

and logic. President Eliot has as little real interest in the American people as in the inhabitants of Mars. He thinks the American volunteer a rather low sort and suspects that most of him is western. Professor Von Holst has a reputation as a historian and philosopher which will hardly survive this century in English. The German people are patient and life goes slower in their country. They are willing to wade through page after page of turbid, turgid, mongrel English in hope of finding the ideas upon which the author's reputation is based. But Americans have had history made easy by Professor Fiske and men of his school and cannot afford to waste much more time on Von Holst. The other signers are alike impractical and apt to be out of sympathy with the people.

President McKinley has never signified his intention of governing the Philippines without the consent of the governed. The inevitable progress of events will declare the way to a president who only lives a day at a time and does not attempt to discount the weeks and months and years that are still in the future. So far he has done nothing rash and nothing in haste. He did not declare war until it was inevitable. The clauses of the treaty are in accordance with the laws of nations. Spain was conquered at the cost of hundreds of lives and millions of dollars. There are inevitable consequences of defeat and the United States has not been ungenerous. The agitators and supercilious college professors who are signing protests to a line of action which has not yet been proposed, at least by the president, ignore the inevitableness of the situation. The Philippines cannot be turned over to native rule until the natives have shown some evidence of capacity for self government. If this country should turn the islands over to Aguinaldo and the factions opposed to him should revolt, then revolutions and counter revolutions would follow, and the grannies who are looking about for proofs that we are not an enlightened people and the exhorters who are without a creed would have a cause of complaint against the president and congress far more likely to get audience with the people than their premature protests.

Centralizing the power and responsibility of the public school administrative system in one man, and that man the superintendent, is an idea which has struck Chicago and Lincoln simultaneously. The present system is a cumbrous engine ill adapted to the function it is supposed and was created to perform. The squabbles of the school board begun with the first one that assembled and will continue till the last one has been prorogued. Each member has been implored by more or less powerful constituents and by the pretty school teachers themselves for positions. For these reasons and others the questions of adequate preparation, natural endowment and a personality necessary for a teacher of the young, are not sufficiently considered by a school board. A superintendent whose success or failure ultimately depends upon the teachers, has motive enough and experience to select the best material irrespective of feminine beguilements and masculine ward influence. Not that the latter will ever be destroyed entirely, but a man like Superintendent Andrews of Chicago is less likely to be influenced by ward personages than members of the school board who are unavoidably and often unwillingly persuaded to vote for a teacher who is not qualified for the position, or to ignore one without a pull who is eminently fitted to arouse and evolve the best there is in

children. Superintendants like President Andrews are of rare occurrence in our present regime because the system in use dwarfs individual initiative and discourages inspiration in a superintendent. If the proposed centralization is accomplished the man fit to be trusted with such power will doubtless be revealed. Principal Waterhouse, of the High school, has brought order out of chaos. He has lifted the standard of the school appreciably, he has a quick and intuitive knowledge of people and he grasps a complicated situation with a masterly comprehension that reduces it to its simplest points with a readiness illustrated by the present condition of the High school and its turbulent state when he began to study it. Such a man in control of the schools of any city will secure good results and can be trusted with a large liberty.

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Lincoln, Nebr., Feb. 1, 1899.

To the Members of the Nebraska State Legislature:

We, the undersigned citizens and voters of Middle Creek precinct, Lancaster county, do hereby express our preference for United States senator, to be elected by the honorable body of which you are a member, and hereby attach our signatures under the candidates' name whom we believe to be the best qualified for the high position to which they aspire and hereby request you to cast your votes for the candidate who may receive the majority or the highest number of signatures to this petition.

We have full confidence that the senators and representatives of this county are ready and willing to voice the sentiment of the majority of their constituents. Here follow the names of Messrs. Field, Lambertson, Hayward, Thompson and Reese.

The paper was circulated among the citizens and no effort was made in the favor of or against any one of the candidates. The result should be startling to the Lancaster delegation. Their candidate received very few votes. The sentiment of the rank and file, the unpurchasable, sturdy, farmers and business men of Middle Creek, Lancaster county, is solidly opposed to Mr. Thompson.

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The midwinter exhibit of the Haydon Art club now in progress at the university is of great interest.

Firstly and primarily because it is the sixth annual exhibit of a society which has fostered the love and the vision of the beautiful in the face of discouragement and a lack of appreciation so deadening that were it not for the conviction that students who pursue their work and make honorable places for themselves, without help, deserve recognition from the few at least, it would doubtless have disbanded. The Haydon Art club has maintained the art department since all support of it was withdrawn by the regents two years ago. By means of exhibitions and the annual dues the club has been able to retain the services of Miss Parker, the able and brilliant artist, many of whose pupils are now at work as illustrators on papers and magazines of the east. Considering the singular withdrawal of all financial support from this department by the university the results accomplished by the students crouched in a hallway among the easels, casts skeleton, lay figure and still life properties are astounding and indicate an artistic susceptibility of the Nebraska born and grown product, which should make us prouder than ever of our stimulating, windswept state of the boundless horizons. These students are not pursuing the study of art as dilettanti. The anatomical and muscular studies and the sketches by

members of the life class bear no signs of frivolous technique or a wavering purpose. Earnestness is stamped on all of them and real artistic inspiration is apparent in many of them.

