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## The Normal Red Letter, volume 5, number 5, February (1904)

Moorhead Normal School

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# The Normal Red Letter

VOLUME V.

State Normal School, Moorhead, Minnesota, February, 1904.

No. 5.

## WASTE LESSONS IN SCIENCE.

BY CASWELL A. BALLARD.

Department of Biological Sciences, State Normal School, Moorhead.

Waste lessons in science are of two kinds—first, lessons on scientific subjects given in such a way or under such conditions as to make them a waste of time to both teacher and pupil; and second, odds and ends of time, which will invariably be found occasionally in the daily program so occupied with some lesson in nature as to render valuable such moments as would otherwise have been wasted.

### AN IRON-CLAD SYSTEM.

I once entered a school room of the fourth and fifth grade, and found the teacher discussing with the pupils a scientific subject. I learned that it was the period which was devoted each day to lessons in science. I observed, too, that the lesson was one of a series on the materials composing the earth's crust. After talking for a time about quartz, as one of the primary building materials of the earth and showing to the pupils a number of pebbles, as quartz, which were composed of various minerals, she spent considerable time in telling the children about the wonderful Mammoth Cave region of Kentucky and the remarkable way in which the solid quartz had been corroded and eroded into the present system of tortuous caverns.

No one will, I believe, question the statement that the teacher's time in this case was wasted, and that the pupils' time was worse than wasted. The teacher showed woeful ignorance of the subject matter, and inexcusable neglect in preparation but even then she was "more sinned against than sinning," for she was the victim of the iron-clad system of education in elementary science, which compelled her to devote a certain amount of time to the teaching of certain specific scientific subjects, regardless of her previous training or present fitness.

Varieties of this teacher are found in every school, where such a system is in vogue.

### THE NORMAL CHILD.

Then there is the teacher who says that nature's way must be followed at any cost. That nature has no order or system in the arrangement of her treasures, that animals and plants are scattered about with hit-or-miss prodigality, and that therefore science lessons should come in the same way. Hence a toad, a stone, a buttercup, a storm, a cow, a visit to a factory, a butterfly, a hawk, are taken up in succession to the dire confusion of the student and the dissatisfaction of the teacher. Rarely is any lasting good accomplished in this way but usually much time is wasted to the detriment of the child. Perhaps under ideally perfect conditions the latter way might be efficacious, but under conditions as we find them in practical life neither the iron-clad route nor the free-for-all way will be satisfactory.

James Whitcomb Riley emphasizes a profound truth in child life, when he says in one of his poems, speaking of a boy:

"High-spirited from boyhood with a most  
inquirin' turn;—  
He wanted to learn ever'thing on earth there  
was to learn:  
He'd ast more plaguey questions in a mortal  
minute here  
Than his grandpap in paradise could answer  
in a year."

The normal child comes early into his heritage from nature. He is inquisitive, he sees, he observes, he thinks, he asks questions, he imagines and in his own way theorizes on the phenomena about him. He finds himself surrounded by an interesting and mysterious world and with childish eagerness and zeal he strives to overcome and understand. The teacher has it in her power to encourage or discourage to help or hinder to make or mar.

There are two reasons for teaching science in the form of nature study which appeal to me strongly. First, there is in the child an inherent or inherited love for nature and



natural things and a desire to know of them.

Teachers begin with the child as though birth were its beginning and they discuss its home, its parentage, the atmosphere in which it lives, its environment. These things are important and I would not detract from their importance in the slightest degree, but we must go farther—let us go back in time 100 years, 500 years, 1,000 years, 10,000 years, go back to the morning of the race—no nations, no governments, no civilization, no great cities—just primitive man surrounded by virgin nature. We live in a new age, and are wont to forget past ages. With an increasingly large percentage of humanity in populous cities or in densely crowded centers of population, the child is no longer born into a natural world, but his environs are largely artificial. Inheritance, however, must leave the child with some innate love, some desire, some craving for the things of nature. The teacher then has already at hand the means, if properly used, to insure interest, attention and purpose in school work.

#### A UTILITARIAN MOTIVE.

The second reason for this work may be called the utilitarian reason. A critical public demands a practical course of study, something which will give to the pupil the ability to at once assume a place in the business world, at the close of his scholastic career. Something in the way of education is called for which will enable a man to earn two dollars where before he could earn but one. The utilitarian idea in nature study is slow in its advance, but it must inevitably come. With nearly half our population on the farm, and with the feeling on the part of every thoughtful person that farming must be reduced to a science, we are standing on the threshold of a new era in agriculture. The time is certainly coming when the man who can increase the sum total of the crop raised on a given area will be hailed as the benefactor of the race.

