

The Normal Offering  
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The Bridgewater Normal Lyceum

Editors of the Present Volume  
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While we live, let us live

Terms.

Good attention and frequent contributions.

Office.

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Motto.

“While we live, let us live.”

Editorial.

Dear Friends,

Upon the literary sea, already teeming with ten thousand lights, we float our simple Offering, hoping it may accomplish some humble good.

It makes no pretense to literary merit, or scientific research.

If it smoothes a wrinkle from any brow, or adds a moment of joy to any -- if it gives strength to good resolve, or serves to stimulate to noble action, or binds the chain of sympathy and affection closer around any hearts, we shall be satisfied -- It will have accomplished all we desire.

Many weeks have elapsed since the last Offering was published, during which time we have been separated from each other, but joined to loved kindred and friends. We have strayed where in

childish innocence we were want to go.

As we took a retrospect, many faces did we recall, once familiar, but long since lost to us. We asked for those who shared our childhood's sports, and learned that most of them had entered upon "the world's broad field of action" -- some near their native home, others in the western wilds, implanting there those principles and sentiments which New Englanders so fondly cherish, and which New Englanders alone can fully appreciate [*sic*].

Of others still, the cold marble speaks "Not lost, but gone before." -- A still voice whispered to us, "Then work thou, while the day lasts."

We looked forward, and varied emotions seemed striving for utterance. Fancy bore us aloft on his airy pinions, and the future seemed painted before us in bright and glowing tints.

But vacation, with all its pleasures and fancies are among the things that were; and we have repaired again to

Normal Halls, refreshed and invigorated and have ~~already~~ engaged again in our school duties. And as day by day new truths are unfolded to us, and new beauties are discovered, we feel more and more thankful for our inestimable advantages.

The Lyceum, ever dear to the heart of all true Normals, is to say the least, not below its former level.

Many who have been with us in times past, we now miss.

They have left this spot, endeared to them by fond associations, and many have engaged in the business scenes of life. Their places are filled by those who have ~~so~~ recently come among us. And we would give to them a cordial welcome, and express the gratifications we feel in seeing them manifesting an interest in this society.

We feel encouraged by their cooperation, and strengthened by the goodly

increase to our numbers.

Let each bear nobly his part in the Lyceum, remembering this institution is our own, and upon us does its position wholly depend.

Then let us individually guard its interests and make its motto, "Excelsior," a proudly beaming truth.

The present Editorial Board would express their thanks for the contributions with which they have been favored. -- And most exceedingly do they regret that the limits of this volume will not admit the publication of all the articles so generously furnished.

They feel to congratulate their successors that so many and able writers are warmly interested in this periodical, trusting that its pages will ever sparkle with the dewey [*sic*] freshness of original thought.

### The ministry of Hope

A vision of hallowed light immersed from its native bower in a far off land, and with pearly wings floated down amid the softer light of other realms, until it reached humble Earth, creating a halo of light around a saddened, weary heart.

That heart had known its full share of deep, harrowing sorrow and discontent, even life's bitterest, wildest grief.

It had felt the blighting, withering blast of adversity. It had seen life's darkest, gloomiest side, and anticipated no light, no peace on earth, no dawn of heaven. Long since had joy fled with its form of more than visionary beauty, giving place to cold, shadowless despair. The lamp of life grew dim, and its slow faint flickering threw a sickly shade over the leaves of memory, as page after page in that heavy volume was turned and reviewed; each seemed

alike filled with notings of despair and discontent. But now, like a ray of heaven's own light comes that dazzling vision, that beautiful day star, hope, lighting the darkest recess of that way worn heart -- lifting the bowed spirit, causing it to thrill with renewed life -- darkness and gloom vanish before the soft light that falls so soothingly like a heaven sent messenger of future glory -- a harbinger of eternal bliss.

Hope, like the compass to the mariner, is a guide to the anticipated goal of peace, a beacon light to heaven emitting a luster as from those eternal mansions where glory undimmed pours forth a sacred light through one unfading day.

Toiling on the way of life,  
Pilgrims all, we go --  
Some upon the mountains height,  
Some in vales below.

Some among the peaceful glades,  
Picking flowers the while;  
Some ever 'neath the deepest shades,  
Wearing ne'er a smile.

Some beside the rivulet,  
Dancing joyously; --  
Some on the desert's burning sands  
Hopeless and wearily.

Some with never failing tread,  
And outgushing song; --  
Some with ever faltering steps  
Scarcely move along.

Some with not a line of care,  
With ne'er a trace of sorrow. --  
Some with deeply furrowed brow,  
Wishing no tomorrow.

Varied as the tints of flowers,  
Or the grains of sand,  
Are the different purposes,  
Of this pilgrim band.

But for all these journeying ones  
The Father's love abides, --  
And safely through Earth's devious paths  
To Heaven his own he guides.