Secondly the pictures in the gallery are worthy of examination by those who love color and atmosphere and by those who do not. The latter have eyes and see not and the joy of seeing can best be appreciated by those who were blind. The beautiful picture by Muenier which occupies the place of honor is a translation of youth, strength and the quietness of nature. The melting atmosphere has destroyed harsh outline and the tender repose of the pastorate tunes me to its own key. It is well that the exhibit contains a few pictures which we know are not chromos because they could not get by the able and indefatigable corresponding secretary, Mrs. F. M. Hall. For they prove to the unlearned that pictures are much prettier which contain atmosphere, color and feeling instead of rigid outline, anecdote and a conventional something else which took the place of plain air painting whose ugly name I do not know.

Thirdly, and this is connected with firstly, the exhibit is visited daily by the children of the public schools. They run about from picture to picture with shining eyes and innumerable questions directed at the nearest adult. The lesson of light and color are received by these with unquestioning faith and become a part of their education. That most of the children prefer the hard, out of date, chromos to the poetic expressions of sunlight and shadow emphasizes the need of such an exhibition.

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The new word for undertaker is mortician. Occasionally when undertakers meet in national assembly they compile a new vocabulary built to disarm prejudice and allay the shudders suggested by the old one. Mortician, with its suggestion of Latin and electricity and the imperceptible welding of the two, can not be found in the encyclopedia. The fruitless search still further increases my admiration for the ingenuity and patient attempts to elude the prejudice which the normal individual feels for all signs of the undertaker's trade. The undertakers themselves are frequently jovial men who have not allowed the constant and visible presence of death to affect their disposition and their patience in seeking a vocabulary which will not be too suggestive of that fate from which all of us shrink, is commendable. Undertaker is a mysterious combination of two common words which are quite harmless and common place until compounded, and until we need him. Analysis does not reveal any reason for the combination. The sudden appearance of mortician, however, suggests that the general assembly of undertakers, hundreds of years ago, finding that the name must be changed, chose under and taker precisely because together they meant nothing at all and separately they are words of every day, homely use. But the association which doomed the old name has overtaken undertaking, hence, "mortician."

A BILL TO ESTABLISH A STATE LIBRARY COMMISSION AND A SYSTEM OF TRAVELLING LIBRARIES.

A bill containing the above provisions will be introduced in the State Legislature. This bill proposes a way by which every small town, village or community, in Nebraska may be supplied with a circulating library.

THE NEED.

It is not possible to estimate even approximately the influence which a collection of well chosen books has in any

community. The smaller the community, the more it is cut off from the usual avenues of improvement, which are offered in a city through lectures, etc.; and the more it stands in need of a well selected library. It is only the well read, well informed man who makes the reliable citizen. As an educative influence the Public Library is second only to the Public School; but while the children of the village or the farm have the benefit of free schools, the adult member of the family cannot, on account of the expense, keep himself informed of current affairs.

In Nebraska there are only 14 free public libraries, and not more than 5 per cent of our population has access to free reading matter. But the question is, "How can a small town afford to equip and maintain a library?" The question of expense is so great that it cannot be done without outside help. The need, however, is so great, that outside help must somehow be given.

THE PLAN.

The proposed bill provides for the formation of a State Circulating Library, from which any town in Nebraska can borrow 25, 50 and 100 volumes at a time, to be kept a certain length of time. This State Library would bear the same relation to a town, that the Town Public Library does to its individual patron, except that the State Library would loan by the fifties and loan to communities. When one lot of books is returned the town can receive another on the same terms; e. g. if these Traveling Libraries contained 2,000 books, then twenty towns might be using 100 books apiece at the same time. At the end of a certain period these would be exchanged, and so on, until the 2,000 books had been read in turn by each town.

ADVANTAGES.

The advantages are very apparent:—

- 1.—Any village or community, not able to form its own library, can have from these traveling libraries a small collection of books constantly on hand.
- 2.—The books, when read through by one town, will do just as good service in other towns.
- 3.—Small libraries already existing, but too poor to keep up a supply, can increase their usefulness by borrowing from the State Traveling Libraries.
- 4.—The impetus given to reading habits will tend toward the formation of permanent town libraries.

A LIBRARY COMMISSION.

This bill also provides for a State Library Commission, whose duties will be the administration of the system of traveling libraries, and the encouragement of town libraries by counsel and advice, or any other feasible way.

PRECEDENTS.

In passing such a law Nebraska would not be entering untried ground. New York appropriates a large sum yearly for a system of Traveling Libraries. Michigan, Iowa and Montana have also passed similar laws, while Massachusetts, New Hampshire and other eastern states give through their library commission a certain sum to any town establishing a free library. Nebraska stands quite as much in need of timely aid from the State toward building up the cause of free libraries, as did these other states, and should pass a helpful library law, such as we believe the present one to be.

This bill has the approval and support of the State Library Association, the Nebraska Federation of Women's Clubs, the University Extension Committee, and many individuals who are interested in the educational advancement of Nebraska.

Will you not co-operate with them to make this bill a law?

WM. E. JILLSON,
Pres. State Library Association.
D. A. CAMPBELL,
State Librarian.
EDITH TORBITT,
Omaha Public Library.
J. I. WYNN,
State University Library.