IOWA'S GREAT COAL PALACE.

It Will Be a Thing of Beauty and a Pride Forever.

A HIGH FESTIVAL AT OTTUMWA.

The Hawkeye State Proposes to Exhibit Her Bituminous Product—Description of the Building—Plans for the Chief Attractions.

Corn and culture have for a long time been staple products in Iowa. Having become foremost in the production of the former, and leading the union in the least per cent of illiteracy, Iowa is now about to take a step in another direction and exhibit to the states her resources for "light, heat and power"—in a word, her vast stores of bituminous product, says an Ottumwa, Ia., says a special to the Chicago News. The palace idea just now is the prevalent one, and so while her corn palace has been built in the region of her great corn belt, and her blue grass palace located in the center of her best meadows, it is natural that Ottumwa, being in the center of the coal fields, should be chosen as the site for her coal palace, a unique and massive structure which has been in process of construction for some time, and now nears completion. Primarily the coal palace will represent the ten counties adjacent to it, so productive of cheap fuel. Secondarily, but of no less importance, it will represent the best of the numerous manufactories of the Hawkeye state, for it is to be "The Iowa Coal Palace and Industrial Exhibit." The coal region of Iowa is not extensively mentioned in the geographies, perhaps, and yet these ten counties—Wapello, Marion, Monroe, Appanoose, Davis, Keokuk, Mahaska, Lucas, Jefferson, and Van Buren—last year mined over three and one-half million tons of coal, employed in the mines nearly eight thousand men, and paid for labor alone more than $1,500,000. It is not so startling, then, that Iowa, so well known as an agricultural state, can build a palace of coal taken from her own borders and thus prove to the sisterhood her wonderful variety of resources.

But the palace!

It is an imposing structure 230 feet in length and 150 feet in width, the main tower being 200 feet in height. It has an architectural character of its own, and with its battlements and turrets of jet reminds one of the frowning castles of feudalism. The architecture is a compromise between the Gothic and Byzantine. The loftiness hints at the Gothic, but the domes a little more bulbous would do credit to the Russian style. The palace will be two stories in height, the first being about twenty feet to the ceiling, the other reaching to the top of the structure, varying from forty to sixty feet. The main entrance is on Main street, through the grand arches in the tower to the right, whose summit is near the grand tower. That tower is thirty-six feet wide and of the same proportions as the one to the left, which faces the unique and beautiful sunken garden on Washington street. The rear end is beautified by twin semi-circular turrets, one of which can be seen at the extreme right. A couple of similar towers, somewhat more elongated, jut out from the other side toward the opposite or Washington end of the palace on the opposite side. In this tower is the stage, 30 by 36, and the main hall with the balconies ascending direct from the stage, will give the building an auditorium with a seating capacity of from four to six thousand. On either side of the main room or nave of the building are the spaces above and below for the exhibits of the nine surrounding counties and from abroad.

There will be three features especially which will delight every visitor—the mine, the garden and the waterfall. The palace is built in what is known as the "Sunken park," owned by President P. G. Ballingall. Years ago the Des Moines river plunged in mighty torrents over the spot the palace adorns. The "Q" came into the city, and finding no better right of way pushed out on trestle work an embankment across the bend in the river. This changed the course of the stream, and soon a slough was incased which was reclaimed, and Colonel Ballingall became possessor of it. It has never been filled up completely, and was thus known as the "Sunken park." Nature seems to have intentionally made the excavation, for that part of it beneath the palace comes in play in a most fortunate manner as a miniature coal mine, which is to be one of the features of the palace, and the excavation is most admirably adapted to it. Into the mine a shaft will lead from the main tower, over one hundred and fifty feet above. The tower will be over forty feet square and will be reached by means of two elevators in the semi-circular towers toward the front or by a flight of stairs in either of the other semi-circular towers on the rear corners. From this point the sight-seer will go into a car just as in a regular mine, when he will be lowered through a dark and foreboding shaft into the sunken park, where the mules and miners with their lamps and picks, and the coal in large veins, can be seen with as much vividness as if in the many mines near the city. From the mine the visitor can go directly to the first floor to view the exhibits or pass out of the building by another exit.