The Atlantic Cable

Some time since, by men of great minds  
Was projected a scheme, all noble, sublime.  
It was this, how e'er strange it may seem,  
To drop a line, did these men mean,  
Across old ocean's unknown sands  
From midway here, to a foreign strand. --  
They pondered well the noble scheme,  
And finally thought if they could gain  
The aid of those whose pockets bend,  
They could with ease, before long send  
To Europe's bright and happy shores,  
In much less space than thought before. --  
Many at this subject greatly jeered;  
But one was determined -- 'twas C. W. Field,  
To carry it out and show to the world  
That science will yet with ease unfold  
The gates which lead to perfect success.  
He then in haste to England repaired  
To gain the sanction of her highest chair. --  
This object completed, in confidence he came

And found Uncle Sam all ready for the same  
To help on a work that would bring to his crown  
In all future ages, immortal renown. --  
Thus far succeeding, he soon became able  
To charter a company to make a strong cable  
That reaches from Valencia, as all would say,  
To a place on our ~~east~~ shores, 'tis Trinity Bay.  
Some time elapsed, when trials were made,  
If possible, to succeed with the cable's being laid.  
Fruitless, and vain were many attempts,  
And after long days, all wearisome spent,  
The ships of the squadron went by the plan  
To a harbor on the coast of Old Ireland. --  
Not long to rest here, again were they started  
To the place in the Ocean, where the cable lost parted.  
In anxious suspense, the nations were there,  
To behold the event, and wonder when.  
Should come from Atlantic's mighty waters  
The blessed words for these nation's matters. --  
With a thrill of joy soon did we greet  
The coming in sight of the Cable fleet.  
But greater yet was the thrill that pierced  
The deepest feeling of every breast

When the words the Heavenly host did sing  
At the birth of our Priest and King –  
Were now again used in ascribing praise  
To Him, who had granted us length of days  
To witness the result of long hours spent  
In bringing out that which man is but lent.

~~May the bonds which so happily unite~~  
May the bonds which unite so happily together,  
This nation, in peace with a might another,  
In constancy keep till times latest end,  
When the nations of earth to the tomb shall descend  
To await a resurrection in glorie's [*sic*] sphere,  
And a crown for reward of labor to wear.

*[blank]*

### A Trip to Seneca Lake

The 16th of August last was the day fixed upon as the time when our family family [*sic*] party should visit Watkins, formerly called Jefferson, a town situated about twenty five miles north of the village of Elmira, at the southern extremity or foot of Seneca lake.

The sun did not rise in all his splendor as is generally the case in compositions, but veiled with clouds, reserved his fire, until he had obtained a more favorable position, and then poured down his beams with a warmth which fully compensated for his sullenness in the morning.

Nine o'clock found us comfortably seated in a passenger car, which brought up the rear of a freight train; this, of course, did not carry us with the speed of an express train; but then, we could have a better opportunity of seeing the beautiful portion of country through which we passed. One of the several places which

attracted our attention was Millport. From the railroad station, we looked down, at our right upon a pretty little village, situated at the base of a mountain, in a valley of picturesque wildness and beauty. Passing on we came to Havana. Upon our left rose a mountain, upon whose precipitous front we were told to look for a waterfall. We did so; but the greedy sun with feverish thirst had drunk the stream. We could however see the place where it was, and probably will be, and judging from the steepness of the hill, and the height of the precipice, the fall must be one of most romantic, and certainly dashing beauty.

But to the friend of education this place possesses an additional interest, as being the seat of the "People's College," now in process of erection.

Soon the deep blue waters of Seneca Lake broke upon our view, and in a few minutes we felt the cool, brisk breeze, which came from over its pure waters.

The railroad station is close by the water

so there is a landing place here for steamboats which ply daily between this place and Geneva at its northern extremity.

The scenery is delightful; the Lake here is about three miles in ~~length~~ width, although it appeared only about half that distance, and is bordered on the Eastern and Western sides by high hills, approaching close to the water's edge. They are mostly covered with woods, but here and there a farm with its house attached give an air of quietness and comfort to the scene.

We must have some fish from the lake for dinner. Oh, how our mouths watered for the luscious feast! So after obtaining rods, lines, etc. and finding a favorable position, we cast in our bait. I think we were the very definitions of patience, as we sat with our lines in water, occasionally jerking them up with great alertness, the wind puffing at us with a degree of earnestness which did perfect justice to its strength, and occasionally dipping up a handful of

water from the top of a wave, and splashing it in our faces. We wondered whether the Red man had ever fished in the same spot – very likely, we thought, but probably with much better success, for like the fishermen of old, we “toiled long, and caught nothing.”

Becoming tired of the monotony of an unprofitable fisher’s life, we contemplated a sail, but the lake was too boisterous.

We had heard of a place somewhere in town called “The Glen,” and we resolved we would find it.

Proceeding directly South from the Lake about half a mile, through the principal street of this very pretty, but exceedingly dull village, we came to the glen.

Upon our right hand, on the West side of the Street, there was an opening of a few rods in width, in one of the hills. The upper boundary is formed by the outline of these hills, and the sides are formed of nothing but rock, and rise gradually, and perpendicularly

from the general level of the ground, to the height of one hundred and thirty or forty feet. Along the base ripples a little stream which falls from its source, about two hundred feet above, in a succession of beautiful little cascades. It is probably much larger at some seasons than when we saw it, and may have once been a mighty river, for the whole place seems like an immense gulley, formed by the "rushing of many waters."

The opening gradually narrowed to a width of only a few feet; and in this place the greater part of the stream was turned from its natural channel, just above a precipice about thirty feet in height, and conveyed by means of a wooden aqueduct to a mill, near the entrance. But a sufficient quantity of the water follows its own inclination to fall over and form a perfect shower, sprinkling the grey walls with spray, and adorning them with moss of velvet greenness. Placing our foot on a rock in the middle of the stream, and leaning

forward we could see, on our left, a place – an idea of which I can no better convey to your minds, than by telling you, we seemed to be looking into a large well, very dark and deep, a portion of the wall being removed, while we stood on a level with the water. If the wall had been entire, it would have been in circumference about sixty or seventy feet; it made more than one half a circle, and rose in this form for about fifty feet. For one hundred and forty feet above the place where we stood, the massive walls stretched their mighty forms as though utterly to prevent the sun's rays from penetrating those dark recesses.

