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Moorhead Normal School

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The Normal Red Letter

VOLUME VII.

State Normal School, Moorhead, Minnesota, December, 1905.

No. 3.

EXERCISES IN ENGLISH AS A MEANS OF DEVELOPING INDIVIDUALITY.

By Edwin T. Reed.

THE NATURE AND INTER-RELATION OF INDIVIDUALITY AND ORIGINALITY

The end of our teaching is to unfold and make effective the native gifts of the individual child. It is impressive to reflect that of the scores of pupils who come and go in our class rooms every day, so nearly alike in age, in speech, even in facial expression, no two came into the world with quite the same endowments, will travel through it by quite the same path, nor leave it in a quite identical manner. The thing that we as teachers are chiefly concerned with, is how the child shall bear himself in this journey through life,—if not from the cradle to the grave, at least from the Kindergarten to the grave. We are not responsible for his native gifts—who shall say, with reverence, that any power under Heaven is responsible for his native gifts?—but we are responsible, in a large measure, for his use of them. We have him in our care for twelve out of his precious three score years and ten—the most hopeful, elastic, and abounding years of his life, and it is then, if ever, that he must discover his peculiar capabilities, and learn to drive them cheerfully and nimbly in harness. Another twelve years after he has left us and he has proved his mettle on his own responsibility in the thick of life; still another twelve and his fortune has been made or marred. As a youth, he has a right to expect something from others; as a man others expect something from him. It was Secretary Stanton, in one of those vigorous outbursts of his, who voiced this memorable truth in a single massive sentence. "I do not like his face," he had exclaimed to a friend, who had called his attention to a new political luminary.—"His face," rejoined his friend, "That's unfair. He can't help his face."—"Huh!" roared Stanton, "at forty a man's responsible for his face!"

To be individual, simply implies that one shall be himself, that he shall maintain, without aggression and without capitulation, the integrity of his personality among his fellows. That he shall stand to his convictions, and make for his ideals, do his

work and hold his faith, in the particular manner that is natural to him, and therefore gives him the largest freedom. The boy who can hold his own in a crowd, not assertively nor obtrusively, but serenely and unconsciously, has individuality. One of small individuality lacks initiative; he takes his cue for others, and does not think for himself. He is dragged or pushed along by his associates, and exerts no directive power. To be individual does not imply, however, that one must love the crowd or have a thirst for the strong wine that flows from the press of teeming events or clashing forces. Rather, it implies that one has the insight to gauge his powers, and the initiative to choose the field of their operation. Individuality should enable one to select his vocation and to pursue it with joy to success.

Thus in business, in society, in scientific research, individuality is the significant thing. In literature it dominates success. Beginning in faint suggestions of insight, it grows by industry, by experience, by contact with congenial ideals, until it brings the worker to a complete realization of his powers. For individuality is not a fixed quantity; it is enlarged by whatever enlarges the view; it is increased by whatever increases the power of self control. Far from being damaged by discipline, it acquires, through the restraints of education, a firmer command of its resources. Indeed, as Dr. Thwing has shown, individuality in the college man is 200 times as apt to develop into originality that can leave the beaten path, as in the case of the uncultured. To be fully effective, in short, for purposes of intelligent cooperation, individuality not only needs training, but a knowledge of human nature.

I have already suggested a close relation between individuality and originality. What is the nature of originality? What does it inhere in? What can it have to do with the restraint of teaching? In this particular phase of my subject I wish to acknowledge my grateful indebtedness to the stimulating classwork and conferences of Mr. William Belmont Parker, for six years an associate editor of the Atlantic Monthly, sometime instructor in Harvard College, and now a member of the English faculty of Columbia, a man whose methods combine the scientific thoroughness of the Harvard

school with the larger enthusiasms of Columbia. It is perhaps worth while to add, too, that this view of originality is essentially endorsed by Prof. Royce in his chapter on "Docility and Differentiation."

What then is the nature of originality? To the conventional mind it is assertive; the striking, the bold, the extravagant, are original, and the halo of genius is wound around the brows of a Mary McLean, a Thos. Lawson, or an Alexander Dowie. But many a glaring meteor of this type, that has held the popular gaze since the days of Alcibiades, has but followed the career that Taine ascribes to Sheridan, "who flashed up and shone in a moment, scaled with a rush the empyrean of politics and literature, settled himself, as it were, among the constellations, and like a brilliant rocket, presently went out in darkness," leaving his age no better than he found it. Aggressiveness is not essential to originality; obtrusiveness is fatal to it. Let a man but say, "Go to now, I will be original; I will add something hitherto undreamed of to the sum of human knowledge; may the world take notice!" and he is doomed. To all but the unthinking he has become a theatrical poser. He has lost the possibility of serious communication with the minds that count.

Originality must be docile. It must conform to its environment. The great teachers of the world, whose immortality began in their own day and was not due merely to a later revival, were the ones who rendered unto Caesar the things that were Caesar's. Quite as surely, they were the ones who rendered unto God the things that were God's. For originality, first and always, must be reverent. Our greatest epic, our greatest allegory, are religious, and the most exalted flights of imagination have winged their course straight for the feet of God. Remember the example of George Eliot, who, when she had completed her great novel, *Daniel Deronda*, thanked God through her tears that He had chosen her as the instrument to write it. Against the record of every original worker might be written that shining couplet that is embedded in the rose quartz boulder that marks the grave of Emerson,

The passive master lent his hand

To the vast soul that o'er him planned.