It may be of great interest to those who still have an admiration for Terpsichore to know that the top of this tower being large enough, will be utilized by the young people for the graceful minuet. Think of a dancing floor with twenty to twenty-five couples tripping the light "pedantic" 150 feet above the surrounding country with but a balustrade to check a tendency toward "slipping off" and taking a tete-a-tete on the atmosphere?

The sunken garden will be one of the crowning features of the palace. Like the mine, it will be below the level of the street, the sloping green from the main street and depot sides being planted with flowers and plants spelling in large, bold beautiful letters "Iowa Coal Palace." Fountains, delightful walks, rare tropical plants and foliage, will be utilized to add to its beauty, the whole to be surrounded by an iron fence, to prevent entrance thereto except from the palace.

The waterfall will probably be the largest ever seen in such a building. It will be in the rear of the stage, a sheet of water thirty feet wide, dashing over an artificial precipice forty feet high; at the bottom it will dissolve into spray, and electric lights in the rear will cause a thousand rainbows to chase each other with exquisite effect. It will take 1,500,000 gallons of water daily for this waterfall—as much as is consumed in the same time by the entire city of Ottumwa. A miniature lake, peopled with the most beautiful representatives of the finny tribes and bordered with flowers, will receive this great quantity of water.

The palace at night from the exterior will present the most striking appearance. Powerful electric arc lights will flash out their brilliancy from each of the towers, and each of the many windows will be provided with various colored electric lights, making a scene more splendid than any illuminated castle of the rich baron of the middle ages.

To make the palace still more attractive in the way of crowd getting, certain days have been designated. Each of the counties will have its own day, and it is expected that those counties will turn out en masse on those days, vying with each other in exhibits and attendance. Besides these there will be Iowa, soldiers', labor, Missouri, miners', ladies', president's and Woodman days. On soldiers' day General Alger is expected to be present. On railroad day the Hon. Chauncey Depew will be the attraction, and on president's day the president of the United States will be present, and other celebrities will grace the palace at different times. The palace will cost $25,000. It will open September 16 and continue till October 11, and all railroads centering in Ottumwa will give half rates during the coal palace season.

THE ARIZONA KICKER.

The Western Editor Also Has His Troubles.

The Detroit Free Press extracts the following from the last issue of the Arizona Kicker.

THEY GOT LEFT.

Feeling the need of a few days' rest from brain work, we hied ourself to Jim's Peak last week, to remain about ten days. Soon after supper a stranger approached us and gave us a hint that the boys were planning a serenade, and that we had better have a speech ready.

In this western country some words have a double meaning. A "serenade" may mean sweet, soft music by the band, with a call from a lot of jolly good fellows, or it may mean a visit from the gang who are provided with a rope but no music. In order to be on the safe side we took up a temporary home in a thicket, and from thence discovered that this was to be a rope serenade. Some of the boys from Johnson's ranch had determined to lynch us as a great moral warning, but while they were hunting for us around the hotel we were meandering through the jack pines and midnight darkness to safer quarters.

In one sense we don't blame the boys so much. An occasional hanging adds zest and gusto to this western life and it is very rare that the victim's friends can claim that any mistake was made. In another sense the boys are to be blamed for their lack of taste. We have it on good authority that they meant to hang us with an old mule chain. There were thirty of them in the crowd. We make no boasts, but let our readers watch for developments. We'll have sheriffs and detectives hereafter at least thirty-one of them before the week is out, and then we shall borrow a shotgun and go on a hunt for the odd one.

SOLD AGAIN.

Our esteemed contemporary has made another dismal failure. On Monday he came out in a double-leaded two-column article on the Wharton shooting case and tried his best to prove that we had an active hand in it and were responsible for Judge Johnson's death. At the coroner's inquest held on that same afternoon Major Bliss testified:

"I was sitting at a table in the Red Cross saloon with the editor of the Kicker. We were there to talk over the McKinley bill, and to take the initiatory steps toward establishing another Sunday school. Judge Johnson came in. He was pretty drunk. He saw Bob Wharton at a table beyond us and pulled his gun. The editor of the Kicker kindly asked him to put it up, and offered him a year's subscription to the paper to go home and take an nap. The judge refused and pressed forward to get a shot. Next moment Wharton dropped him."