Spying a staircase, which led to a side bridge that crossed the chasm, we ascended; and soon found ourselves threading our way, one by one along a narrow footpath, not exceeding three feet in width, and in many places much less formed of loose stones, which had probably fallen from the overhanging cliffs, which seemed

to be formed entirely of limestone, and so loose and crumbling that the pieces, most of them only a few inches in length could be easily removed with the fingers.

For once in my life, if never before, I was going “onward and upward.” The walls on either side, when not perpendicular approached each other at the top, so that a great part of the way they hung above us, looking frowningly down, seemingly threatening to hurl at us the stones which they held so loosely in their grasp. The path was rendered slippery by the dampness, so that our foothold was not perfectly secure, and our courage was by no means increased by a piece of information, given us very kindly, by a workman near the entrance, viz: that a gentleman visiting the place, a short time before, slipped and fell, and was instantly killed.

When we ventured to turn our eyes for a moment to look into the abyss below, we saw the leaping, rapid stream foaming

and hurrying far beneath us. The gentlemen left us in a place apparently secure, and went on, as they wished to ascend a staircase which we could see still further on, and about one hundred feet above us, and which could only be reached by a slippery and dangerous path. We seated ourselves on a flat rock, just on a level with the stream which in that place only a few inches in depth, ran swiftly over its rocky bed.

Just below us, on our right, was a little fall, of only a few feet, and below the stairway on our left, roared a beautiful cascade, of 30 or 40 ft. in height. The verge of the precipice above was crowned with trees, some of which were half fallen across the chasm.

We were now about one fourth of a mile from the entrance, and never before had I beheld anything so perfectly wild and enchanting as the whole scene.

I have often wondered, when I have heard of people who were visiting such places, why they would place themselves in such dangerous

situations, but it seems to me now that the spirit partakes of the wildness of the place, and that there is a sort of fascination in the idea of standing in the highest, and most dangerous spot, merely for the sake of doing it, which seizes the mind and lures it on. I confess it seems foolish, and is reckless, but then how can one help it? I'd really like to know.

The rest of the party soon returned, finding it literally true that getting down is not always quite as easy as getting up. After ascending the staircase they saw several other cascades, and farther on another flight of stairs, and beyond these, a reservoir, covering about an acre of ground.

We all proceeded to descend, and on reaching the bottom, felt truly grateful that our necks were entire.

Going back to the Lake, we found the wind had subsided sufficiently to admit of a sail. We were soon seated

in a small sail boat, and gliding swiftly over the rolling waves.

Cannot I guide the boat, I asked. Then seating myself at the helm, I felt quite like a sailor, as I directed our course toward the Eastern side of the Lake.

The boatman seemed quite intelligent and interested us by relating several historical facts. Nearly in front of us, on the eastern shore, he pointed out a precipice which is called "the painted rocks."

The legend is, that they were so named by the Indians, who painted on them the picture of a squaw who there leaped into the water below. He also informed us that Gen. Sullivan with a number of his men, at one time encamped on the hill just above, and some of the Indians came upon them, took their canon [*sic*] and wheeled it from the precipice.

Soon after Gen. Sullivan gained the advantage of a party of Indians, and returned the favor by driving them off

the same place. We gazed upon the spot with a new and lively interest.

A pair of Bald Eagles have dwelt for years in ~~the~~ a crevice of the rock 20 ft. below the top, and 40 ft. above the water, as though to guard the place from the hand of civilization, and keep it in its primitive wildness.

We would have visited the spot, but a train stood in readiness to start as soon as the boat should arrive from Geneva, and we hastened to return.

I felt an inward pleasure as I so easily turned about the bow of the boat and guided the little bark "whither I would." Still I could not help comparing myself to a little child, driving, with a more experienced person ~~by the~~ beside him to take the reins when ever the road is crooked.

As we turned toward the west, the scene was indeed beautiful.

The shades of evening were fast deepening,

the hills were silently darkening, while above them the sun already set threw a a [*sic*] clear and mellow light, forming a striking and pleasing contrast with the dark forests. The beautiful picture was reflected in the deep, clear waters.

The effect of the whole was enchanting. I felt like a skillful pilot as the boat rode safely in its little port.

The steamboat soon arrived, and after a few minutes of hurry and bustle we were whirling swiftly homeward.

H. [?]

“Charles,” remarked a member of the Middle Class, “do you know that some of the juniors have been the theme of the poets?”

“Ah,” said the Senior, “Do tell!” “Why yes,” several of them have been. Let me see, there’s Longfellow says:

“With a slow and noiseless footstep  
Comes that “Messenger” divine  
Takes the vacant chair beside me,  
Lays her gentle hand on mine”

And another says, “Remote from cities lived a Swain” – that refers to the Nantucket delegate, of course.

Again, we hear:

“Of all the fairest things on Earth  
Or fairest spots to roam,  
Whate’er can match New England girls  
Or bright New England “Homes.”

Or again –

Keep they “Heart-well” and see that it abound  
With seeds of knowledge, & the fruit of love.”

Even glorious Byron has not failed to notice us, for you know he says:

“Once more upon the waters, yet once more  
And the waves bound beneath me,  
As a horse that knows no “Rider.”