So much for the nature of originality. It must be docile; it must conform; it must be reverent. But what does it inhere in? Not in the intellect chiefly. The will cannot help much, though without the consent of the will one cannot be original. Feeling and emotion are the seats of originality. It is in our feelings that we are most ourselves.

They take possession of us, freeing us from all conventionalities, all systems, and philosophies. They imbue us with throbbing moods, that lift us out of the commonplace of every day, into the spacious twilights of the soul. Back of every great work there has been a great mood. In literature, I need seek no further for examples than the *Pilgrim's Progress* and the *Speech at Gettysburg*. But shall we therefore depend on mood, and wait for it? Not at all. Rather, we are to seize the mood when it comes, make the most of it, and carry over some of its elevated passion to the hour of normal effort. We are to conserve mood for the hour of work.

But shall we cramp originality by reducing it to routine, and subjecting it to rules? Cramp originality? Yes, for a season, if need be, in order that it may ultimately be both free and effective. No amount of genius can compensate for lack of science. In stenography, in tennis, in piano playing, for instance, we may do fairly well for a time without rules, but we cannot attain the highest art. If we would excel in music, though we have the talent of a Beethoven, we can do nothing less than devote our days and nights to the study of technique. So it is with original talent in general, and not least so in creative writing. We must so mechanize the rules as to master them, and thus become free forever from their shackles. The more duties we mechanize, the more fully we release the stream of consciousness to devote itself to new processes. Thus, upon originality, which is but a higher form of individuality and springs from the emotions, we are to impose such restraints as will bring it into right relations with its surroundings; upon great mood we are to impose order. The emotions take the initiative; the intellect restrains and directs.

II. EXERCISES IN ENGLISH DESIGNED TO ENCOURAGE INDIVIDUALITY.

Of all subjects taught in the secondary schools, English Composition is the most self-revealing. In the course in science or mathematics, the student is dealing, for the most part, with quantities and processes new in his experience. By the skill with which he attacks these, the success he attains in attempting to master them, and the pertinence with which he applies them to his subsequent experience, we learn much of his intellectual habits and potentialities. In history and literature, moreover, there is an additional element of self-interpretation; for by his preference for different types of character, and different styles of expression—the impassioned, the poetic, the

gravely commonsense—the student reveals something of his tastes and ideals. But in composition, where the student draws on his own selection, and voices it in his own manner (however immature that manner may be), we have a variety of channels for self-revelation not equalled by any other subject.

Two classes of themes, or written exercises, usually engage the exertions of our students: themes based on literature; themes based on life. Material for themes of the first class is generally comprised within the pages of a text-book in the hands of the students. Such themes assume that we are reading, for instance, Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield, and they require that we compose a description of the Primrose home, a narration of Moses' visit to the fair or an exposition of Dr. Primrose's views on marriage. At most, we get no further from the book than to write a description or an argument after the manner of some model passage in the text. The merits of this method are obvious; its defects are almost equally plain. No one can compose without materials to put into the composition; and it is a common complaint that the young boy is without ideas—literary ideas. How can he make his words leap into place, how can he weave his clauses, warp and woof, and make his silken sentences into a firm and gleaming web, with nothing to give them life and movement. How indeed. But here, in the classic, is rich material ready to his hand. Let the youth note it, and let him note too the elegance of diction, the nobility and sweep of style, the delicate finish of phrase. But exactly herein lies the boy's danger and despair. For the thought, in the first place, is too mature to stir him with any glow of fellowship; and the style is so severely perfect that it takes no living hold upon his language. The problem that he faces, then, is like a mountain of glass; the thought of scaling its splendid surface is despair. But to slide along the hillocks at its base, pursuing curves and by-ways, but never disturbing the essential contour or substance of the mountain—this for a season is both agreeable and easy.

Undoubtedly the better class of themes for developing power over natural endowments and practical command of language is the class that deals with life—the experience and emotion of the student himself. Such themes, from their inception to their completion, make a constant and cumulative demand upon the capacities of the pupil. He must use his own resources and arrive at his own results. Not the balanced resources that he is expected to have at

maturity; but such as he has now—crude but aspiring, diffuse but flexible; inquiring, fragmentary, refreshing. Not the results of a Scott or a Webster, but the results that are natural to an abashed age of fourteen or an ambitious one of eighteen. In the very act of choosing a subject the boy must observe and determine. And here is where temperament tells. While cautious and sensitive Clarence is balancing the niceties of "The Girl in Clover" against the more heroic possibilities of "Her son, the Corporal," and Carl is viciously prodding his ink well and sulking himself into a state of bristling impotence, the robustious Bunker is already half way up to the boom house with "The Boy that Broke the Log Jam," and spreading ink on paper as freely as if he were tarring a roof. Each student is in need of some correction; but except in the case of the sulker, there is need for no sudden concern. What we are after is momentum. We want movement first, and then direction. We want life and energy and action. We should be glad to find method, and reflection, and insight—and now and then we find them—but we are satisfied to begin with action. We can check the reckless and the over-enthusiastic, we can guide the rambling and refine the crude, and even puncture the inflated style; but the barren! This gives us pause. For the barren student is our heaviest burden, and we must sometimes lift him bodily. And here again is where the appeal of interest—interest that springs from experience—may help the learner into action, and through a judicious assignment, finally give us the victory.

