out a very interesting trait in his character that is not very widely known. It was written when Lowell was a member of the Harvard faculty; at the time "Harvard contested with the 'Lowell's' on Boston Common for the 'silver ball' and it shows the lovable character of the great man who could be so interested in the smaller things which his scholars deemed precious." The letter is as follows:

ELMWOOD, 27th May, 1867.

Dear ———,

We hear that you are inclined to play the Roman father and not let————stay here to play the next ball match with the Lowell club. This must be some of the old leaven of presbyterianism. I can testify from the evidence of my own eyes that he is essential to the success of our nine—who are really the muses, only disguised. Now do be a good fellow and let him stay—for it is of great consequence that we beat the Lowell chaps who are a little stuck up. I am sure Mr. ————, had he not gone to Europe, would have taken that side of the question. Remember that even a Roman father would have allowed something for friendship. I am fast getting to be an *old* friend. With kindest remembrances to Mrs. ————, Believe me, always cordially yours,

J. R. LOWELL.

Such an appeal as this could not be resisted. The "silver ball" was won by Harvard and Lowell was undoubtedly instrumental in bringing about the victory.

ALUMNI AND FORMER STUDENTS.

Editor Alumni Department, HESPERIAN:

In the trip just concluded I visited three of the Australian colonies. Australia is a very interesting land to the naturalist, tourist, student, or man of the world. There is the same high civilization that we see in every Anglo-Saxon community. Its great cities are centers of culture and refinement as well as of manufacture and commerce. The differences apparent in the every day social life are slight. One notices rather the points of similarity.

But putting aside the social phase and viewing the land from a student naturalist's stand point, what a wonderland is before us. In the words of Marcus Clark, the Australian novelist: "In Australia alone is to be found the grotesque, the weird, the strange scribblings of nature learning how to write,—trees without shade, flowers without perfume, birds who cannot fly, beasts who have not yet learned to walk on all fours,—a land of fantastic monstrosities." From ocean beach to mountain top stretches the great, silent forest, the "wild dreamland" of the Bush. The Bush, a meaningless word to the stranger, yet, to the dweller in its recesses, what a world of meaning it unfolds. To see it in early spring when the wattles are a flaming streak of yellow and the air is heavy with scent, or in the evening just as the great silver moon rises in the east. The gnarled and twisted gum trees with their bare white trunks and ragged branches rise like ghosts or monuments of the dead. They reach back to an age co-eval with the first man. Could they unfold the memories of the forgotten past what mysteries would be made clear. Now they stand like grim sentinels of the past, true to their duty and their sacred trust, watching over the dead races of mankind.

To see the Bush again in summer when the hot winds have curled and dried every blade of grass and tender thing. When above is the merciless, brazen sky; beneath, the dry baked earth that burns our feet, and all around is the ocean of burning air. Or perhaps there is an open flat that reminds one of some bit of old world forest, only that the grasses are dead and brown and the shining leaves of acacia and encalyptus take the place of cool-leaved oak and elm.

In the early dawn when the mist wreaths rise, you watch nature's family at their morning meal. A great gray kangaroo hops noiselessly about, stopping to nibble a bit here or browse there. Make no noise for his eyes are bright and his ears sharp. The presence of man has taught him to look out for danger. A stately emu leads her flock of striped youngsters where the scrub is thickest and where the young grass grows. An iguana is out rabbit hunting. You hear his scales rustle as he runs through the undergrowth, or seeing you, makes for a hollow tree. But hark, some one else is abroad this morning. To hear him laugh his sense of the ridiculous must be well developed. Search brings to light no foot prints. A solemn, gray kingfisher flys from a tree top and takes himself and his laugh off together. The laughing jackass is a born humorist for no matter how mirth provoking his jokes, he preserves a grave countenance. He is the last person from whom one would expect such a disturbance. A flock of bright green paroquets whirls away. No fear of your getting near them unseen again. Three or four dozen pink and white gulahs or cockatoos are digging up grubs underneath the gum trees for a living. Shoot one and his comrades are very loath to desert him. They circle and return time after time, making a great din with their short sharp screams. There are all sorts of small birds, some with a few sweet notes but nothing that could be called a song. Their plumage is mostly of the soft subdued colors like the dull grays and greens of the vegetation around them. Reptile life is plentiful ranging in size from tiny inch long lizards to huge carpet snakes and iguanas. You glide from tree to tree and bush to bush and if quiet enough you may surprise a wild turkey in some open bit of plain or grass land. One false step or one broken twig and he is away with heavy flight. Near the water holes and sheep tanks are flocks of wood duck and great gray or blue herons. Altogether the sights and sounds of the Australian bush are new and strange. Whosoever is a student of nature will find untold treasures.

JARED G. SMITH, '88.

Editor Alumni Department, HESPERIAN:

Looking over the letters from the alumni it strikes me that this is one of the pleasantest features of our paper, and thinking that "a word from the north" might be acceptable, I shall proceed to "effuse."

Dakota climate is by no means so terrible as the average outsider considers it. So far it has seemed to me to be very pleasant. True it is at times rather cold, but one does not feel it so much as the atmosphere is so dry. It is windy. Nebraska zephyrs cannot hope to compare with those of Dakota. Someone has truly said that there is no such thing as climate here, only samples of weather.

For so young a state South Dakota stands well up, educationally. There are a few things, however, that Nebraska can justly pride herself in, and which are conspicuously wanting here. One in studying the history of the schools of both states is at once struck with the fact that as the people are so the school must be. The accredited school system is, as yet, in its infancy here, and it is a noticeable fact that our best students are those coming from these schools. The standard of admittance is much lower here than there, but it is steadily coming up. It seems to me that some educators have a wrong idea of what the standard should be in state institutions, at least it differs from mine. The state schools are for the people. In a new state the educational standard is necessarily low and can only be raised as the general education of the state is raised.

The system of accredited schools established in many states is one of the best means of accomplishing this result systematically. This is well shown in Nebraska. There are of course drawbacks to this system. Some schools do not do