be blamed for the failure. She, innocent though she be, no doubt entertained the idea that "she was good in grammar," as many aspiring pupils do, when in reality they know nothing scarcely of the simple rudiments.

Thoroughness itself, implies a slow and labored mental effort to acquire knowledge. The mind must advance by degrees; especially is this true of the younger pupils.

This fact is illustrated in the history of man from birth until the decline of life. The mind of a child may be compared to a "blank"; when the little stranger enters the world it brings this "blank" along, upon which to take impression while it sojourns in this, its temporary home. The great work of education is to fill this "blank." "Impressions upon it are made as soon as the child can form a mental conception of an object." External objects are presented, and impression after impression is made upon the "blank." Gradually, and by degrees, the mind is opening out—this "blank," possessing in itself the philosophical property of expansion is constantly receiving accessions, while its capacity remains undiminished. The great "Book of Nature" supplies the child with lessons for the first few years of its existence, and in learning from this "Book" its progress is only by degrees. After the lapse of a few years, the law allows the child to enter the common or public school.

The same slow process of education is then and there initiated. Step by step, by degrees the child advances; first the simple sounds, then a combination of sougds, then words, sentences still upward on the ascending scale, until finally the student receives a "degree" which ever after entitles him to a claim to scholarship. The education must then be by degrees, and that education may be practical and beneficial, these degrees must be degrees of thoroughness. Injudicious haste must be avoided; "whatever is done hurriedly is never done well." Time must be allowed the mind to dwell on difficult principles and abstruse problems. But the teacher says: "How can I hope to be *thorough* during a term of three months?" True, this is a pertinent question, and one which school boards and parents should address to themselves. For the teacher we can venture an answer. No teacher can hope to be thorough and advance his pupils "through the book," as many parents seem to desire, during so short a time as three months; nor can he succeed in this in six months, nine months, or in a year; it is the work of years. Right here the difficulty arises with the thorough teacher. The mania to "go through the book" is almost universal; many teachers are not exempt from its contagious poison.

The thorough teacher is employed to teach a three months' school. He begins with first principles—with elements or rudiments; he advances the pupils by degrees—the natural method; the degree method is a slow one, it is a laborious method; time is required to work out the "how" and "why"; soon the three months have passed; pupils did not "get through the book"—they are yet in the rudiments. Remuneration is so comparatively insignificant that teacher cannot afford to teach another term of the same school, and school board thinks it cannot increase wages, perhaps cannot pay so much; and the thorough teacher, or *the* teacher must go elsewhere to become perhaps a party to the repetition of the same. Presently another teacher comes along and offers his services to said school board "cheap."—"Cheapness" is the great object with the school board, and soon Mr. "Cheap" Pedagogue is duly installed in the place of the thorough teacher. Mr. Cheap is one of the lightning sort of teachers; he reaches the end of the book by the shortest route; principles, rules, problems, theorems, axioms, practical education, all, are set aside to enable this flying pedagogue to reach his "mark" on the last page. But "his mark" is reached, and with a self satisfied air he turns to his pupils and exclaims: "How fast you have progressed!" But pupils are no farther advanced than at the beginning of the term; they are to a greater or less extent farther back. The bad habit of "haste in study" has been contracted, and this will require time to eradicate. Thus passes away many months of the period of youth; time appropriated to the attainment of one of the noblest of objects, yet most unfortunately misapplied.

Let school boards and parents through out the County and State take this subject under serious consideration. Let them remember that if they would build up the character of their schools—if they would have their children, and those in whose interests they labor, receive a substantial education in our public schools—if they would thus add their mite to the well-being, prosperity, and happiness of society, they must attend to the selection of these teachers, who advance the pupils by degrees; who aim at thoroughness, and whose primary object in the school-room is, to teach.—This class of teachers can not afford to employ their time and tax their energies without a just compensation. They cannot compete with that class who semi-occasionally adopt the teacher's profession only for the purpose of replenishing a depleted purse; and they cannot hope to be thorough in mental discipline unless they be employed in the same school for a longer period than one, two, or three terms.

FIDELIS.

What Oakes Ames is Like.

Ames is large in stature, with a head something like a gourd, the principal feature of attraction to a stranger being the evident disposition of his nose and chin to meet and shake hands. A cold, sellfish, grayish-blue eye contributes to make up the countenance, which, backed by a little mind, form the entire man. The only dispositon he has evinced toward the affairs of the House, aside from the Pacific Railroad, has been an unsuccessful attempt, in usurping the office of door-keeper, to keep the page boys steadily at work, and prevent the pranks of those youngsters. I was once a witness of a "conflict of jurisdiction" between the venerable Ames and a page. As the House had adjourned, the boys commenced a little play on their own hook, but Mr. Ames, who has a great aversion to anything but business, undertook to reprove them. "Boys," said he, "don't you know that you are in the presence of members of the House of Representatives, and that such conduct is entirely unbecoming?" The impressiveness of this sermon was entirely lost, however, for one of the boys replied:—"He thinks himself smart because he is down here raising the price of shovels,"