Facing these certainties of the not very distant future, we will, I think, be forced to admit that nature study is a coming study. Such facts as the following lend color to the picture: From government reports we learn that in 1891 in Prussia alone the loss to the wheat crop due to wheat rust

was estimated at 3,500,000 £; in the same year Prussia's loss from the same cause on her crop of rye was nearly 9,000,000 £; in California in 1892 the vine disease injured the grape crop \$10,000,000; ornithologists tell us that the tree sparrows in Iowa consume 875 tons of weed seed in one year. W. H. Payne once said that—"The greatest achievement of modern education is the gradation and correlation of schools, whereby the ladder of learning is let down from the university to secondary schools, and from these to the schools of the people."

Prof. Bailey in commenting on this says—"this origin of 'the schools of the people' from the university explains why it is that these schools are so unrelated to the life of the people and so unreal; they are exotic and unnatural." Without doubt the present system of education centering as it does about the college or university, has been of the greatest service to educational progress, but sooner or later a demand for a system which shall center in part about the elementary school must be recognized. Something must be done for the benefit of those who are content with, or are, under the stress of circumstances, compelled to accept a shorter period in school.

Nature study will find a place in such a readjustment.

#### ENTHUSIASM.

The essential thing in teaching science, as in the teaching of any other subject, is interest, and the teacher must, therefore, be able not only to hold the natural interest many children still have, and bolster up the waning interest of another class of children, but to kindle afresh the spark of interest, which in the case of many others, has been killed. Enthusiasm is the only key to the situation, and the enthusiasm must be real for the trumped up kind has some where the ring of insincerity, which pupils soon detect.

What is to be taught or what is to be eliminated? Under the iron-clad system there is little option, and the teacher must do the best that she can do under the circumstances. I agree most heartily with Prof. Bailey who says: "For the first lesson choose the natural object that you know most about. Every teacher has sufficient



knowledge of one subject to afford one good nature study lesson. The second lesson will take care of itself." I believe that I should go beyond the first lesson. Teach the thing of which you know most, and in which you have the greatest interest, and as experience is gained and confidence strengthened, the field may be widened. Avoid too great continuity in the lower grades—make inquirers of the children. Too great continuity is confining, irritating, it kills interest. Too great diffusiveness is perhaps worse,—it begets superficiality.

#### TRUTH AND HONESTY.

Teach the truth. Strive to know, but do not hesitate to tell the children that you do not know. The bird, the plant, the rock will speak the truth,—teach the child to receive it. Coming into direct contact with nature is inspiring but reading from some book what has been done is an abstraction and must be approached with caution. Dr. David Starr Jordan says: "There is greater moral value in the study of magnets than in the distinction between shall and will, in the study of birds and rocks than in that of diacritical marks or postage stamps, in the development of a frog than in the longer or shorter catechism, in the study of things than in the study of abstractions."

Help to eradicate error and superstition. Many persons still plant potatoes in the moon, hear death in the howl of the dog, attribute warts to the innocent toad, see fatality in the harmless salamander and flee before the number which precedes fourteen. Some one has said that—"It is better to seek knowledge than to have knowledge," and it is true that the child gains strength through its own activity in seeking rather than in passive possession.

But nature's secrets are so many and her mysteries so great that there is an infinite opportunity here for seeking with a constant increment of attainment. Let the child then accumulate a fund of information, a store of knowledge upon which he may draw in the future. Teach the simple to the child. But in rendering that simple, which you wish to teach, do not make the mistake of confusing simplicity with inaccuracy. Be sure of your sources of information,—the popular trea-

tise and poetry have a doubtful place among them.

Bring the child into sympathetic relations with nature. Remember, however, that sentimentalism and sympathy are not synonymous.

Waste lessons in science, then, should arouse interest and enthusiasm; they should open the eyes of childhood to not only the external beauty of visible forms, but to the pregnant truths of the hidden beauties of living things; they should open up the avenues to an inexhaustible mine of practical knowledge; but above all should they eradicate error, and weave into the fabric of character the sterling virtues of truth and honesty.

#### PRESIDENT NORTHROP'S VISIT.

One of the happiest and most widely influential events that the University Club has fathered was that of Monday evening, January twenty-fifth, when President Northrop of the State University, lectured before a large gathering at the auditorium, and afterward became the guest of honor at a banquet given by the club at Wheeler Hall. As President Northrop came upon the stage, accompanied by Judge Pollock and Hon. S. G. Comstock, the students saluted him with a rousing varsity cheer and a song which they had arranged in his honor. With his usual readiness and wealth of good feeling he acknowledged the greeting in a witty sentence.

As a prelude to the evening's program, Miss Watts sang a graceful solo, "Habenera," from Carmen, and as an encore gave Protheroe's "My Heart is Sair." Judge Pollock, on behalf of the club, presented President Northrop to the audience.