And a sadder strain would say:

When “Rogers” stood among the flames  
That from the fagots blazed on high  
The gaping crowd looked calmly on,  
Or smiled to see the Hero die.”

“Indeed several pages have been devoted to this character in the N. E. Primer.”  
“Why that was John Rogers the Martyr,” suggested senior.

“What odds!” does not every Normal feel the flames, and are not many of them martyrs?

At this juncture senior was obliged to leave for Home, in order to memorize the preamble to the Constitution.

Nature

“To him who, in the love of Nature, holds  
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks  
A serious language; for his gayer hours,  
She has a voice of gladness, and a smile  
And eloquence, of beauty, and she glides  
Into his darker musings, with a mild  
And gentle sympathy, what steals away  
Their sharpness, ere he is aware.”

Let his tastes be what they may, in nature he shall find gratification for them all.

The grand, the sublime, the beautiful within him, may find, in the outer world  
their counterpart, and take delight in the scenes which are spread in rich profusion  
on every hand. And though he may view them every day, they have still the same  
charm, their grandeur never departs, their beauties never fade.

They seem as fresh as if his eye had never before feasted on them, as if men

from the hand of their Creator, they, for the first time, were lending their aid to purify, enoble [*sic*], and refine man's character, and direct his thoughts from themselves up to the great Maker of heaven and Earth and all that is therein.

The mighty ocean, ever active, never resting, tells of His ceaseless activity and omnipotence; the fair landscape, the gentle river, the placid lake speak to the inmost soul, and touch the finer feelings, and he exclaims, "The Hand that made them is divine."

Wherever we turn, whatever we examine, all speak of the wisdom, the power, the goodness of ~~God~~ the Father above.

Are you walking in the street, the very pebble, which you strike with your foot, contains within it an exhibition of the greatness of that intellect which has made the rocks and has directed all the changes which they have undergone. And even our feeble minds have seen in this His power and wisdom.

Geology reveals to us the order in which the various formations were placed, and we find a constant change going on. As the state of the Earth is improved, higher types of life, vegetable and mineral, are brought into existence, till in its most advanced stage, the present, the greatest, noblest works of creation are made manifest, and man, the noblest of Earthly beings yet created, stands forth in the image of his Maker, endowed with powers, possessed by no others; -- powers whose range is infinite, whose existence is eternal.

To him the present ministers, and his future anticipations reach far through a misty range of years, even beyond his existence here, to the life he feels is eternal.

Nor is the past of no value to him, the present seems to depend upon that. From the hidden rocks, come the metals indispensable to his comfort, the coal by which he warms his home, and drives his factory.

The rocks themselves lie ready to take the form of stores and wharves and bridges; and

the lime to bind each stone to its neighbor waits to be used.

The animals and vegetables, so long advancing to their high position, seem designed to supply the wants of man. He seems to be the center toward which all things tend; then what is man? Consider the vastness of the universe – the millions of fixed stars, which are but centers, for as many systems of planets – then what is our system? And if in this, our Earth is but a speck, what is it compared with the universe?

Yet man is but as the dust upon this particle of matter, and there are myriads of animals still so much smaller that his unassisted eye cannot discern them. Shall not these be lost sight of, in the care of ~~the~~ systems and words? No. Not a sparrow falleth, not a lily of the valley opens its fair petals, but God is there. In this is his greatness, ~~is~~ most apparent, that from ~~the~~ suns and planets down to the smallest animalculae, ~~in~~ all are cared for, all provided with what is necessary for their existence and enjoyment; not one is forgotten.

O. the beauties the sublimities of nature baffle description. They are all around us. Seek and you shall find them, thicker than the leaves in Autumn, and were all fully described. I believe that it would be

almost literally true, that the world could not contain the books which would be written concerning them.

Little Mary

With what quaint, noiseless steps Death enters the household, and selects as his victim the fairest of all its treasures, -- passing by the aged ones, who, perhaps, have long looked for his coming as a happy release from the trials and sorrows of Earth.

A little sister once gladdened our home. She was its light and joy, and won the hearts of all by her guileless ways, and innocent prattle.

Well do I remember the last day our little pet spent with us in health.

How fairy like she danced about in childish glee, her eyes beaming with mirth and goodness, while here little heart seemed brimfull [*sic*] of happiness.

She appeared the very picture of health, yet the seeds of an insidious disease were even then fast rooted in that lovely form,

and soon it was chilled by the touch of Death's cold hand, and she passed from Earth.

The sound of mourning was heard in those rooms which had echoed but a short time before to the sound of her glad voice.

But in the midst of our sorrow and desolation we remembered the words of Christ, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven" and we were comforted.

Many years have now passed, and death has many times visited our household, yet we look back to that death-bed scene, and hope ours may be as calm and peaceful.

### A Visit to Jupiter

It was evening. The moon had just arisen and her placid light beamed brightly o'er this dark and troubled world. Myriads of stars shone with unrivalled luster.

I wondered forth for an even walk, as I was quietly wending my way along, suddenly I felt a strange sensation, and all around became dark. I saw nothing – I heard nothing till after some moment's suspense, I found myself in a vast assembly, but where I could not determine. After a little time I found I was on the planet Jupiter.

The people, knowing no such beings existed in their world, had taken measures to find out who I was. They were no more surprised at my appearance than I at theirs, for stranger beings I never beheld.