This was the truth and the whole truth, and yet our jealous-pated contemporary, hoping he had a hold on us, tried his hardest to make out that but for us there would have been no shooting! We used to refer to him as toothless, knock-kneed, bow-legged, lop-earned, hump-backed, white-livered, cross-eyed, and so on. We have a mortgage on his whole outfit, and we used to threaten to foreclose it. We used to meet him on the street and scare him into kneeling down and begging our pardon. We now let him have his own way. Some day we will bury him in our private grave-yard—some day when he has tired us out completely.

Merit wins, as the marvelous success of Hood's Sarsaparilla shows. It possesses true medicinal merit. Sold by all druggists.

A GREAT LADY.

The Gorgeous Female of the Land of Thibet.

After half an hour's absence Lhacham returned and resumed her seat. With her right hand she twirled a golden prayer-wheel, while with her left she caressed her son, who was seated beside her. She pressed me again to take tea and biscuits, and some bread made of buckwheat and millet was placed upon my table, says a writer in the Contemporary Review. At midday she offered dinner to be brought. Several china cups, also maple-knot cups, mounted in gold and silver, were then produced from a chest of drawers in the room, and a cleanly-dressed boy brought in a tray filled with cups containing different dainties.

Before beginning I inquired of Lhacham if there were yak-beef in the dishes. "No, no; all that you see in the plates and cups is made of mutton of the first quality. Although we prefer yak-beef to mutton, yet, knowing that you Indians have a repugnance to this delicacy of Thibet, I ordered our cook not to mix beef with mutton. I relished the dishes very much, using chop-sticks and the pins which in Thibet served for forks. Lhacham occasionally took a sip or two of tea and conversed with me, showing great interest in my narrative of Indian marriage customs and female seclusion. But when I related to her that in India sometimes one husband had several wives, while the P'iling-pa (English) and enlightened natives had only one, she stared at me in wonder.

"One wife with only one husband," she exclaimed in comic surprise. "Do you not think that we Thibetan women are happier than the Indian or Piling women, of whom the Indian must be the most miserable?"

"Pray tell me," said I, "is it not inconvenient for one wife to have so many husbands?"

"I do not see," observed Lhacham, "how Indian women can possibly be as happy as Thiberan women are. The former have to divide among many the affection and the property of their one husband, whereas in Thibet the house-wife, one woman, is the real mistress of all the joint earnings and inheritance of several brothers. These, her husbands, being sprung from the same mother, are undoubtedly one, and therefore the same flesh, blood and bones. Their persons are one, although their souls may be different."

After dinner Lhackam asked me if I would be presented to her chief husband, the Shabpe, to whom she said she had already made mention of me. I thanked her for her gracious kindness and said I would avail myself of the honor of a presentation another day.

Nervous debility, poor memory, diffidence, sexual weakness, pimples, cured by Dr. Miles' Nervine. Samples free at Kuhn & Co.'s 15th and Douglas.

IN NAME ONLY.

The So-Called Argentine Republic a Bad Form of Oligarchy.

The Argentine is a republic in name only; in reality it is an oligarchy composed of men who make of politics a commerce writes Theodore Childs in Harper's weekly. In the old days the sole object of the conquistadores was to acquire wealth rapidly, and such remains the idea of the Argentines of today. In the colonial days the Spanish or creole population of the towns lived as functuaries and parasites, profiting by the labor of slaves and subdued Indian tribes and their aim was wealth and never civilization. Hence we look in vain in the old provincal capitals for traces of past splendor or for monuments such as testify to the collective civic care of the common weal. In the provincial capitals we find the offices of the representatives of the authority of Spain and a church on which no superfluous adornment has been wasted; but we see no beneficient or educational foundations, and no evidence of unselfish social sentiments. After the declaration of independence the intestine strife which for years agitated the country had rarely other than motives of selfish ambition, for to hold power in Spanish America has always signified to possess the means of rapidly acquiring wealth.