The lecture was the expression of a great personality—broad, practical and inspiring. It dealt chiefly with the mission of college-bred young men. It showed clearly that the function of the university was no longer to train men solely for the learned professions. Its broader and nobler function was to train men for all the occupations of life—men who, by their scholarship, their increased capacity and larger view, should enoble and re-create all the honest industries of the hour. The college-bred young man,



particularly here in the northwest, had a rare responsibility to fulfill: that of indicating, by practical experience, how a college training could make the usual business—farming, banking, railroading, retailing—yield larger returns and greater happiness to those pursuing it.

At the conclusion of the banquet, where over one hundred people enjoyed a delightful repast, several attractive toasts were given, all of which, directly or indirectly, combined to celebrate the gifts and graces of the club's distinguished visitor. Miss Marsh proposed an earnest toast to The Small College; Mr. John Watson dealt sincerely with the College Man in Professional Life; Mrs. White, wife of Governor White of North Dakota, sketched with deft and witty strokes, the attractions and shortcomings of the College Man in the Home, occasionally pointing a moral or adorning a tale by reference to the Governor who sat at her side. Mr. Holt toasted old Harvard; President Merrifield of the University of North Dakota upheld the banner of Yale, giving a series of delightful reminiscences typifying life at the college when President Northrop was a professor there. Dr. Hult, of the agricultural college, then celebrated the prowess of the University of Minnesota; and at length President Northrop himself, in response to this earnest toast and the enthusiastic calls of the banqueters, concluded the program by a brief and spontaneous address. His thoughts were sparkling with wit and glowing with sentiment; they gave new significance to every utterance of the evening and left a chastened inspiration in the hearts of all who heard him. And they impressed still deeper the conviction that we were listening not simply to the chief of a great university, but to one of the greatest college presidents the country has ever known.

#### LIVINGSTON SOCIETY.

The Livingston Society held an interesting meeting on Monday evening, January twenty-fifth. Erick Allstrom opened the program with a pleasing vocal solo, "The Wanderer." His listeners regretted that he was too modest to respond to a generous encore. Dena Halsten delivered "The Spy" in a manner that roused the patriotism of

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every listener. The debate on the question: "Resolved, That there should be a permanent Board of Arbitration to settle disputes between capital and labor," was upheld on the affirmative by Casper Bergh and Orville Perkins; on the negative by Lewis Larson, Annie Pearson and Conrad Hovden. The arguments on both sides gave evidence of earnest thought and conscientious research. The decision of the judges was two to one in favor of the negative.

May Plowman's theme, "Harold's Indians," was heartily enjoyed, and was very generally spoken of as one of the best numbers given at literary this year. The program was concluded by extemporaneous speeches from Lewis Larson and Casper Bergh on the timely subject—a corollary to the main proposition—"Arbitration between faculty and students."

For the first time since the reorganization of the societies there was a deplorable amount of noise and distracting conversation; so much, indeed, that it would have warranted a "censor with a rod" to quell the senseless prattle and dowdy show of indifference on the part of some of the occupants of the rear seats.

### WINTER IN THE COUNTRY,

An obstreperous blizzard—the second within a fortnight, but this time a white one—threw the rhetorical program that was announced for Monday evening, February first, into the afternoon of February second. It alighted squarely on both feet, however, and in view of the subject, "Winter in the Country," simply took on an added force because of its rude buffet from the weather. The novelty of meeting in the afternoon for rhetorical, which have been held in the evening for so long that the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, gave the program a slightly different tone. To most of us this was very agreeable.

The numbers, in general, contributed distinctly to the subject of the program and had variety and charm. The styles of interpretation were quite individual, and though there was an unusual tendency to hesitate and forget, the impression produced was altogether pleasing and hopeful.

Mr. Ballard introduced the program. With characteristic humor and a gentle di-

rectness of speech, he sketched the many attributes of winter in the country—its relentless cold, its dread, its occasional cruelties, its surprises, its dazzling beauties and its sports. He referred to our old friend the blizzard, and aptly recalled examples both of its boisterous energy and grim humor—as for example when, after a "soft spell," a raging young prairie terror piles up a drift to the height of ten feet and politely tops it off with a sign from a neighboring barber shop, "Hot and Cold Baths." He spoke of the noble beauty of a great pine forest weighted with its wealth of snow; of the resplendent attractions of our deciduous forests on a frosty morning, and of the infinite, though diminutive, loveliness of the snow crystal.

