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LINCOLN, NEB., JUNE 1, 1895.

CROAN AND THE WESTERN NORMAL The history of W. M. Croan's management of the Western Normal college at Hawthorne, this city, is an instructive lesson in the ways and means of fakirs. The experience has been a costly one to Lincoln. It has damaged the reputation of the city as a center of genuine education, and it has caused the serious financial embarrassment of a number of worthy citizens. The Croan fiasco should be a warning for all future time. It should make the people of this town wary of adventurers and slow to fall in with the schemes of irresponsible promoters. As few people are conversant with the facts a consideration of some of the details may be interesting at this time as showing the mountebank tactics of the man Croan, and the general costliness of the Western Normal college enterprise to the people of Lincoln.

A WORD ABOUT CROAN Mr. Croan came to Lincoln with a bad record. The college building at Shenandoah had burned down under circumstances that give rise to certain ugly suspicions; and his relations with the students at Shenandoah, financial and otherwise, were not such as to commend him to public favor. But the man has effrontery enough to combat any obstacle. He was not embarrassed by the disfavor with which he was generally regarded. The fact that his school methods had always failed to command respect, and that his business operations had made his integrity questionable, did not deter him from embarking in the enterprise in this city; and in spite of the record which preceded or accompanied him he was successful in his assault upon the credulity of our people. Croan as an educator is the veriest tyro. His methods are the methods of charlatany. He is not a proper school man, and the public interests demand that he be restrained from this sort of work. There's no denying that he has a certain kind of talent. As the advance man of a flamboyant circus he would be a conspicuous success; and we are ready to admit that he would make money exploiting a patent medicine. He understands the art of advertising. He is the P. T. Barnum of the school business. It may be added that he fails to impress people with his sincerity or truth.

HOW THE SCHOOL WAS STARTED Mr. Croan, by clever manipulation, succeeded in effecting the organization of the Hawthorne improvement association. This company secured donations of land from property

owners at Hawthorne, and erected the college building at the approximate cost of \$80,000. In all about \$100,000 was spent. Then a contract was entered into with Croan by which he was to be given the buildings outright at the end of five years, provided he maintained the school during this time. The principal movers in the Hawthorne company were J. H. McMurtry, A. D. Ricketts, J. W. Dewese and C. D. Mullen. These gentlemen were called upon to make heavy investments, much larger than they originally intended to make, because, in the first place, the company was unable to secure a loan on the building, and Mr. Croan's management of the school was such that the boom at Hawthorne quickly subsided and then there was no sale for lots. Mr. Croan was to put in the furnishings, and he did purchase something like \$10,000 worth of goods on credit, a large portion of which remains unpaid for to this date.

HOW THE SCHOOL WAS RUN Mr. Croan is nothing if not a boomer. Coming to Lincoln, he proceeded at once to advertise himself and his college in the most extravagant manner. In his advertising there is no principle of truth or propriety which Croan respects. In the work of his advertising bureau were blatant falsehoods and ridiculous promises. He claimed many things he did not have, and pledged to do many things he never attempted to perform. All of his newspaper notices were exaggerations. The first year he claimed 1700 students. At one time there were nearly 400 students in attendance, and that was as high as it ever got. He started in with a few fairly good teachers, most of whom are today looking to Croan for their pay. He was a smooth hand at dodging a pay roll. Instructors were induced to work for a promised percentage of the business done in their departments, or were given uncollectable accounts against students in lieu of compensation. The second year most of the instructors were dropped, the teaching being done to a considerable extent, by students. Now there are only two or three regular teachers employed; students being employed to teach other students. The course of study is now and has been from the first a farce. The scientific and literary courses which are extensively advertised are a mockery of their names. Students have become dissatisfied with the instruction and returned to their homes or entered some other school. The Western Normal college was not, properly speaking, a legitimate school, and it has brought discredit upon the independent normal school system. It has disgusted people with Croan, with his school, with Lincoln, with Nebraska. And, according to the people who have worked for him, he has juggled accounts and taken every advantage of both teachers and students. He has not omitted to play the role of Squeers. At the beginning of the term the boarding house attachment of the concern was, for a very limited space, run on liberal lines. Students were induced, whenever possible, to pay for tuition and board in advance. Then the quality of the provender began to rapidly deteriorate. Students were compelled to come into town at stated intervals, to get a good, square, sustaining meal. At the present time a large number of students, allured by extra inducements, have paid in advance for several week's board and tuition. What they will get for this remains to be seen. From the first the "school" has steadily and rapidly deteriorated.

PUFFED UP THEN COLLAPSED This is only a glimpse at the Western Normal college scheme. There is a wealth of detail to be had for the mere asking. It at all times lacked honesty

of purpose, and its effect has been prejudicial to the town. It was a discredit in more ways than one. The Western Normal scheme is a practical exemplification of the fact that a "college" can be run, for a time, on wind. It also shows that collapse is sure to follow such inflation.

IN LOVE.

Good night,
A sigh from lips that touch my own,
Good night,
And I am alone.

I wander out in the night
I see the stars above me light
The wide expanse of sky;
I ponder and I sigh,
Good night.

Go where I will
They haunt me still —
Her passionate eyes.
I see her white, white face,
Her red-gold hair that flies
As flames of fire, the lace
As snow upon her breast—
The half withered rose by her breath
caressed.

I pass on in the night
I ponder and I sigh,
Good night.

I turn and see her light
Shine from her window, bright,
The light goes out—'tis dark
A moment—I listen—hark,
The clock in the tower chimes
Through the heavy air twelve
times.

I stretched myself upon the grass,
The winds cool my brow as they
slowly pass,
The hours fly, the clock tolls
one and two,
And three, and my face is wet
with falling dew.
Again four, then five, and day's
begun.
I sigh and say
Good morrow to the sun.

I bend a wreath of flowers and
grass
And hang it at her gate. As I
pass
The morning breeze blows wide her
curtain and I see
Her white shoulders clad only in
her floating hair,
She kneels before the Virgin deep
in prayer,
I wildly hope she prays for me.
WILLIAM REED DUNROY.

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50 Cents a Dozen.
Finest Grades.

GHAPIN BRO'S

Greenhouse 16th & D Street.

TELEPHONE 364.

Cemetery and Decoration Day Work
a Specialty.

REWARD!

A good dinner will be the reward for any person proving that they get a better meal for the money than I give.

The Diamond is Standard.

Anything you get is
sure to be first class.

All kinds of Fish, Oysters
And Game a specialty

REEDER . . .

DIAMOND RESTAURANT.

138 South Eleventh Street.

Under new management

MERCHANTS' HOTEL
OMAHA, NEBR.

FAXTON, HULETT & DAVENPORT,
Proprietors.

Special attention to state trade, guest and commercial travelers. Farnam street electric cars pass the door to and from all parts of the city.

Ice cream and ices for parties at Sisler's, 133 South Twelfth street. Telephone 630.

When the ice man comes be sure the name LINCOLN ICE is on the wagon, they have no pond ice. 1945 O Street.

For St. Louis take the Missouri Pacific route. City ticket office 1201 O street.

LADIES PREFER NOVELTIES--

ARE NOVELTIES

- "Reliable" Gas Stoves
- "Reliable" Gasoline Stoves
- "Siberia" Refrigerators
- "Continental" Lawn Mowers
- "White Mountain" Ice Cream Freezers

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