The subject having been chosen, the plan is evolved, and the composition commences. In both these later stages the pupil is even more entirely thrown upon his own devices than in the first. He has no classic on which to pattern his plan; no Goldsmith's phrases to shape to a Goldsmith's thought. Indirectly, of course, his Goldsmith or his Addison and all the wealth of his reading experience help him not a little; but only by wholesome suggestion. His theme is unique; his plan and his words are his own; and helpless as he finds himself at first, when all is done, and his theme is manfully read, he rejoices in a sense of authorship, a feeling of positive creation.

III. THE ASSIGNMENT IN ITS RELATION TO INDIVIDUALITY.

And now we arrive at the assignment—a phase of composition that has come to impress me more and more seriously during the five years of my experience with normal school students. Upon the simplicity, and fertility, of the assignment has depended in

most cases not only the human content of the themes, but their literary symmetry as well. Not that the themes are correct as to details, but that they are effective as a whole.

With high school and normal students, I have found that neither the absolutely free choice of subject by the student nor the exact assignment of a topic by the teacher, is wholly profitable throughout the course of a term. On occasions either method has its place. But as a regular plan for the shorter themes, in order to give a basis of comparison as well as to stimulate thought and inquiry, and still carry out a definite plan through the term, I have been in the habit of assigning a class topic under which the students may group their individual experiences.

Such assignments as I have in mind are designed primarily to encourage a sincere expression of personal experience and opinion. They are not for the purpose of illustrating specifically whether or not the student has mastered the uses of the semicolon or learned to avoid the split infinitive. Incidentally they tell you a great deal about these things; but their real purpose is to lift the student free of the shackles of all printed things and send him deep down into the well of his own experience, from which (if he has really reached the living water) he must needs bring up something refreshing because it is peculiarly his own.

The assignments at first must be rather inclusive and so simple that they are almost commonplace—An Incident of My Childhood, My Favorite Haunt, High Water in the Spring (with its suggestion of rafts, boats, floods, floating wreckage), My Tasks At Home, An Exciting Contest, An Odd Character, A Forest Excursion. Such an assignment, given informally, with not too much emphasis, with glimpses of what the topic suggests to you and what it has led others of your students to express, with possibly the reading of a fine specimen theme held over from a previous course—will give you, along with much ordinary writing perhaps, a few specimens so convincing and effective that they will lift the whole tone of your next exercise.

Assignments that spring from annual festivals, or from local events and celebrations of vital moment, are not to be neglected. A Christmas Episode, assigned with some suggestion of the atmosphere of the hour, with the reading of Mary E. Wilkins' "The Christmas Monks" and a bit from Dickens, has brought from my classes some pleasing and purposeful little stories. The Easter Spirit, with all that it implies of chastened

ambitions, loving sacrifice and budding hopes,—vague and subtle as the subject is,—has also yielded its reflective bits of exposition. A Book That Has Influenced Me, was an assignment that furnished not a little food for thought both to the members of the class and to the teacher.

Memories of An Aged Relative, prefaced by the reading of parts of "Grandfather" in Roy Rolfe Gilson's "In the Morning Glow," was an assignment rich in human interest, and fairly inspirational in its evidences of the unconscious recognition of an ideal. Few families are without the gray-haired philosopher at the fireside, or the sweet-faced, wistful-eyed grandmother in the rocker by the window. Very few boys have been so unfortunate as not to have known some aged friend, whose hand they clasped in his walks from shop to orchard, whose woodrack they mounted behind the prancing Jack and Gin, or whose every motion they watched with breathless interest as he taught them the mysteries of chiseling in stone or trapping the mink or pocket gopher. Or perhaps this aged relative was the grandmother, who, more than anyone else, helped to shape and fix the boy's moral standards for life,—who, with a kind of bantering tenderness and sweet raillery, taught him as a lad to recognize what was genuine, what was righteous, what was pure, and by the same gay sincerity kept him firmly wedded to them through the after years. The grandfather, the grandmother, in short, are just close enough to the boy or girl to be very dear and intimate, but not, like the father or mother, so very close as to make the act of writing about them a painfully self-conscious process.

A theme written in response to this assignment is the following:

GRANDMA.

By Margaret Plowman, 1st year, 1st term, English Composition.

If grandma could only come back to us once more, and be in the center of that group of happy little cousins, and tell us those old stories we liked so well, especially, "Jack and the Bean Stalk," and "Camera Cot!" How big our eyes got over that, and how we did wish that Jack would hurry when he was coming down the stalk; for if he didn't run faster it seemed as if he surely would be caught. But grandma would rescue him even if he did get caught.

But grandma cannot come back to us now, and we must not wish her here; instead, we have that dear memory of her that will always be with us. We can see her now, if we close our eyes. There she is, every wrinkle in the right place, and the waves in her snow white hair just as they used to be when we sat in her

lap and laid our head upon that dear shoulder that was made for tired little heads to rest upon. Yes and she has her white apron on, too. How eagerly we used to watch for that white apron along the path that came out of the woods and led on down the big hill.

It was pleasant to be sick when grandma was there to take care of you; she never gave you nasty medicine and always brought you such good things to eat. Why, you felt better as soon as you saw grandma coming.

Then came a time when grandma was sick herself, and it was our turn to take care of her. How hard we tried to rub away that terrible head ache and cool the fevered brow that felt so hot against our own warm cheek.