The school opened the program proper by singing "Daybreak," a delicate and lofty chorus, and Phoebe Meigs gave the first reading, an extract from "Snowbound." Following these attractive numbers, Eliza-

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both Way gave a graceful interpretation of Riley's familiar "When the Frost is on the Punkin," and Eugene Field's significant little ballad, "Ashes on the Slide." Lydia Loge showed considerable dramatic insight in portraying the characters of the two "peculiar" old ladies who were "Joint Owners in Spain," though they both occupied the same room in an old ladies' home.

The seventh and eighth grade boys lined up promptly like tin soldiers and sang "Old Winter" as conscientiously as if they were storming a castle—and the castle duly fell, with all hands clapping in prodigious applause. Nettie Jorgens got poor Mr. Winkle into a series of awful predicaments on ice, illustrating them with such ludicrous fidelity that the audience came near letting the hapless Mr. Pickwick drown utterly in cold water before it could recover itself sufficiently to come to his rescue.

Henrietta Hennemuth exposed the real nature of "A Timid Woman" who wouldn't see the family exchequer robbed of its good greenbacks, though it involved a ride on an "unbusted" broncho, a flourish of "cold steel" and a little emphatic talk on the station platform just as the express rolls in. She doesn't mind telling you, after she has recovered the greenbacks and the train is off again, that the pistol isn't loaded.

"How Deacon Tubman and Parson Whitney spent New Year" was the closing reading, and Julia Sawyer swung into it with a fine energy and freedom. She managed the whole selection with admirable poise, and hit off the race in capital periods. This, together with a beautiful chorus, The Toreador Song from Carmen, in which Erick Allstrom carried the tenor solo with sustained volume and dramatic fire, closed a very enjoyable and successful program.

#### AUGUSTINE PROGRAM.

The Augustine Literary Society gave a musical and literary program at the auditorium on the evening of January eleventh. The program follows:

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**THE MINNESOTA NORTHWESTERN EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION,**

The spring meeting of the Minnesota Northwestern Educational Association will be held at the Normal school in Moorhead, March third and fourth. It promises to be by far the most attractive and eventful meeting of the association. President Weld, who is head of the association, has arranged the program with a view to giving it superior unity and power. Speakers of distinction, whose experience has given them a message of profound moment to express, will be heard at this meeting for the first time in this section of the country. Several prominent educators of Minnesota and Dakota will give practical papers on live subjects, and the entertainment and musical features will have due attention.

The first meeting of the association will occur Thursday evening, March third; on Friday, March fourth, there will be forenoon, afternoon and evening sessions.

While the detailed program has not yet been completed, the following significant features have been definitely arranged. Papers will be presented by President George A. McFarland of the Valley City Normal; Prof. Joseph Kennedy of the University of North Dakota; Miss Abbie L. Simmons of the Moorhead Normal; Prof. W. I. Thomas of the University of Minnesota, and Superintendent Alfred E. Logie of the City Schools, Fargo.

Dr. Krohn, of Chicago, the well known author and lecturer, will give two addresses. Miss Jane Addams, of the celebrated Hull House Social Settlement of Chicago, will give an evening lecture on Friday.

The date of the St. Louis meeting of the N. E. A. has been moved forward by the executive committee from July sixth to July twenty-eighth. The change was necessary to avoid a conflict with the national convention of the Democratic party which will be in session on the former date and will monopolize both the traveling and hotel accommodations and the attention of public and press. The change seems a wise one.

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The state of New York, always foremost in matters of education and amelioration, has just made operative a child labor law which positively forbids the employment, in office, shop, hotel, or any other service, of any child under the age of fourteen. What good reason exists why Minnesota should not have and enforce such a law?

President Hall, on the occasion of the recent dedication of the new library, announced a gift of \$100,000 to Clark University from Andrew Carnegie. This gift, in connection with Mr. Carnegie's founding of the Carnegie Institution, proclaims the giver the patron par excellence of scientific research in America.

Chancellor Andrews of the University of Nebraska is reported as in danger of losing his position on account of his favoring the acceptance of Mr. Rockefeller's offer to erect a new building at the university. A storm of opposition has been aroused throughout the state and great pressure is being brought to bear on the regents to enforce their refusal of the Rockefeller gift.

\* President Dabney of the University of Tennessee has accepted a call to become the head of the University of Cincinnati. For some years President Dabney has been the leading spirit in southern education, not the least among his services being the establishment of the great summer school at the University of Tennessee where thousands of teachers have received training and inspiration.

A new bill providing for the adoption of the metric system of weights, measures and values as the legal system of the United States was recently introduced into the United States House of Representatives and referred to the

proper committee. The bill fixes January 1, 1906, as the date when the metric system shall become the legal standard. It is to be hoped that this bill may fare better than earlier efforts of the kind.