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The *Aldine* for February is in every respect equal to the sanguine expectations excited by the January number of this remarkable periodical, of which each issue appears to be the climax until its successor appears. The opening illustration is a magnificent full page by J. D. Woodward, of Puncheon Run Falls, which is certainly one of the most delightful pictures which it is possible to conceive. Further on we have three smaller illustrations by the same artist, the whole being illustrative of an article on Virginia scenery, with especial reference to the beauties of the Blue Ridge. Mr. Woodward, as a draughtsman, certainly will rank with Thos. Moran, and we shall always regard the specimens of his exquisite taste in landscape as among the foremost attractions which the shrewdness and tact of the publishers offer the patrons of *The Aldine*. "An Attack in the Rear," by J. G. Brown, a snowballing sketch, is worthy of that eminent artist's reputation, and it is in the exhibition of work from the pencils of the first painters of the country, that *The Aldine* is justifying the highest expectations of its friends. "Bust," by Wm. M. Cary, is a powerful delineation of a catastrophe on the plains, and the correct detail shows that this artist is no novice in the experiences of Western frontier life. The other cuts are all good and of interest scarcely inferior to those we have specially noticed. The literature of the present number leaves nothing to be desired in the way of excellence and variety. It opens with "Ebenezer Elliott," a gossippy paper about that manly old poet, by January Searle; a second paper of the same sort is "Delfine Gay Girardin," a translation from the Spanish of Emil Castelar, by Helen S. Conant. The stories are "Over a Cabin Table," by Hiram Rich, and "The Garden of God," by Charlotte Peters. Besides, there are several miscellaneous papers, as "The Old Dominion," *apropos* to Mr. Woodward's illustrations; Lingering Superstitions," by Charles Dawson Shanley; Mosses and Lichens," by W. W. Bailey; "A Castle in the Rhine; "Snow," and "Poetic Children." Music, Art and Literature receive their due attention, this department of *The Aldine* being very ably filled. The poems are "Peradventure," by Julia C. R. Dorr; "A Tartar Song," by Henry Richards; "Up in the Trees," by John Sydney, and "Bust," by the editor, who evidently believes that some things can be done as well as others. It is written in dialect which he handles with great skill and power, and will cause a sensation. $5 per year with premium Oil Chromos "Village Belle" and "Crossing the Moor." 14x20 inches.—James Sutton & Co., Publishers, 58 Maiden Lane, New York.

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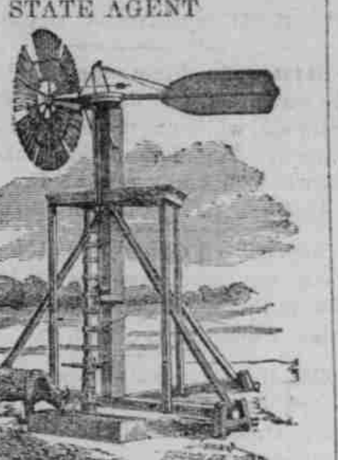

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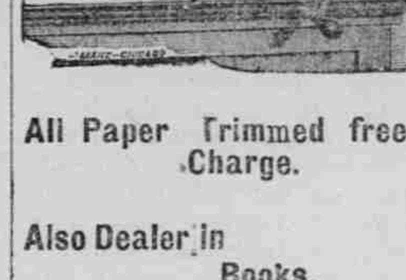

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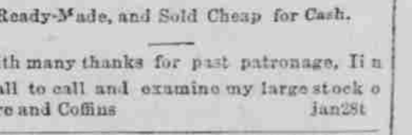

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Sugar, Syrup,

&c., &c. &c.

Also a good assortment of Boots & Shoes.

In Connection with the Grocery is a Bakery & Confectionery!

All kinds of Country Produce bought and sold

Take notice of the sign "EMPIRE BAKERY AND GROCERY." may16wtf.

G. W. MERK,

Main Street, Four Doors East of Court House,

DEALER IN

HARDWARE,

HEATING

AND

COOKING STOVES

Of the latest Improvements, warranted, and sold at a small profit above cost.

Doing my own work in

Tin and Sheet Iron

Combined, with long experience guarantee satisfaction and Prices to suit

HARD TIMES.

31w 3m

ROCK! STONE!

I will furnish parties with stone for all building purposes at a reasonable price, at my quarries or delivered on the cars at Louisville station. The following kind of stone can be had on short notice: sills, caps, perch rock line or rod sand stone such as was used by the B. & M. R. R. in the construction of their stone work. All responsible orders, promptly filled

J. T. A. HOOVER.

Louisville, Station Neb.

J. W. SHANNON'S

FEED, SALE AND

LIVERY STABLE.

MAIN STREET,

Plattsmouth, Nebraska.

I am prepared to accommodate the public with Horses, Carriages, Buggies and a No. 1 Hearse on short notice and reasonable terms. A Hack will run to the steamboat landing, and all parts of the city when desired

January 8 1871—d&wtf