Their skin was of a dark brilliancy, and their clothes were made of leaves.

A placid smile ever beaming on their

features, prevented the expression of their countenance from being terrific. Their size was most enormous.

They addressed me with “Child, who art thou?” Terrified beyond description, I had no power to answer. They then were about to hurl me into a frightful abyss. I opened my mouth to implore mercy, when I awoke – and beheld it was a dream.

### Figures and Hyperbole

It is said, that some time since, a young lady “burst into tears.” Little was said of it at the time, so it did not get into the papers; but it was whispered around pretty generally among the ladies and now, it is said, the most of them are secure against the recurrence of such a calamity.

Figures are dangerous, but hyperbole is worse. We know a young lady who has cried her eyes out an indefinite number of times; and if she has preserved them all, it is presumed she has something like a bushel of spare eyeballs, for which she has no further use. This is a clever expedient for those troubled with near sightedness, for the chances are that some of the new growth may have a longer range of vision.

Another lady has been “half killed” a large number of times, but she “still lives,” showing a most wonderful tenacity of life.

A third has been “half crazy” so many times that her friends suspect she is a little “cracked,” to use a homely simile; but we trust it is not a “lone crack.”

Exaggeration [*sic*] is another dangerous form of speech – but we will give only a single example. A young minister had got into this ridiculous habit to such an extent that he was called before a council of ministers to answer for it, when he stood up with tears in his eyes, begging them to be lenient with him, saying that he had tried hard to overcome the difficulty, and had wept barrels of tears over it.

### A Word to the Public

We ~~often~~ frequently hear it asked, why boys so often prefer going out evenings, among vicious companions, to remaining at home with their mothers and sisters?

And why do they manifest such a dislike to their father's company?

We think these questions can be answered very conclusively. Parents do not make their home pleasant and agreeable.

They are not thoughtful enough of their children's happiness, consulting only their own individual comfort.

When they are engaged in conversation, if the child asks a question, he is reproved for his impertinence. He can no more join in the conversation than as if he were a mere automaton; and if he grows restless and makes a noise, he is sent off to bed.

In the streets they can find enough

who are ready to talk with him, and listen to his remarks, and those too who have attained the size of manhood, (though that may be all the manliness they can boast of). The boy begins to feel himself quite consequential in such company, and soon learns to imitate the language and habits of these companions, however vicious they may be.

To remedy this, parents have only to make home attractive – provide suitable employments, and amusements for their children and let them invite in such companions as they would choose to have them associate with. And the parents need not think it beneath their dignity to join occasionally in their innocent sports.

Boys do not like the company of their mother & sisters, because their conversation is, chiefly, upon matters that do not interest them. What do they care about “a love of a bonnet,” a “hundred dollars

shawl,” a “polka jacket,” a “basqueen,” [?] a “fascinating [*sic*] pair of undersleeves” and a “superb collar” that cost six months labor – or any of the thousand and one things which the fashionable lady deems necessary for a complete toilet.

If mothers and sisters would make such men of the boys, as they will be proud to own, and such as the world will hone and esteem, let them become true women, fit companions for noble, and cultivated intellects, then such will surely cluster around their charmed circle.

Teachers have a work to do in this matter – the extent of their influence cannot be computed.

Let them see that they do what they can toward elevating the standard of social intercourse.

Anecdote

During the late vacation a mother called her little daughter to her one evening preparatory to putting her to bed, saying "Come, Minnie say your prayers."

The little ~~girl~~ one looked up, and said, in a tone as if her mother was sadly forgetful, "Why, Mother, it's vacation!"

A Psalm of Life.

What the heart of a young boy said to his teacher.

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,  
Play is but a waste of time.  
For the boy's a fool that studies,  
And books are not worth a dime.

Life is real! Life is earnest!  
And a schoolroom, not its goal,  
Study hard, now while your skull's thin,  
Ne'er was spoken to a boy.

Spelling's hard, and Grammar tiresome,  
And the boys, though stout and brave,  
Still, on pleasant days are beating,  
Truant marches to the woods.

Trust no teacher, howe'er pleasant!  
Let the poor girls study the books –  
Play – play in the pleasant meadow –  
Grass beneath, and sky o'erhead.

Feats of schoolboys all remind us,  
We can make our deed sublime;  
And on going, leave behind us  
Knife marks, on these desks of pine.

Scratches, that perhaps another,  
Coming here to learn to read,  
A forlorn and homesick brother,  
Seeing, shall forget his grief.

Let us, then, be up and doing,  
With a hand for any game,  
Playing marbles, ball, or leapfrog,  
Try to hurry off the time.

Works are dull, and lessons hateful,  
Teachers too impatient grow.  
And every boy who proves not faithful  
Meets a quick and heavy blow.

Then let us each with spirit bold,  
Assert our youthful rights,

For surely now, our manly souls,  
In freedom should delight.

### A word on Sympathy

How much power, and what beauty exists in the exercise of sympathy. The sufferer pours into the willing ear of a friend the burden of his sorrows, and while that friend bears a portion of his suffering, he finds relief.

Imagine one depressed by some severe affliction, who has not in the wide world a friend whose heart is open to his anguish, -- to whom he can draw near, in confidence, and tell the story of his grief -- sure that every word of complaint will be received with charity, not examined with the unfeeling coldness of the critic. His is a sad lot.