A new English educational monthly, with the brief but significant title of "School," made its initial bow to the educational public on January first. It will be a monthly record of educational theory and progress, and will be sufficiently broad in its outlook to attract a patronage beyond the boundaries of England. The magazine will be edited by Laurie Magnus and published by the well known house of John Murray.

An interesting situation has arisen in England through the "passive resistance" which is being indulged in by nonconformists all over England against the Education Act passed by Parliament a year ago. Everywhere they are refusing to pay their taxes for the support of Church Schools, with the result that their property is seized and sold at public auction to raise the taxes assessed. Even the papers most friendly to the Education Act take a gloomy view of the situation and fear to predict the outcome.

## NEWS COMMENT.

On January nineteenth the New England Society held a banquet at Pirie's Hall, Fargo. Mr. Weld rendered several dialect stories and Miss Watts sang a song which she had composed for the occasion to the music of "Dost Thou Know That Sweet Land?" from the opera Mignon.

\* \* \*

Saturday evening, January thirtieth, Mr. and Mrs. Chambers, counselors to the Juniors, entertained the class at the Columbia. The parlor was tastefully decorated in the class colors, lavender and maize, and a large '05 suspended by a bunch of the colors, hung from the chandelier at the center of the room. The program of the evening was delightfully informal, "Flinch" and other games contributing to the splendid good cheer of the occasion. Refreshments were served later in the evening, still further enlivening the merry scene. A funny song by Mr. Chambers was the occasion of more



mirth, till the happy Juniors realized with regret that the delightful gathering could not be prolonged indefinitely. Before departing each member affixed his signature to the napkins used; these will be treasured as souvenirs of one of the most enjoyable gatherings in the history of the class.

\* \* \*

The Curfew Bell, a beautiful cantata, was most successfully presented at the Congregational church on February 10th by a chorus of thirty under the direction of Mrs. Burnham. The soloists in the cantata were: Bessie, Miss Bessie Van Houten; Basil Underwood, Mr. S. H. Kantor; Sexton, Mr. L. A. Huntoon; The Narrators, Miss Hattie Fuller and Mr. J. H. Burnham.

\* \* \*

During Miss Simmons' recent illness, several courtesies were shown her by the pupils and pupil-teachers of her room. The pupils presented her with a beautiful plant while the pupil-teachers manifested their deep respect for her by sending her a box of cut flowers.

\* \* \*

Miss Elizabeth Belle James and Robert A. French, of Fargo, were married on Jan. 7, at the home of the bride, in Victor, N. Y. Miss James is well known in this city having taught for a number of years in the public schools. Mr. French, commonly called "Tot," rendered efficient service as coach of the Normal football team last fall and is well known in both cities. The best wishes of the Normal community are heartily extended to them.

\* \* \*

One of the most enjoyable social events of the school year was the Leap Year party given by Mrs. Smith and the members of Wheeler Hall, in the gymnasium, Saturday evening, January fourteenth. The gymnasium had been tastefully decorated, a cosy corner here and there adding much to its attractiveness. Dancing was the order of the evening, Zimmerman's orchestra furnishing the music. The novelty of the situation and the grace with which the ladies carried out their plans added much to the pleasures of the evening.

\* \* \*

On January nineteenth an old-time spelling match was held between the two literary societies, in the auditorium. A larger

crowd than usual, probably drawn by the novelty of the affair, attended this joint meeting. As soon as the contesting parties had taken their stand, one on either side of the room, the battle opened. Miss Dow pronounced the words. After the first few rounds each society had about decided who were to be its best supporters. As the words grew easier, the more mistakes were made and the more excited grew the spellers. The "eives" and "ieves" rapidly thinned out the ranks. Four spellers went down by illogically changing sealing-wax to ceiling-wax. Mr. Skaug who was prepared for anything up to words of twenty letters, was put down by "dynimite." While yet eight Livingstons were on the floor Miss Clara Pearson was the only Augustine member standing. One by one she "spelled" them down until Mr. Bergh alone held his ground. Indeed it seemed as if the contest would end in a tie. Miss Dow pronounced "article." It was Miss Pearson's turn and she spelled the word correctly. Vertical was the next word. "V-e-r-t-i-c-l-e," quickly spelled Mr. Bergh. It was such an easy catch, and the Augustines had won.

\* \* \*

About thirty students heard the Bostonians in The Serenade on February second.

\* \* \*

The Cadet Band of the State University, numbering forty-five pieces and reputed to be the finest organization of its kind in the country, expects to make a tour of the larger towns between Minneapolis and Grand Forks early in April.

\* \* \*

President Weld's illustrated lecture on the Yellowstone Park, which was to have been given during January as one of the numbers of the Normal Course of Entertainments, will be given February 22nd.