After the cessation of the wars of federalists and unitarians, and the formation of the actual republic, with its constitution soi-disant on the model of that of the United States, the race for wealth became all the more furious as the development of the commercial relatides of the country helped to create the great fortunes of the creole estanderos, or cattle-breeders. Piqued by jealousy, other creoles threw themselves into politics and became venal functionaries, the aim being always personal enrichment at the expense of the nation. Nowadays the Argentine political men, with very few notable exceptions that might be counted on the fingers of one hand, from the president down to the humblest local leader, are venal without concealment and without shame. They are rapacious parasites, like the conquistadors, like the colonial functionaries, and like the ambitious adventurers who furnished the dictators and tyrants of the first half of the present century. Only at rare intervals does a good, patriotic man spring up and do something for the country, which in the normal and iniquitous state of things prospers not on account of its government, but in spite of it. The citizens, as we have seen, are always crying out against their rulers, but they take no means to change the it condition. Why do they not act instead of talking? This question is natural. The answer is not easy to give in a few words. Briefly, we may say that the citizens do nothing and can do nothing against their parasitical rulers, because they are not organized and not prepared or educated for republican institutions. In the political struggles there are rarely questions of principles, but always questions of persons. President succeeds president, but the aim of all is equally selfish, and even if the opposition were transformed into the government the whole result would be that one set of parasites would take the place of another. In the five South-American republics that I have just visited—the Argentine, Uruguay, Paraguay, Chili and Peru—the political conditions are more or less the same; they are ruled by presidents who are as absolute autocrats as the czar of Russia, and even more so, because they are safe from the intrusion or influence of European criticism. The president of the Argentine or the president of Chili is master of the whole administrative organization of the country so completely that no legal and constitutional means can be brought to bear efficaciously against his personal will or caprice. He not only disposes of the armed force of the country, but the entire administrative personel is his creature and at his devotion. Thus the manipulation of the whole electoral machinery is under his control, and the citizens enjoy in consequence a right of voting that is purely platonic. They may vote, it is true in many cases, as much as they please, but no account is taken of their suffrages. The whole apparatus of republicanism in these countries is a farce, and in spite of the sonorous speeches of after-dinner orators, they have not yet begun to enjoy even the most elementary political liberty.

The Clergy, the Medical Faculty and the People all endorse Burdock Blood Bitters as the best system renovating, blood purifying tonic in the world. Send for testimonials.

One Way to Tell a Happy Pair

There is nothing that the average bridegroom so much desires to avoid as a disclosure of the fact of his recent marriage, says the Washington Post. Not that he is at all ashamed of it. O, no. But there is a shyness about him which induces him to conceal the fact. This is showed especially at the bridegroom's first visit at the hotel on his bridal tour.

The other evening a young man walked briskly up to the desk in one of the hotels in this city, and, with a very badly assumed air of noncholance, registered "Mr. and Mrs.——." A room was assigned him, and when he was out of hearing the clerk leaned over the desk, and confidentially speaking to several acquaintances standing there, said:

"Just married."

"How do you know?" was asked.

"O, you never see an old married man register Mr. and Mrs.' It's always so-and-so and wife. You just notice now if it isn't so.

A Boiler of Great Power.

There has just been finished at South Framingham a small steam yacht which bids fair to create a revolution in marine boilers and engines, says the Boston Herald. The yacht was built by Samuel L. Johnston for Mr. Thomas D. Sturtevant, who is the inventor and patentee of the new boiler, which is fed by crude petroleum and which in a boat twenty-five feet long has developed thirty horse-power and a rate of speed of fifteen miles per hour. Mr. Sturtevant is now building a fifty-foot yacht at his place here, and the triple expansion engine will have 100 horse-power, a wonderful thing in a boat of this size, promising great speed. The latter boat is nearly finished, and will make her trial trip in two or three weeks. The sanguine ones predict that she will beat the famous torpedo boat Cushing.