True, all have the privilege of asking -- not in vain -- the assistance and sympathy of the Almighty; -- but the human mind is constituted with a necessity for sympathy in kind. Had it been the intention of the Creator that we should find in his Divine love and favor all we

need, our state of existence would have been isolated – solitary; not as now, in social communities.

And again, the fact that we desire human sympathy proves that such a feeling is implanted with our organization.

Sympathy costs the giver nothing, but is priceless to the recipient. One word spoken in the spirit of Christian Charity, while it benefits him whose feelings are moved to the utterance, comes to the sufferer like refreshing dew.

When burdened, and despondent with gloom and sorrow, there comes an involuntary impulse to seek a friend who is true, and with perfect freedom throw open ~~the~~ our thoughts and ~~the~~ griefs to the sympathy which we know will need no prompting.

At the side of a friend in whose truth we can thus confide, we seem enveloped in the very atmosphere of Christian love – such as the great master taught should be cherished by each, for all.

When driven by repeated afflictions to the verge of despair, a word of encouragement from a friend will change the whole current of thought, and often point the way to hope and cheerfulness.

This desire for the sympathy of our fellow beings, and the faculties by which it may be indulged, are among the most valuable of our endowments.

But the presence of these faculties demands their free exercise. This is what holds men together in societies and communities – it is what draws mind to mind with silent mysterious power.

Friendship should be free from the cold conventionalities which characterize the intercourse of many who consider themselves friends.

Even with our nearest and dearest ones, we ~~seldom~~ sometimes hold in check many thoughts which are warmed by mutual confidence to a struggle for utterance, but are repressed by our never

failing worldly circumspection.

Let friendship flow more freely and its current will be even more pure; for freedom, wherever existing, acts as its own restraint.

The following lines were written on reading of a custom among the Greeks which leads the friends of the deceased person to reproach him for dying.

Oh! why did ye die, when thy rich, clear voice  
Was the joy of the evening throng?  
Oh! why did ye make so sad a choice  
When so young, so healthy and strong?  
There's none in our number can fill thy place –  
And none can dispel the gloom  
That gathers around, as we cover thy face,  
And lay thee away in the tomb.

Oh! why did ye die, and leave your bride,  
Who is graced with beauty so rare?  
Oh! what could persuade ye to quit her side,  
And leave her to mourn in despair?  
Thy lands were wide; and full was thy purse,  
Many thy friends, and true. –  
Oh! why so hasty to bear the curse,  
And bid all thy friends adieu?

Oh! why did ye die? – We ask ye again –  
Wilt thou not give heed to our call?  
And return, if thou may'est to the dwellings of men  
That a blessing may rest on us all? –  
Oh! come and once more with our number unite;  
And our love shall be doubled towards thee,  
Our circle of hearts shall bound with delight,  
And thou the bright center shalt be.

Well, I should really like to comply with the Editors' very polite invitation to write a piece for the Offering – not only because they invited me; but to make it seem more as if I were still a member of the Normal band, though departed from them by a score of miles. But the question is what shall I write? I can think of nothing interesting. My own everyday life is monotonous in the extreme – there are no remarkable adventures, accidents, or incidents to enliven, and render an account of it interesting to any one.

If I do not succeed in writing anything I shall, at least, have the merit of trying very hard indeed, for I have racked my brain, for an hour, in vain. – there, that is a rhyme, I do believe! I've racked my brain, for an hour in vain – Yes, that is a rhyme, and I can-write poetry!! How astonishing that I should have made the discovery

just at this time, and in this manner too!

Henceforth I shall believe, with the ancients, that the appearance of a comet foretells some great national event! It must be that the comet of 1858 was the herald of this astonishing discovery that I am a poetess!

From this time forth adieu to prose, and prose writing! Oh Poesy! gentle mistress, to you do I devote my future life, and nations yet unborn, shall revel in the wild creations of my genius!

But what of a subject for the present occasion! Of course, it must be a poem, but on what? “Lines to an absent Friend,” or a “Sonnet to the moon”? The latter, I think, the first is too sentimental.

By the way, I intend to improve the present style of poetry – it is altogether too frivolous and sentimental – “namly pamly”, sickening stuff. – and the influence of much of it is decidedly deleterious. But to my subject – I think my shall be an “Ode to the Moon”

Magnificent orb! Queen of the Heaven!  
Well may mortals gaze on thee.  
When thou risest with – with – with –

Oh dear! What shall I do? Nothing under the sun to rhyme with heaven, but  
leaven and who ever heard of putting leaven into the moon to make it rise? It's  
plain I can't write poetry this evening, but sometime I'll try, and you, dear  
Normals, shall have my very first essay.

Perhaps my talent has lain dormant until it has become rusty – be that as it may,  
for the present I must content myself with writing prose.

*[blank]*

From our Regular Correspondent

Quebec. Sept. 1858

Dear Offering: --

Of the situation of this fine old city, it is unnecessary to speak, it being well known to your numerous readers. The Upper town is completely fortified, it being the only walled city in America. There are five gates, named Prescott, Hope, St. Lewis, St. Rock's and St. Peter's. Each is guarded by a British Sentinel – and the Red coats are very plenty there being over a thousand soldiers stationed here.

The buildings are mostly of stone, very few being of brick, and the walls of the houses are from four to eight feet thick.

The lower town is only a business mart, and it best viewed from Durham Terrace, an unrivalled promenade, on the brink of the promontory, and commanding a fine view over the river, and the surrounding country. The guide called it “The finest promenade in Europe or America,” which

is not wholly to be credited. To the West of Durham Terrace are the Governor's Gardens, which are open to the public. The lower one contains covered avenues of shade trees, and the Military Band, in white uniforms, perform their choicest music here three times a week, during the summer months.