\* \* \*

The Fergus Falls debating team by defeating Barnesville's doughty trio on January thirteenth became the champions of the ninth congressional district in the high school debating league.

\* \* \*

January was an active and enjoyable month for the normal community; many events both intellectual and social marked



its progress. It was rich in lectures and parties, and was not entirely without an accompanying stir in nature, the black blizzard of the eighteenth furnishing a unique example of the way we occasionally get "in the whirl." Of lectures, there were at least four that were exceedingly stimulating and thoughtful; that of President Morley on the ninth; that of President Northrop on the twenty-fifth; that of Mr. Parson on the twenty-sixth, and that of Dr. Hult on the thirtieth. Among the social gatherings shared in by many of the faculty or students were the Presbyterian social of the eighth, the Fargo College reception of the eleventh, the leap year party at the gymnasium on the sixteenth, the New England society banquet on the nineteenth, the University Club banquet on the twenty-fifth, the Junior party at the Columbia and Mrs. Smith's informal at the hall on the thirtieth.

\* \* \*

Total registration, February first: Normal department, 339; Model department, 155.

\* \* \*

Twin girls, Ruth and Beth, are new members of the Stanford family. They arrived January twentieth, and after an approving inspection of their fond parents and the premises, decided to make this their permanent home. The young ladies have already been the recipients of much social honor and are the subjects of keen rivalry between three well-known young gentlemen of the neighborhood—Vernon Godfrey, Jas. Ballard and Thomas Hillyer, Jr. Both the young ladies are musical.

\* \* \* \*

The practice teachers in the primary department gave a surprise party in honor of Miss Bickell on the evening of January twenty-third.

\* \* \* \*

Mr. and Mrs. Russel entertained the members and friends of the Presbyterian Church at their home on January eighth. The evening was delightfully spent in playing games in which young and old joined.

\* \* \* \*

Orville Perkins joined the "hooting circle" on Wednesday night, January thirteenth, and is now a full-fledged Owl. He was duly instructed in the weighty medi-

tations of the order and is now able to employ the mystic wink and mellifluous serenade with credit to himself and to the order.

\* \* \* \*

"A little taffy now and then  
Is relished by the best of men,"

and by the best of women for that matter, for all members of Wheeler Hall joined heartily in the taffy and pop-corn jollification which Mrs. Smith had provided for the evening of January thirtieth. The fun incidental to the occasion was equalled only by the sweetness of those who participated.

\* \* \* \*

The literary society contest has been postponed until the first Monday in May.

\* \* \* \*

The senior class play "Ivanhoe," is well under way and will be given near the close of the term. Miss Remmele and Miss Watts have charge of the presentation and the Minneapolis Costume Company will supply the costumes. No effort will be spared to make the play a success from all points of view.

\* \* \* \*

The Clay County Teachers' Association held its mid-winter meeting in Moorhead on January sixteenth. Mr. Chambers addressed the meeting in the afternoon on the "Training for Citizenship." The meeting was well attended and Superintendent Turner reports a most profitable session.

### MUSIC CONTEST.

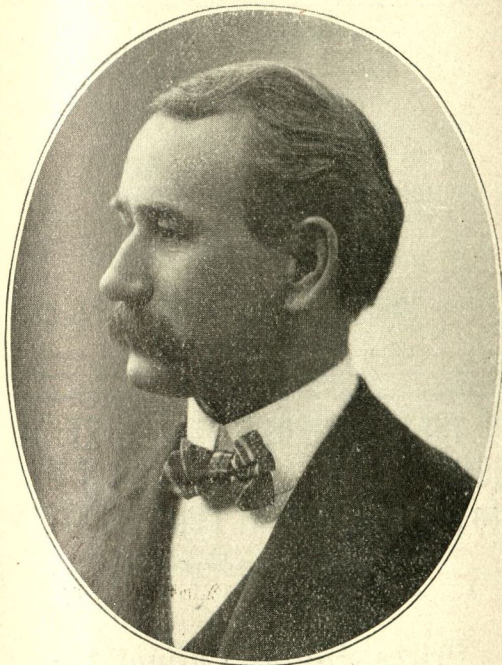
One of the most interesting school events of the month was the music-contest which took place during the chorus-practice period on January twentieth. The school had been divided into companies by rows, and all the companies, under their respective captains, had worked assiduously for a week, against the coming contest. Each row in turn sang a familiar selection from the hymnal, and each felt remarkably well satisfied with its performance, until "Nearer My God to Thee," was announced for the second row of boys. As Miss Kaus began the accompaniment, an impressive silence settled over the whole assembly, including the boys' row number two; a silence which as far as the singers were concerned, grew more and more impressive, as the hymn drew toward its close, when it suddenly gave way to



storms of applause and laughter. Number two had preserved a silence not quite golden.