Once when we went into grandma's room, the head ache was gone, the brow was cool. Grandma was sleeping so softly, we must be quiet and not disturb her.

That was what we thot then, but we afterwards learned why grandma never came again and why the path down the hill grew to weeds and grass. It is all gone now, not a trace of it is left to call back the memories of our dear grandma, who used that little path the most.

(This article will be concluded next month.)

THE LITERARY SOCIETIES.

At a meeting held Nov. 22d, the Augustine society elected the following officers for the winter term:

President, Curtis Pomeroy.
Vice President, Bertha Wyant.
Secretary, Nellie Rose.
Treasurer, Emma Kuhfeld.
Doorkeeper, Lucile Switzer.

Members on the Red Letter Board, Moselle Weld and Clara Rawson.

Nov. 25th the Livingston society elected officers for the winter term. Conrad Hovden and Grace Walker were elected members on the Red Letter Board. The other officers are as follows:

President, Molly Conant.
Vice President, Otto Bergh.
Secretary, Mary Flynn.
Treasurer, Mrs. Evans.
Doorkeeper, Keith Walker.

Dec. 7th the officers of the two societies met in joint session to consider the advisability of changing the time of the annual contest and of shortening the program of the contest. No definite decision was reached.

At a meeting of the Livingston society Dec. 8th, a motion was passed to propose amendments to sections one (1) and four (4) of the by-laws; changing the time of the annual contest from the latter part of the winter term to the fourth week of the spring term and shortening the time of debate from fifty-eight to forty-two minutes, by having only two contestants on each side instead of three.

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THE BIG SNOW STORM.

Thanksgiving day was blown across the prairies by one of our "ragingest" of raging blizzards,—snow, wind, and huge drifts; we all know the kind. Monday night the storm began and Tuesday morning the elements were having full sway across the prairies—and examinations were a minus quantity at the Normal that day. There were some fears on the part of those who were going home to spend Thanksgiving, but though the drifts were high the big snow plows did faithful work and the welcomes home were all the merrier. The streets of Fargo and Moorhead were never in such good condition for sleighing and bells were soon jingling merrily. The moonlight nights were taken advantage of by the college and high schools of the two towns, and many and various were the yells which answered each other across the crisp air of winter.

CLASS NEWS.

Mr. Quigley, the junior class counsellor, entertained his class most royally on the evening of November 11th. The games were original and interesting and the fun waxed high. The refreshments were in complement to the junior colors, which very highly delighted the class who are ever loyal to the Brown and Gold. Mr. Quigley is a most delightful host and the class gave the "All Right" yell with a vim as the goodnights were being said.

Who are the A's and where are the A's? would be a good problem for the algebra classes to solve.

THE SENIOR PARTY.

For several days preceding Saturday, November 11, the senior class counsellor was exceedingly busy. Class meetings were held from which the seniors came with a look of mystery upon their faces that reminded the juniors, they had better get busy too. Miss Dow was going to give a party to the seniors.

At eight o'clock the library was filled with seniors, who, having dismissed all cares from their minds, were now giving play to their reserve energy along lines quite remote from "methods in grammar." In fact the hilarity and confusion grew to such a pitch that even some of the most sober minded were seen to inquire with a perplexed look. "What am I?" But they soon identified themselves when it was announced that a program for a Students' Recital had been arranged and there was only ten minutes in which to prepare. Rehearsals began at once and the program which consisted largely of musical numbers was soon commenced. The recital as a whole

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was a piece of art and was pronounced the most excellent one of its kind ever presented.

Miss Dow has always been noted for resourcefulness in arranging for pleasant surprises at her entertainments and this time was not an exception. Just as the fun began to lag a little, the whole class was invited into the hall, and there at the bottom of the stair stood a whole row of juniors who entertained for a few minutes with special music. Refreshments were then served, after which the class adjourned to the auditorium and a business meeting was held. Class pins and class plays were discussed as well as other plans for future events.

THE MODEL SCHOOL.

This department has recently received from the General Library about 150 juvenile books which have greatly enriched its circulating library.

The attendance this term is larger than the last and bids fair at the end of the year to be larger than ever before.

The special program to be presented by the united Model Department on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving had to be given up because of the severe storm which prevented the children from coming to school on this day. The accumulated Thanksgiving spirit was, however, carried over into the Xmas exercises.

About forty-five practice teachers are accommodated in the Winter Term, all of whom are abundantly enthusiastic and industrious in their efforts to train the young idea how to shoot.

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ALUMNI

Margaret Walker—'05. This year Stephen is erecting a splendid brick school building. Since it was expected that the new structure would be ready for occupancy the first of November, the old building, was raised some distance from the ground, preparatory to its being moved away. The heating plant was transferred to the new building and some ram-shackle stoves set up in the various rooms of the old building. But the work lagged, since some difficulty was experienced in getting material on time. When the cold weather came on, many of the parents kept their children at home since they knew of the condition of the old building. The board soon realized that the school work would be hampered by such broken attendance. On the eve before Thanksgiving a board meeting was called, the decision arrived at was: "No more school until Jan. 2nd."

The Moorhead Normal is well represented in Stephen's corps of teachers, for Anna Moran, the primary teacher, Marion Sonquist, who has charge of the 4th and 5th grades, Nellie Nelson, who has charge of the 2nd and 3rd grades, Addie Rice, 6th and 7th grades, and myself, 8th grade, have all at various times received our sheepskin from the Normal.