Johnstown Building Up.

Johnstown, Pa., which was so nearly destroyed by a flood something over a year ago; has not only been rebuilt but is said to have gained over its previous population, notwithstanding nearly 2,000 of its citizens were drowned.

An Old Indian Battlefield.

An old Indian battlefield has just been discovered. It is the farm of A. J. Phillips, near Bridgeport, and many relics are being secured. A mammoth pipe, supposed to have been used by Captain Burt, of Saginaw, after the last campaign has just been dug up.

The Ladies Delighted.

The pleasant effect and the perfect safety with which ladies may use the liquid fruit laxative, Syrup of Figs, under all conditions make it their favorite remedy. It is pleasing to the eye and to the taste, gentle, yet effectual in acting on the kidneys, liver and bowels.

THE CALIFORNIA MISSIONS.

Interesting Monuments of the Zeal of the Early Jesuit Fathers.

THEIR DREAMS NEVER REALIZED.

The Anglo-Saxon and Not the Spanish Race Dominated the Country in Which They Were the Pioneers.

One hundred and twenty-one years ago on May 15, Juan Crespi, a friar of the order of St. Francis, accompanied by twenty-six soldiers, three packers, and four or five Indian servants, arrived at San Diego, Cal., with the purpose of establishing a permanent mission and converting the savages, and introducing the arts of civilization—and those purposes were not only solemnly and religiously, but commercially and successfully carried out, writes a correspondant of the New York Times. The settlement was permanent, but it was not made so without the encountering of disturbing elements, and in two or three cases loss of life was involved. Padre Juan Crespi's name as founder, however, gives way historically to Padre Junipero Serra, who arrived at San Diego July 7, 1769, and who at once formally founded the first mission in California at what is now known as old San Diego, where the padre wrote—in a record which I once saw in the possession of the presiding in February, 1867—"It was maintained for five years and various buildings were erected with more labor than benefit to the mission, all of them having been afterward appropriated to the use of the garrison," etc.

As I have stated, this mission was permanent, and others soon followed until nearly all of the great valleys bordering on the Pacific, where there were harbors or roadsteads, were marked by mission churches and commercial structures from San Diego to San Francisco and New-California, as it was then called, took its place as one of the occupied provinces of the Spanish empire. Since then the remote, poor, insignificant, thinly-settled and almost unknown province has become rich, influential, and populous, and is today one of the most noted states in the American aggregation. Its prodigality of soil and its equability of temperature (west of the Sierra Nevada mountains) being unsurpassed by any other section of country in the world, although these pioneers had not, of course, the remotest conception of the superstructure that so rarise majestically on their unpretentious foundation.

Spain was then, in their eyes, the greatest of all nations. To be sure, they were not unmindful of the fact that England was mistress of the seas; that she had taken Canada and India from the French, and that the American colonies were rapidly gaining in population and wealth, but they did not dream of what would occur in a hundred years, nor did it enter their minds that the Anglo-Saxon colonists upon the Atlantic coast would in less than a hundred years become one of the greatest powers among nations, make California part of a magnificent republic, and sweep almost entirely out of existence the unfortunate aborigines for whom the missions were at first, ostensibly or otherwise, founded. Undoubtedly there were sanguine thinkers and dreamers among the Atlantic colonists who foresaw achievements of art and science, expansion of territory, growth of population, and greatness of political power; but lived there a man whose keen foresight, stimulated by the wildest enthusiasm, could have predicted at the time Padre Crespi landed at San Diego, the inventions of the boat and steam car, the cotton gin and the McCormick reaper, the wonderful developments of commerce and manufactures, the opening of gold and silver mines in California and Australia and Liberia and Nevada, and the establishment of the independence of the Spanish colonies in North and South America?—all of which, while they contributed to strengthen many nations, weakened Spain and united the Americans in becoming masters of Upper California, which became so important that, after the gold discovery, it was the only California to which people paid any attention, and the country to which the name was originally applied was called, for the sake of distinction, "Lower California."