The judges, Mrs. Smith, Miss Bickell and President Weld, decided that first place, due to superior quality of tone, belonged to the eleventh row of girls, and in the boys' division to the first row. Second place was given to the seventh row of girls; and to the third row of boys. The second row received mention! The contest not only afforded an agreeable diversion, but aroused a great deal of initiative effort, resulting in a happy familiarity with many of the better selections in the hymnal. It was another instance of how Miss Watts' abundant enthusiasm becomes contagious.

GEORGE A. FRANKLIN.



Superintendent George A. Franklin, elected president of the State Educational Association at its recent meeting in St. Paul, has been in charge of the public schools of Faribault for the past ten years. During this time he has exerted a vital influence, not only in the intellectual life of his city but in the educational activities of the state at large. He was educated in the

public schools of Rockford, Ill., and at the Illinois Normal University. He has been in school work as teacher, principal and county and city superintendent for twenty-one years. His chief service has been as principal of the Rockford, Ill., High school, as superintendent at Delavan, Ill., for six years (1888-94) and as superintendent at Faribault. In addition he has done considerable work in institutes and summer schools in the states of Iowa, Illinois and Minnesota.

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## PERSONALS.

Oscar Hiemark visited school January eighteenth.

Clarence Hulett is in the real estate business at Erwood, Canada.

W. J. Chappel of Fergus Falls visited his daughter Madge, January twentieth.

Pansy Gilbert returned to her home at Felton, Minn., on January sixteenth.

O. H. Gunderson and Emil Larson were visitors at the school on February fourth.

Gertrude and Louise Monson visited classes and attended chapel January twenty-seventh.

Cherry Nichols of Fargo visited with Emma Lincoln and attended chapel exercises January thirtieth.

Sue O'Laughlin left school on account of the death of her father which occurred at Chicago, January third.

George Brohaugh of Hendrum visited with John Haugen and looked over the Normal January twenty-fourth.

Superintendent Williams, Maude Patterson and Flora Lester of Breckenridge visited school January sixteenth.

Frank Malloy who attended the Normal two years ago is employed in the bookkeeping department of Park, Grant, Morris & Company in Fargo.

## ALUMNI NOTES.

Cealia Busness, '00, is teaching at Wadena.

Bertha Curtis, '02, is studying music at the Chicago Musical College.

Edith Porter, '02, of Detroit, visited with friends January twenty-second.

Alfred Boe, '07, is spending the winter at his home at Lake Park. He expects to return to Alaska next summer.

Alta Kimber, '03, sends in her subscription and best wishes from Frazee, Minn.

Lillian Yemen, '02, was married to Rev. R. Francis Hall of Hallock, Minn., on June fourth. Rev. and Mrs. Hall now reside at Necpawa, Canada.

J. D. Mason, '01, and father to the local tribe of Owls, went and took unto himself a wife, Miss Gina Dahl of Twin Valley, on December twenty-fourth. The Red Letter joins with the many friends of the bride and groom in wishing them unlimited happiness.

# Swem

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Chiming Sabbath anthems, stilling eager care,  
Hark, the bells are pealing; joy is every-  
where.

Down the lane I loiter, through the wild wood  
stray,

Seat me where the river winds its silent way.  
Now no robin warbles, orioles are still,  
Hermit jays that spy me pipe their warnings  
shrill.

Round me, softly, deftly, fairy fingers small  
(Brushes dipped in sunset) spread the tints  
of fall;

Every leaf is lively—lo, could blush of morn  
Emulate this mantle by the woodland worn?  
In this chapel wondrous, voices faint and low  
Call the heart to beating, make the quick tears  
flow;

Eloquence persuasive in that sermon still  
Chides the wayward wand'rings, props the  
falt'ring will.

Face to face with nature, every vain thought  
flies;

We are one in spirit—self, forgotten lies.

**THE BLACK BLIZZARD.**

BY MAY FLOWMAN.

A strong, rushing wind came tearing over  
the prairie—a wind, high enough to bend  
and twist our tallest trees and lash their  
bare branches about unmercifully; low  
enough to gather up snow and dust from  
the wide prairies, lift it up, and, tossing  
and tumbling it, rush it along in sweeping,  
blinding clouds.

It threw its light load softly, but per-  
sistently, against the window panes. The  
snow held the dust on the glass in a thick  
coat that darkened the rooms and gave to  
the world a still more dull and gloomy color.

It wrestled roughly, but playfully, with  
the occasional passer-by. Then, without  
further warning, it would maliciously fling  
itself against him with overpowering force  
and carry him, gasping and blinded, with it.  
Pelting him savagely with snow and sand  
and filling his face and clothing with a thick  
coating of cold mud, it would whirl him  
on. Then, proud of its work, vain of its  
power, it would rush on, shrieking and howl-  
ing and at times fairly shouting with glee.