Mr. Pierce, of St. Paul, the principal, is a graduate of Minnesota U. and also of the Mankato Normal.

Miss Johnson, assistant principal, is a graduate of the Minnesota U.

Only a word for myself now before closing. I enjoy my work very much. But I had not been at it very long before I decided that teaching under a good critic at the Normal was quite different from doing things on one's own hook.

While at the Normal, a great deal of responsibility could be pushed aside at the end of each class period; but now things are different. Yet it is truly pleasant to plan and then watch for the outcome, good or bad, which surely follows.

A serious complication makes one all the

more determined to straighten things out, while a little success helps soothe the ache made by a mistake.

THE ENROLLMENT.

The number of students enrolled is now upwards of 425, the largest in the history of the school. The seating capacity of the auditorium and the class rooms is crowded to the utmost, and good nature on the part of the students is necessary. The new students and the old were given a hearty welcome by President Weld and a general air of joyous excitement pervaded the halls as the greetings were exchanged. The hearts of the fair damsels were gladdened by the sight of so many new young men students. The winter term is one of promise and the students in general have put interest and enthusiasm in all their work.

A first year student rushing in from out doors and standing red-faced before the mirror in the dressing room: "Oh, girls! girls! do they sell powder in the text book library?"

FLORENCE MONTEN, '04.

The members of the normal school, and particularly the young people of the class of 1904, were profoundly grieved to learn of the death of Florence Helen Montén, which occurred at her home in Monson, near Wheaton, on the second of November. Florence was a girl who was universally beloved here—her kindness, her refinement, and her angelic character, winning her a place of exalted regard in all hearts. She was studious, musical and devout, with a gentleness of manner and a firmness of conviction that made her an influence in all spiritual interests, and would have made her an undoubted leader in all student activities, but for the disability of her crutches, upon which she swung her delicate body along the walks and through the halls of the school she loved so well and graced so nobly.

On graduating from the normal, she entered the University of Minnesota, where she spent a year in study. At the time of her death she was teaching the district school in the town where her father, Rev. A. P. Montén, is pastor of the Swedish Lutheran Church. Her death, which was due to a stroke of apoplexy, was sudden, but peaceful and resigned. At the funeral, which occurred Sunday, November 5, the throng of reverent friends, including her devoted school children, and all the members of her family except her brother William, who is attending the Harvard law school and could not come, paid loving tribute to the memory of her gifts and graces.

The normal school laments her death, as of a flower whose beauty was scarcely yet unfolded; but it rejoices in the sweetness of her life and character, as an example that still glows with goodness.

NEWS COMMENT.

Flossie Slagerman has charge of the daily mail and the mail-list this term.

* * *

Miss Mears' return was the occasion of much felicitation among her many friends at the normal.

* * *

Pres. Weld was able to move back into his private office late in December, after the work of repair had made it into a habitation of delight.

* * *

Because of illness Miss Kibby was obliged to relinquish her duties at school about the middle of December and retire to her home for rest and recuperation.

* * *

George Comstock distinguished himself in Harvard athletics this fall. He won a cup for broad-high jump in a tournament early in the season, and played on the freshman eleven.

* * *

A number of girls at the Hall arranged a surprise party on Katie Hartwell one Saturday evening of November, and made her home on Tenth street the scene of a pleasant informal frolic.

* * *

On the evening of the 10th the Dixie Singers scored a huge success at the Normal. The program was a delightful one and much appreciated by the audience, all of the numbers being heartily encored.

* * *

The reception room bears an improved appearance as a result of Miss Smith's trip to St. Paul. New portiers and some new furniture have been added, and the room is very attractive, especially on Saturday nights.

* * *

Mrs. Palmer entertained one Saturday evening in November for the normal school students who attend the Presbyterian church. Mrs. Russell was also hostess for a like cause later in the season. Both occasions were full of good cheer.

* * *

One of the girls who has but lately come to the Normal shows a peculiar ingenuity in getting lost in the building. Her chief difficulty is getting out after once getting in. It has been suggested that she employ the "Open Sesame" to straighten out the tangled maze.

* * *

The first of the Wheeler Hall parties was a very brilliant success. Whether from the point of view of numbers in attendance, charm of appointments, music, refreshments, or spontaneous good cheer, the occasion was altogether delightful. Miss Smith and the ladies of the Hall are to be cordially applauded as entertainers.

The leading article of our last issue "Early Steamboating on the Red River" was written by Phoebe Keeney, a member of the first year class in composition. Her name was on the original copy sent to the printers, and it was supplied in both the galley and the page proof; still it was omitted from the final impression of the paper.

* * *

Miss Smith entertained her Sunday school class at Wheeler Hall on the evening of Nov. 8. A very pleasant evening was spent and an impromptu program was rendered by the guests themselves. As the guests departed they gave some well known yells which appealed greatly to the hungry hearts of the hall girls as they endangered their lives by leaning in "break-neck" attitudes from their windows to watch the retreating revelers.

* * *

It is reported that the normal students who patronize the Moorhead-Northern line, made themselves virtual masters of the train on their return from the Thanksgiving vacation. The abundant energies incident to a week's leisure and turkey dinners seem to have been too much for the restraints of travel, and all the train officers, including the news agent, took to the baggage car to avoid complications, while the sage Friars from Fargo College and Concordia cried in vain for quarter—and a chance to study.