The Jesuites were banished from Mexico in June 1767, and the king gave orders that the Jesuit mission in Lower California should not be abandoned, but should be placed in charge of Franciscan friars, who were, next to the Jesuits, the most active and zealous missionaries in New Spain, (Mexico.) The king expressed a desire, also, that new missions should be established further north. In the latter part of 1768, therefore, friars, soldiers, supplies, and means of transportation were collected for the new missions and four parties were sent out from Lower California. A little brig called the San Carlos sailed from La Paz on the 1st of May, and a similar craft named the San Antonio sailed from Cape St. Lucas on the 15th of February and arrived on the 11th of April. Both vessels experienced long voyages and lost many men by scurvy, and their masters were so much discouraged by the shortness of supplies and the seeming failure of the land expeditions to reach their point of destination that they were about to sail away, when Friar Crespi, who had left La Paz by land on the 20th of February, came in sight on the 14th of May, and Junipero Serra, the president of the missionary enterprise, arrived at San Diego in about six weeks thereafter from Loretta, having departed on the 1st of April, the trip taking three months and one day.

The only original record accessible or the first settlement of California is that briefly presented in the life of Junipero Serra, by his friend and for some time colleague, Francisco Palou, who wrote it at the mission of San Francisco in 1785; but this biographer, whose attention was fixed chiefly on the pious labors and seraphic character of his hero, leaves the searcher of these curious looking old volumes of worn-out Spanish manuscript in almost complete ignorance of many of the particulars of the adventures by land and sea, and of the conduct of the Indians upon the first appearance of the missionaries.

Crispi was in the habit of keeping diaries whenever he traveled, and several copies of them are now in possession of Catholic priests now in charge of these missions that have not entirely crumbled into decay, but none have been properly preserved in the state or church archives of California. When the Franciscan friars were directly or indirectly driven away many of their records were purposely destroyed, numbers were neglected, while others were carried away by the departing missionaries, and it would be a difficult matter to find a bit of manuscript of Crispi, or Serra. Once, while in the city of Mexico, I saw copies of a number of their journals, and Father Ybach, when I first visited San Diego, twenty-three years ago, showed me the portion I have quoted in Serra's handwriting. But I have been informed that the original journals of Crispi, Serra, Jinime, Sanchez, and Salvidea, and other friars may be found in the convent of San Fernando (Mexico) and also at the Franciscan convent in the city of Palma, on the island of Majorca, but that these journals and other companion papers are in great confusion.

There is one thing certain; Serra and his brother friars did their work well, as they understood it, and their missions continued to gain in converts, herds of cattle, horses and sheep, and wealth for forty-five years, after which, under the influence of the Mexican rebellion, they declined, until at last, in 1833, after an existence of sixty-six years, they were secularized, the property was placed in the hands of civil officers, and the friars were deprived of power of control. And thus ended in California a great sytem or combination of commerce and agriculture and religion, the result of which, whatever good may have been derived therefrom, was to leave the Indians in a worse state than that in which they were found by the missionaries, as they soon afterwards abandoned their habits of regular industry and began to die off very rapidly, until they are not now 2,000 of the ten times that number fifty years ago left, and most of these at present live away from the whites in a condition little better than that of the coyote.

There were twenty-one missions founded in all, the first and most southernat San Diego, in 1769, as heretofore mentioned, and the last and most northernat Sonoma, in 1823. None was more than thirty miles from the ocean, while most of them were nearer. The mission at San Francisco was founded in 1776, and that at Monterey in 1770, one year after Padres Crispi and Serra landed at San Diego. These misions were in their best condition in 1814, although in 1823 they had 400,000 cattle, 200,000 sheep and 20,000 horses. They also kept at work 15,000 Indians and harvested nearly 100,000 bushels of grain of various kinds.

For several years these missions constituted a paradise, not only for the missionaries and their troops, but for the Indians, who, while they were compelled to work from ten to sixteen hours a day, were well enough fed and clothed, philanthropically cared for, and treated to horse racing, bear baiting and bull fighting and cock fighting Sunday afternoons.