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Occasionally the sun tried to look down through the whirling clouds, but the wind would then teasingly toss up such quantities of the clouded snow as to hide its dim light entirely.

Two girls under the spell of the weird day climbed up to the attic. It was dark and chilly there and the queer shadows gave ghostlike suggestions. Through the small windows, flecked with dust and snow, they peered down on the unusual scene below; on the wild forms of the snow, out into the distance where the familiar objects, grotesquely disfigured in shape and color, appeared at intervals as the grey curtains were drawn back and forth by the tireless wind. His strength was fully appreciated in the dusky attic. The girls shouted to each other to make their voices heard above the uproar. Suddenly a mighty blast, screaming shrilly, shaking and rocking the building and rattling the windows and loose boards in its passage, caused them to listen for a moment; then as its fury increased they grasped each other's hand and ran down the dark stairs to the warmth and light below.

The force of the wind steadily increased. The sun gave up its vain struggle for its rightful position. Great banks of the blackened snow hung heavily along the horizon and brought darkness early. The would-be-traveler turned back to his fireside and shivered at the sound of the storm. The wind hurled its cargo of icy sleet against the building as though it would batter down every barrier. And thus struggling wildly to overcome all obstacles in its path, it fought on through the night, until, completely exhausted, it died away with a few weary moans in the early hours of the following morning.

#### CHRONICLE.

Jan. 4. Students return.—Many new ones enter.

Jan. 5. Class in commercial geography organized.—Matheson tells his bear story.

Jan. 8. Senior class meets in auditorium; members held up for \$1.00 apiece.

Jan. 9. Arithmetic class kept through chapel period.—Barnes takes a lowly seat in Am. Literature.—President Morley of Fargo College speaks in chapel.—"Tot" French marries Miss James.—Spelling match between literary societies; Augustines win.

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Jan. 11. Augustine society meets.—Fargo college faculty entertains.—Wardeberg forgot to go skating.

Jan. 12. Owls meet in Mr. Stanford's office.—Methods in geography class observe the constellations; epoch making maps the result. Members who went skating saw stars which they failed to get on the map.—Bon fire on the ice in the evening; much hilarity.

Jan. 13. Perkins joins the Owl tribe.—Butler's favorite hymn:

"I want to be an angel  
And with the angels stand,  
Or sit beside a school ma-am  
And hold her by the hand,"

and thereby hangs a tale.

Jan. 14. Civics class visits court house.

Jan. 15. Mr. Stanford at Barnesville and Mr. Ballard at Fergus act as judges in state league debates.

Jan. 16. Civics class tries Pomeroy for burglary.—Hall girls give leap year party at gymnasium.

Jan. 18. Black blizzard.—Livingston meeting postponed.

Jan. 19. Seniors fill out syllabi relative to hygienic conditions in the Normal.—Carrie N— promoted to the front seat in reading; Butler nit.—New England Society banquet at Pirie's Hall.

Jan. 20. Music contest; rows 11 of the girls and 1 of the boys proclaimed victors.—Mr. Stanford wears a broad smile; twin girls in the faculty high chairs.

Jan. 21. New magazine cabinet for the library.—Seniors measured for class play costumes.—Red Letter distributed.

Jan. 22. Seniors select class pin.—Pauline Neiland day dreams in Psychology.—Edith Porter, '02, visits; Wardeberg's eye brighter.

Jan. 23. Faculty meeting in Room 22.—Livingston society renders program.—Surprise party on Miss Bickell.

Jan. 25. President Northrop speaks at the auditorium.—University Club banquet at the Hall after the lecture.—Coldest day in Minn. history.

Jan. 26. "Panic" in Miss Deans' room.—Mr. Parson, Y. M. C. A. organizer, speaks in chapel.—Junior class meets.—"Not guilty" the verdict; Pomeroy happy.

Jan. 27. "Spooners" in Red Letter office forcibly ejected by Business Manager.

Jan. 28. Young Men's Social Club party at Fraternity Hall.

Jan. 29. Mr. Reed acts as judge in Fergus-Barnesville debate.

Jan. 30. Dr. Hult of the Agricultural College lectures in chapel.—Junior party at Columbia.—Mrs. Smith entertains members of Wheeler Hall at pop-corn and taffy party.

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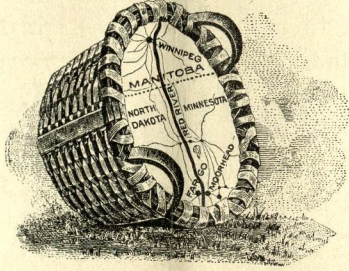
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