* * *

Crowds of happy girls thronged the depot platform at intervals during the Monday after Thanksgiving. An observer might have noticed the increase in bag and baggage, as each and every girl who came back was well supplied with "good things" to eat. All had planned on having enough to last until Christmas, and that night cakes and even pumpkin and mince pies reposed in the hidden corners of the several rooms. But, alas,—the dreams of plenty have vanished and the number of head-aches have increased.

* * *

The seniors thought no one knew of their plans for the evening of November 11. But alas for hopes—the juniors, as usual, knew all there was to know. The revelry was high in the library that night, when soft strains of music rose outside, beneath the window, and the whisper flew quickly among the seniors, "The juniors' serenade." The lights were quickly extinguished, and the seniors watched the shadowy group, who sang in the moonlight below; the chorus ceased, the figures moved away into the dark, and the lights were on again. Where the juniors dispersed to, the seniors will never know, but the juniors oh—they know.

RED RIVER VALLEY CONGREGATIONAL CLUB.

Thursday evening, Dec. 14, was the occasion of the annual banquet of the Red River Valley Congregational Club. The place of meeting was that spacious artistic room with its adjoining banqueting hall so well adapted for a "feast of reason, and flow of soul," known as Stone's Music Hall. The caterer was one Pirie, who on short notice is ever ready to feast a multitude in a most sumptuous manner. The purpose was the commemoration of the far-reaching character influence of Pilgrim Fathers.

The success of a banquet depends largely upon its toast master. He must be apt in his introductory remarks, and in his selection of the individuals chosen to respond to the toasts assigned. The Red River Valley Congregational Club was certainly privileged in having not only for toast master but for president of this organization the worthy head of Moorhead Normal school, Pres. Frank A. Weld. It was due to his executive and literary ability that the evening was such a delightful one to the guests assembled.

It was not simply the charm of brilliant toasts alone but the fine program that followed which made the occasion an intellectual feast long to be remembered.

Of the quartette of toasts, the first response was given by Rev. C. H. Barnes in his original and inimitably humorous manner on "The Puritan," the second was entitled "The Small College," by Prof. Knowlton of Fargo College. He spoke in a convincing manner, giving its importance in the way of comradeship, scholarship and character building; the third was rendered by Mr. Harold Stanford of the Moorhead Normal school on "A Broader View of University Life." He presented in an earnest and scholarly manner the great work of the University, especially emphasizing individual culture, the great benefits derived from scientific research, and the University's broadening influence as carried from the individual to social life, being particularly revealed in Settlement work, and in the various University Extension Courses. The Hon. George E. Perley closed this enjoyable symposium with "When The Pilgrims Had Lawyers," presenting his toast in his usual happy and humorous vein, making the thread of his argument hang upon the fact that the appreciation of the lawyer was great in the Pilgrim era, since upon that subject the Pilgrim was ever silent.

On leaving the banquet table, the guests assembled in the Music Hall, and were both entertained and instructed by the program there presented. The first number was a vocal solo rendered in an artistic manner by Mr. Greaves, one of Fargo's most popular singers.

Then followed the address of the evening given by Prof. Vernon P. Squires who is at the head of the department of literature in the State University of North Dakota. The subject of his address was "The Influence of The Pilgrims in Founding Educational Institutions in America." The paper was scholarly from the standpoint of literary finish and meritable content. He built his educational structure upon the influence of the forceful character of John Robinson, the beloved Pilgrim pastor, upon the power of his simple language, and the sterling worth of his writings, with their breadth of vision, and keen insight into the eternal laws which rule the universe. It was, in Prof. Squires' paper, the sway of the tolerant Pilgrim rather than the strenuous intolerance of the Puritan, that has been the influence of founding educational institutions in America. He closed with an appeal for honoring the memory of this forceful personality by naming some one of our American schools—the Robinson College.

The last number on the program was presented by Miss Harriet Rumball, who is at the head of the department of Expression in the State Normal School at Moorhead. Her selection was one of her own arrangements from "Attila, or The Virgin of the Last Loves" from the French author, Chateaubriand. It was indeed a great pleasure to listen to such a genuine interpretation, given with that simplicity and utter forgetfulness of self and environment which always bespeaks the artist. She is the happy possessor of that subtle dramatic ability which belongs only to the favored few.

This banquet of the Red River Valley Congregational Club was most assuredly one of the Red Letter events of the year for the Twin Cities of this Red River vicinity.

ADDRESS ON CHARACTER.

Rev. Irving P. Johnson of Minneapolis conducted a series of interesting mission meetings in Moorhead and Fargo from Nov. 19th to 26th. In the morning of the 23d he delivered an address on "Character" to the Normal students at Chapel. In his address he likened character to a river.

A man's character flows onward throughout his life like a river, it has three dimensions—length, breadth and depth. The length of a man's character depends upon his perseverance, the breadth of his character is determined by his helpfulness to himself and to his fellows, and the depth of his character is as his reverence is deep and as his faith is strong.

The address was as intelligent as it was definite and direct, as impressive as it was short. It was received in the spirit in which it was given. We shall be glad to have Rev. Johnson with us again.

OTTILIA WESTLUND'S SONG.