LINCOLN'S SCHOOL DAYS.

Little Abe's "Course of Study" Contained in a Spelling Book.

Little Abe was first sent to school when he was about seven years of age. His father had never received any "book learnin'," as education was termed among such people, and it was with difficulty that he could write his own name, says a writer in Harper's Young People. One day, about four weeks after Abe had been sent to school, his father asked the teacher, "How's Abe getting along?" The teacher replied that he was doing well; he wouldn't task to have a better boy. He had only one lesson book, an old spelling book. During the school hours he was attentive to his task and at night he would study over the lesson he had been engaged on during the day; the highest ambition of his life at this time was to learn to read. He believed if he could only read as well as his mother, who read the bible aloud every day, the whole world of knowledge would be opened to him, and in this conjecture he was about right. As the old Baptist minister told him one day, "When you can read you've got something that nobody can take away from you."

In the Kentucky home there were but three books in the family—the Bible, a catechism, and the spelling book which Abe Lincoln studied. He had not been long in Indiana before he had read the Pilgrim's Progress, his father borrowing it from a friend who lived twenty miles away. He was very fond of reading Æsop's fables, a copy of which came in his way. A young man taught him to write. As writing paper of any kind was very scarce and expensive, Abe used to practice his writing exercises with bits of chalk or a burnt stick on slabs and trunks of trees. Sometimes he would trace out his name with a sharp stick on the bare ground. When, finally he was able to write letters, he was called to do the correspondence of many of his neighbors, for very few grown persons in that region could write even a simple letter.

As Abe Lincoln grew older he became a great reader and read all the books he could borrow. Once he borrowed of his school teacher a life of Washington. His mother happened to put it on a certain shelf, and the rain coming through the roof the book was badly damaged. Abe took it back to his schoolmaster and arranged to purchase it of him, paying for it by three hard days' work in the cornfield and he was entirely satisfied with the bargain at that. At the age of eighteen his library consisted of the Life of Franklin, Plutarch's Lives, the bible, the spelling book, Æsop's Fables, Pilgrim's Progress, and the lives of Washington and Henry Clay. A boy might have a much larger public library than this, but he could scarcely find an equal number of books better calculated to impart wholesome lessons as to correct living and right thinking.

The only railroad train out of Omaha run expressly for the accommodation of Omaha, Council Bluffs, Des Moines and Chicago business is the Rock Island vestibule limited, leaving Omaha at 4:15 p. m. daily. Ticket office 1302 Sixteenth and Farnam sts., Omaha.

A Skull for a Flower Pot.

W. C. Van Buskirk, the master mechanic of the Terre Haute & Peoria railroad shops in Paris, Ill., has a peculiar flower pot hanging in his dooryard. It is made out of a human skull and is suspended with slender chains, says a special to the St. Louis Republican.

The brain cavity is filled with earth, and a beautiful growth of vines creep out from the empty sockets and grinning jaws. Across the broad forehead is the inscription:

"To what base use we may come at last."

The skull has something of a history, being that of a theological student who committed suicide. He was interred in a small graveyard, which afterward fell into disuse and decay, and was finally sold for building purposes.

A Historical Portrait of Washington.

Lord Rosebery, in his dining-room at Berkeley square, has a portrait of George Washington by Stuart, one of the only two existing portraits painted from life. This picture was painted by Stuart for Lord Shelburne, and is dated 1796. When Lord Shelburne died, in 1805, his pictures were sold, and this portrait brought £540. It is known in art circles as the Lansdowne portrait, Lord Shelburne having become Marquis of Lansdowne before his death. The man who bought the portrait became bankrupt, and Washington was again in the market. How greatly it had, in a comparatively brief space of time, increased in value, is shown by the fact that it now brought 2000 guineas. It was acquired in a raffle by Mr. Delaware Lewis, member for Davenport. When that gentleman died the picture was again for sale, and Lord Rosebery bought it.

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