In the upper portion of the Gardens is the monument, erected to Wolfe and Montcalm.

The Gov. Gen. Sir Edmund Bond Head, is in Quebec at present, having lately arrived from Montreal. Some say, he is here for the benefit of his health, others because of some difficulty he got into at Montreal.

Yesterday afternoon, we visited his residence, Spencer Wood, it is called. 'Tis only a short ride from the city, and a very pretty place it is, hid away among the trees. Speaking of riding, I would mention that carriage wheels are taxed according to their height.

I noticed some dray wheels, not over a foot high that were so made to evade the

the *[sic]* tax. The tax on two horses and a calesh, an old fashioned chaise, the driver sitting in the dasher, is \$7.00 a year.

Dog carts are very numerous in this city. I saw one medium sized dog carrying a load of over 300 lbs. weight.

Of course, we visited the fall of Montmorenci *[sic – Montmorency]*. It is distant some nine miles from the city, making a very pretty drive through a thickly settled French ~~city~~ village.

The houses do not face the street, but stand “cornerwise.” The farms, looking very neat, consist of long strips of land. When a farm is divided, the division extends the whole length, so that some of the fields are very narrow, but long. The price of admittance to see the Fall is an English shilling. This charge is made to defray the cost of certain steps, and other improvements that have lately been made.

The falls have a perpendicular height of 200 ft. higher than those of Niagara and the water descends in one single mass.

We viewed the falls from above, and from below, and a beautiful sight it was. Just below the falls, we were pointed to the remains of the Suspension Bridge, which broke some 3 or 4 years ago, precipitating some Canadians to instant death in the boiling torrent below. -- We had a fine view of the city on our return, build as it is, on a hill, with its bright tin roofs, and numerous church spires covered with tin, its massive stone buildings and fortifications, together with the scenery of the surrounding country, make a picture which I think can scarcely be surpassed even in ~~England~~ Europe.

There is no other city on this continent in which so many and varied attractions to the sightseer are accumulated as in Quebec. The buildings, people, customs, and everything here tends to make one think himself in some city of the old world.

I cannot do justice to Quebec in a letter which must necessarily be short, but you may hope to hear from your correspondent while in Montreal, for which city I shall start tomorrow morning.

Gr. [?]

### Our Normal Letters

Yes, this great bundle of letters were all received during the last vacation, from our brother and sister Normals – and such real joyous, hope inspiring letters as these Uncle Sam’s agents seldom have the honor of distributing.

Why, this first one is just one of the happiest letters that was ever written!

Nobody could find it in his natural dispensation to feel cross for a week after reading it, even though the luxuries of the dinner table were freely indulged.

It commences with the interjection “Oh,” three times repeated, and then, as the interpretation thereof, says, “I am so happy! I’ve just drawn the first good long breath of unmodified freedom! Actually ‘breathing the forest air’ – sitting on a hill not Kunchainjunga [*sic – Kanchenjunga ?*] – with a dense forest ~~in front~~ behind, the village in front

at my feet – and the dear old Ocean on my left – the subdued sunlight comes through Nature’s finely wrought muslin curtains, which she has dropped in graceful folds over the windows of heaven – the invigorating sea breeze, loaded with the perfumes of the forest fans my brow – and why should I not feel --- if I had every sort of words that mean something good which can be found in ‘Webster’s Unabridged’ united in one long word, terminated with a six double superlative, I could express a fractional part of my feelings --- in lieu of which I can only repeat Oh!”

After this outgushing of joy, he tells us of things which were done by the members of the dear Normal fraternity who lingered a few days near their “Alma Mater” after the close of the term. And the description ~~takes~~ took us right there as we read, and we can scarcely convince ourself now that we did not tarry a

tarry a [*sic*] few days, ~~enjoying~~ and enjoy a never to be forgotten jubilee, and attend the Examination of the Salem Normal School and heard Miss Brook's dissertation on the "School of Life." – Miss Dudley's poem, and other interesting exercises. Why, the last sentence of Mr. Greenleaf's odd and spicy remarks are still singing in our ears. "Take care of your health – take care of your influence – take care of your souls."

The next letter is a little soberer – the familiar home scenes recall childhood's sportive days, and the friends who shared their glee – now scattered – some filling places of honor and trust, others in a very quiet sphere are moving happily on life's way – and others still are lying in the cold and silent grave. – All this very naturally gave rise to somewhat serious reflections from which the writer arouses by saying, "This sounds rather sermonish – it only lacks the conclusion, or application."

and then he chats merrily of other things.

Next comes one from our dear chum telling us of every little particular which had happened since we parted – and how lonely our room appeared after ~~it~~ being emptied of ourself and all our baggage, and all the little things, which were intensely interesting to ourselves but with which a stranger intermeddleth [*sic*] not.

Here is one in which there is no joyous allusion to a reunion at Normal Hall – but a trembling anticipation of awful responsibilities. He declares he can think of nothing but that school – and there is to be a teacher's class, and how can he make that interesting is a burdensome thought.

Now comes a dreamy, poetic letter – It touched a deep chord in our heart as we read, and the tears would come, even if our rougish brother was looking

right at us and did say, "It must be very pathetic."