Just before we left for the Christmas holidays the school enjoyed the privilege of singing "The Moorhead Normal," a song written by Ottilia Westlund for the class of 1905. Through the foresight of the class, a fund was left to have the song appropriately printed, that it might be sent as a souvenir to each member of the class. When Mr. Stanford received the printed songs he had them distributed to the students at chorus period, and under Miss Damon's direction the "School Upon the Red" was sung with a royal good will.

The song is a meritorious piece of work. It has fluency, and ease, and color, and its images are natural to the life and views it describes. It is more than a class song; for it celebrates the school as a whole. It is the first lyric written by a student of the school that has undoubted poetic charm and is adapted for general singing. It is worthy to be remembered and kept alive. Let us see to it that this gift of a truly poetic soul shall not be lightly handled nor neglected.

RED LETTER BENEFIT.

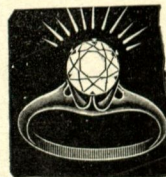
The dramatic recital, for the benefit of the Red Letter, was a distinct success. It furnished an evening of sparkling entertainment, and it brought in about fifty dollars to the yawning coffers of the treasury. This sum alone is not enough to provide a cover for the paper for all the issues of the year; but there are good prospects that it may be augmented by other means.

The recital opened with a choral number by the girls' glee club, Perkin's "Daybreak," that was sung with much delicacy, and met with prompt and hearty appreciation on the part of the audience. The glee club, in fact, is an organization that makes us justly vain.

Mark Twain's "An Encounter With an Interviewer" was happily hit off by Conrad Hovden, who was Mark, and Curtis Pomeroy, who was the interviewer—or Easy Mark. Hovden had a very consistent notion of his part—preoccupied, blank and indifferent—and Pomeroy was beautifully gushing and guileless; so that the piece went off very brightly. The piano solo that followed this number, Braham's Piccola (Fantasie) by Sylva Fortyn, was a captivating performance, so dashing, emotional and refined. It was decisively encored.

Mendelssohn's "O Wert Thou in the Cauld Blast," a tenor and baritone duet, was most agreeably sung by Conrad Hovden and Keith Walker. The reading that succeeded this, Gilbert Parker's "The Going of the White Swan" by Gova Willis, was given with a nice appreciation of the wierd mysticism of the story, and was sympathetically followed by all the listeners.

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The ladies' quartet, including Dora Hanson, Minnie Corbett, Eulalia Tufts and Camilla Rawson, gave two charming selections with the same delicacy and insight that characterized the work of the glee club. Pinsuti's "Rhine Raft-song" and Parks' "Little Boy Blue" were their numbers, and both carried a distinct impression. The first part of the program was then concluded by a flag drill given by a number of young ladies who had been trained under Miss Dayton's direction. The drill was so heartily received that the performers came on again with an additional measure—this time carrying normal banners.

The second part of the evening's entertainment was a lively little farce comedy in two acts, "The Sunbonnets." It would take a good column of the Red Letter's valuable space (see the assistant business manager for *values*) to tell all the clever stunts and happy impersonations of these two tripping acts; but if you weren't there you won't believe it, and if you were, we needn't remind you of it. One can hardly refrain, however, from a word of felicitation on the clever girlishness of the two "daughters" and the consistent acting of Mrs. Butterfield and Mrs. DuBois. The cast was as follows:

WOMEN'S AID SOCIETY.

Mrs. Butterfield..... Anna Johnson
 Charlina, her daughter....Albertina Engberg
 Mrs. Tryphena Sanford, a postmistress

..... Anna Keeley

Mrs. Pheelan.....Kathrine McLeod
 Mrs. Martin.....Margaret Peterson

LADIES' BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

Mrs. DuBois.....Jessie Corbett
 Mildred, her daughter.....Ora Nason

Mrs. Tibbets.....Edna Ransom
 Mrs. Pendleton.....Grace Hurlbut

Mrs. Melvina Spinney.....Rose Sorensen
 Mrs. Grannon, the miniser's wife.....

..... Ruth Wheeler

PANAMA CANAL.

Students, business men and citizens in general, were attracted to the auditorium Monday evening, Dec. 18, by the lecture on Panama, given by the traveler, Dr. Edward Burton McDowell, who in a clear straightforward way related the facts concerning the world's greatest engineering project—Panama Canal. The moving pictures transported the audience immediately to the scene of operations, and the reason was soon made clear why all this discussion and financiering about a canal across a narrow neck of land. We bought this canal of the French for forty million dollars, after the DeLesseps Co. had squandered millions upon a lost cause. Our purchase included all of the old machinery left to ruin upon the hills and in the jungles. The dredges, shovels and engines will be repaired

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and put to use by Uncle Sam. Also included in the bargain are the workmen's quarters, erected by the French. A residence costing from fifty to seventy-five thousand dollars was built for M. De Lesseps, and it is said the gentleman spent but two nights in it on his visit to the canal.

A strip of land ten miles wide and forty-five miles long, through a mountainous jungle, is now the property of Uncle Sam. A period of twenty years is estimated as the time required to construct the sea-level canal, forty feet deep, ample for the largest sea-going vessel. The car loads of earth still to be removed would span the earth twenty-four times. White and native labor is employed. Laborers from the West Indies are imported in large numbers, receiving seventy-five cents a day, which is not too small a wage, considering that loafing is a common evil among them. At present one shift does the work, but later, three will be run, and electric lights will turn the night into day. The work will be let out in sections to the lowest bidders.

The Panama Canal will give the United States ports closer connection with the Far East than the English have through the Suez Canal. We shall be saved a voyage of nine thousand miles around Cape Horn, and our commerce may well defy the world.

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CHRONICLE.

Nov. 1, Wed.—The electric light plant burns out.

Nov. 2, Thurs.—And there are always some little mills that grind on just the same.—Roll taken at chapel.

Nov. 3, Fri.—Pres. Weld goes to St. Paul.—Red Letter distributed.—Miss Dow and Miss Rumball go to Thief River Falls to Educational Association.—Students get new seats for chorus practice.

Nov. 4, Sat.—The President is at St. Paul where he addressed a banquet gathering last night.—U. of Wis. defeats Minn. 16-12.—St. Thomas boys visit during chorus practice.

Nov. 5, Sun.—Memorial to Mrs. Mackall erected at St. Johns'.—A beautiful church service.—Henry Mackall attends it.

Nov. 6, Mon.—Pres. and Mrs. Weld give a five o'clock tea in honor of State Sup't J. W. Olson.—The Wendling lecture at the auditorium.—A few flakes of "the beautiful."

Nov. 7, Tues.—The memorial card announcing the death of the senior class was presented to the school at chorus practice.—Mrs. Weld visits.—Faculty meeting: question: change holiday from Mon. to Sat.?—No. Faculty reception to students? Yes. (When?) Appointment of committees.—Lit. class meets with Mr. Reed.—Miss Smith entertains Sunday school class.

Nov. 8, Wed.—President calls attention. A few in N. W. corner "sit up and take notice."—Program for winter term is posted.—Senior class meeting.

Nov. 9, Thur.—Why do the seniors "look" so wise? Why is Miss Dow so busy?

Nov. 10, Fri.—Pres. Weld goes up on the Range.—Miss Rumball goes to Hallock.—Seniors and juniors buzzing. Mild weather.—The juniors bravely disregard the curfew.

Nov. 11, Sat.—Senior meeting called Sat. at recess.—Miss Smith goes to St. Paul.—Mrs. Comstock gives a luncheon.—Mrs. Palmer entertains for the young ladies of the normal school who attend the Presbyterian church.—Miss Dow's party.—What will the juniors do next?—Edna Hall and Bessie Gormley, '05, visit.

Nov. 12, Sun.—Pres. Weld returns.

Nov. 13, Mon.—Mrs. Russell entertains the young ladies of the Presbyterian church.

Nov. 14, Tues.—Pilgrim's chorus distributed in chorus practice.—Bracing weather.

Nov. 15, Wed.—Invitations to Wheeler Hall party, for Monday eve., issued.—Still windy.

Nov. 16, Thur.—Seniors of advanced course register.

Nov. 17, Fri.—First basket ball game, score 12-4 in favor of Normal.

Nov. 18, Sat.—Pres. Weld announces Livingston program.—Owls and their friends congregate.

Nov. 19, Sun.—First of the Johnson mission meetings at St. John's Church.

Nov. 20, Mon.—Hall girls entertain sumptuously in the gymnasium.—The city begins operations on the skating rink.

Nov. 21, Tues.—Why do so many look sleepy?—A new chorus.—Juniors are requested to register tomorrow.—Another victory for the Normal.—Students are requested to occupy their own seats in chapel.

Nov. 22, Wed.—The Literary Societies hold business meeting.—No chorus practice.

Nov. 23, Thur.—Rev. E. P. Johnson of Minneapolis addresses the school at chapel.—Messrs. Trout, Young and Jones visit chapel.—Mrs. Palmer visits.—Mrs. Ballard and Mrs. Weld and State Sup't. Olson visit classes and chorus.—Pres. Weld announces students' recital.

Nov. 24, Fri.—No school Sat. afternoon.—Normal boys are defeated by a score of 18-10, by the High school boys.

Nov. 25, Sat.—A. C. boys visit.—Detroit boys visit.—Moorhead vs Detroit.—Students' recital.

Nov. 26, Sun.—End of missions in St. John's church.

Nov. 27, Mon.—Rain.

Nov. 28, Tues.—No school.—"Snow."—The Normal boys suffered another defeat at the hands of the H. S. boys, score 24-22.

Nov. 29, Wed.—More snow.—Street cars blocked.

Nov. 30, Thur.—Thanksgiving.—Informal in the gym.—Margarett Walker returns home.—28° below zero.

Following are the school exchanges received by the Red Letter:

Blue and Gold, Fargo, N. D.; The High School Sentiment, Parsons, Kans.; The Exponent, Aberdeen, S. D.; The Normal Oracle, Valley City, N. D.; College Breeze, St. Peter, Minn.; The Hemnica, Red Wing, Minn.; The Cynosure, Fargo, N. D.; Alumni Weekly, Minneapolis; Carletonia, Northfield, Minn.; Our Schools, Red Wing, Minn.; The Weekly Student, Grand Forks, N. D.; Normal Exponent, Mayville, N. D.; Clonian, Macomb, Ill.; Spectrum, N. D., A. C.; Mankatonian, Mankato, Minn.; The Videtta, Normal, Ill.; The High School Register, Burlington, Vt.

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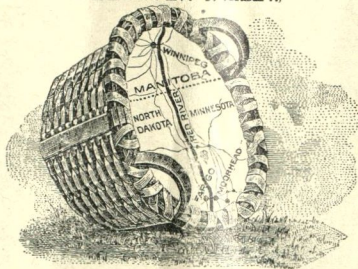
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