The next is a rich, racy letter, full of ~~fun~~ incident and adventure – telling us of the Normal Convention – of seeing Gov. Banks and wife, among other notables – of a conversation with his Excellency – slyly hinting about future Legislative favors.

Now comes one telling of journeying through a pleasant, and varied landscape, of a short sojourn where a beloved parent passed the sunny days of childhood – of visiting schools – his Normal connection giving him the privileges of superintending committee of public schools generally. He tells also of ascending one of New Hampshire's famed mountains, and waking the echoes with ~~one~~ a Normal song, wishing all the while that many of the band could join their voices in full chorus there.

And here is a letter, the appearance of which greatly astonishes us from the envelope was wonderfully distended from the usual flat appearance – what could it contain? was it a preserved specimen of some ancient vertebrate, or a live subject for dissection and Physiological investigation? We held the suspicious article at a safe distance, while we carefully broke the seal – when lo! the fact was plainly revealed that promises made in jest are sometimes remembered and redeemed.

Here comes a little dainty looking letter written on a tiny gilt edged sheet. But no matter if it was little, it brought us the glad intelligence that we should soon meet its author at the base of one of “earth’s o’erlooking mountains” and together ascent its proud summit. --- What need then of a long letter!

There! The great clock on the Unitarian Church is striking ten – and we must put away our letters until another evening for we are obedient to all Normal rules.

### The Red Gate

Vacation had come, and I was again among the dear old haunts. I once more climbed the scraggy hillside, and from its summit looked out upon its waters. I saw them dance in the bright sunlight, and flash back the silver moonlight. I walked again on the beach-sands, and listened to the soothing music of old ocean's murmurs, bathing my hands in its fleecy foam. I stood on the green slopes of "Water Side," and saw the sun go down behind the spires, that he had brightened with his moontide rays, leaving a glowing track upon the waters, like a golden pathway leading to his chamber. Yet was I not satisfied until again I sat neath the many willows, on the mossy seat by the Red Gate.

It was a dear hallowed spot. Nature and association had rendered it so.

The ponderous gate swung on its great hinges, and the iron chain creaked above

it. As the sun burnt man of toil urged his cattle to the end of their days labor.

I sat there, and “thoughts came crowding thick and fast,” – of the hours that I had spent neath those willows, by the old gate side, when in thoughtless boyhood, tired and fevered by the long ramble, I turned there to rest.

There had the scenes of the future loomed up the brightest, there had I built my highest grandest air castles, while the birds sang above me in the leafy canopy. There too I saw those fair fabrics shattered – and youth’s first sadness weighed upon my spirit, when those leaves dry and sear, rustled at my feet, and the birds winged their way to the south land.

In the quiet retreat, had nature whispered to me her purest, holiest teachings, revealed to me her brightest phases, – told me of her God.

I had wandered there in childhood by a father’s side; in early boyhood I had sought its solitude to steal from its silence solace for my griefs.

And now again I sat in the shadows of the green arches on my temple where had been rendered the fairest offerings of young devotion at the shrine of Nature.

And why was it that now, in youth's bright flush sorrow strangely mingled with the joy I felt to be there, once again.

My head was on my hand; the branches waved above me – my thoughts were wandering back. ‘Twas but a few years before that I was wont to come there often, though not alone.

Cousin Lizzie – shall I ever forget her – was my companion then.

The breezes that stole through the leaves seemed to bear her name. I looked up involuntarily, expecting to see an angel's face. Ah! I saw her but in the bright mirror of memory. She stood before me as of old. Her hat swung carelessly upon her arm, her little basket was filled with wild flowers, some of the fairest of which had been twined into a chaplet

for her brow. The breeze played with her fair curls, and her eyes, blue as the Heavens, spoke all happiness and joy.

She was my young ideal of the beautiful, and in later years, I have longed for one of half her spotless purity.

I looked back now through the ~~long~~ vistas of my boylife, and she was associated with them all. What ramble, what sport had I then enjoyed without her? –

The sun had gone down behind the hills from which, together, often had we viewed its last beams, when there came a darker recollection. Dear Lizzie! Her cheek had grown pale, her slip was less gay, and we heard her songs no more. How the thoughts of those sad weeks and days have haunted me! The rooms were darkened; our tones were low; our steps were very light: -- there were tears by the bedside, and prayers around the altar; -- there were hopes and fears – Lizzie was very sick!

The sun was setting; the autumn

tints were over all the landscape when her life tide was ebbing away –

There were stifled sobs, and low groans at times, but she heeded them not. In that solemn hour, it was for me to raise that pale form, and support it as in brighter days – and while a brightness, not of earth, shone in her eyes that never beamed with aught but love and tenderness, with the waters of baptism on her brow, her spirit sought its home.

The wish of her life had been fulfilled in the hour of death – another soul had found the waters of life.

Now steals on me the thought of the shroud and the coffin, the grave, and the cold clod. – it was all over then.

I arose from my seat, neath the willow by the old red gate. I passed the brook that oft had soothed me with its murmurs.

The twilight was deepening, and the fleecy clouds seemed to torch the tops of the tall poplars, as the grave yard gate

swung behind me and I sat down, wearied on a grassy mound. It was Lizzie's grave.

Here a mother's hand had planted the flowers that once she loved. – Here a father had bowed his head in sorrow, -- here had I come to pay the tribute of a tear.

The moon rose, and its light shone strangely o'er the white slabs and monuments, but still I lingered. – And joy mingled with the sorrow I felt to be there once again, and recall the days of my first friendship, and my first grief.