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Bridgewater State Normal School

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The Normal Offering

Published monthly during the School Year, by the Lyceum of the Bridgewater State Normal School.

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With the end of this half term several studies have been concluded and new classes have consequently been formed. As we look back over our work we find that we all have, to a greater or less degree, a desire that as favorable a light as possible be thrown over the results of our labors. This, if it comes from the just pride which a student takes in the results of faithful labor, is not to be condemned.

Among the classes which have appeared to be particularly interested in their work this term, we have noticed especially those studying natural science. In many cases the interest in subjects has extended considerably beyond the class and we consider this a good sign, for it shows the strength both of the influence of the class and the subject upon those outside the class room.

One of the studies which has thus found permanent friends is Geology. Here the class has worked, to a limited extent, upon a new plan—Field Work. The class has thus studied Hingham and Quincy, two of the best localities in this section of New England. Equipped with a geological map of the place to be studied, the observer can readily discover all important facts of geologic interest, while collecting specimens for future use.

It is needless for us to say that this work brings excellent results. We believe that such a mode of study will not long continue unused.

On the evening of Nov. 11, the long expected prize drill of the Cadets took place. As this was the first event of this kind in the history of the company, considerable interest was evinced in regard to it. After the formation of the company, the first half-hour was spent in company drill. This was followed by the drilling of the squads which was very good throughout.

As the squads grew smaller, the accuracy of the
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individual movements became more and more marked. In many instances indeed the movements were almost faultless, and if accuracy of movement had been the only basis of judgment it would have been much more difficult than it was to award the prizes. After two hours steady drilling the prizes were awarded, the first to Mr. Speare and the second to Mr. Andrews.

The badges were presented by Mr. A. G. Boyden with an appropriate address to each successful competitor. After the dismissal of the company, the remainder of the evening was spent in social intercourse.

As a result of this prize drill, there are without doubt more thoroughly drilled men in the company now than at any previous time. We compliment the Captain for the successful accomplishment of plans which necessarily met many unexpected obstacles.

OBITUARY.

Miss Eliza Bond Woodward, for thirty years a teacher in this school, died at Harrisburg, Pa., on Wednesday, Nov. 2, at the residence of her sister, where she had gone three weeks before to make it her home. Peacefully, without a struggle, at the close of the day, her spirit left the body which had become a burden and returned to God who gave it. She was buried from the Central Square Church in Bridgewater, of which she was an honored member, on Saturday, November 5, Rev. W. W. Fay, the pastor officiating, Rev. T. F. Wright speaking in behalf of the citizens, and Rev. A. E. Winship speaking for the teachers and alumni of the school, he having been her pupil twenty-five years ago and an associate teacher for four years.

The church was crowded with mourning relatives, associate teachers, pupils, and friends from far and near. The front of the pulpit was beautifully decorated with cut flowers, ivy, and smilax, the borders of the platform were banked with pot flowers in full bloom, and a beautiful floral pillow bearing the word "Teacher" rested upon the casket, the loving tribute of the pupils and teachers of the school. This was specially appropriate as Miss Woodward was very fond of flowers, and on many Sabbaths and special occasions had they been deftly arranged by her skillful hands to beautify the church.

Superintendent Edwin P. Seaver of Boston, Samuel P. Gates and George M. Hooper of Bridgewater, schoolmates, and General W. W. Blackmar, lawyer, Alfred Bunker, Principal of Quincy School, of Boston, and Superintendent David Bentley of Hyde Park, among her earliest pupils, acted as pall bearers. The Episcopal burial service was read at the grave and the chant "Go to thy rest in peace" was sung by the quartette. She was buried in the lot with Marshall Conant the second principal of this Normal School, who was her teacher and with whom she taught the first three years of her service in the school.

On Sunday morning, in Central Square Church, the day following the funeral services, Rev. Mr. Fay preached from Genesis 5: 24, "And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him," and in the course of his sermon alluded frequently to the late Miss Woodward, tracing the points of resemblance between her and Enoch, a most reverent and affectionate tribute.

Miss Woodward was born in Haverhill, N. H., on January 8, 1827, and was sixty years, nine months and twenty-five days old at the time of her departure. She entered the State Normal School, Bridgewater, as a pupil, March 19, 1856. As a student she was distinguished by her scholarship, her genial manner, maturity of judgment, and nobility of character. Immediately on her graduation she was appointed assistant teacher in the school, a position which only two ladies had previously held.

She entered upon her duties as teacher in September, 1857, and continued them without interruption for thirty years, never in all this period being absent from her post on account of illness, until July, 1887, when she was obliged to resign her position on account of failing health. It was only by the most heroic fortitude that she was able to finish her last term in the school, suffering severely from a cancer which had been gradually increasing for several years. She made a vigorous struggle for life concealing her malady from her nearest friends as long as possible, and hoping
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until the last that she should recover, though ready to meet the worst.

Previous to the advance of this fatal disease she was blessed with abounding health. Naturally cheerful, fond of life, and looking upon the bright side of everything, she met with a cordial reception in the family, the school, the social circle, and the church. She possessed in a remarkable degree the happy faculty of winning others, of making them feel that she had a genuine personal interest in them, of saying what needed to be said without giving offence. At the completion of twenty-five years of service the alumni presented her a purse of five hundred dollars and at her resignation the school presented her a handsome purse as a tribute of regard.

She was a noble woman, greatly loved and honored by all who knew her, for her genial sympathy, her thoughtful inspiring words, her faithful teaching, her loyalty to the school and to truth, her interest in everything pertaining to the best interests of the community, and her earnest Christian life. She was a faithful worker in the church and in the Sunday school. The members of her Bible class will long remember her as a source of inspiration and quickening to their spiritual life. Nearly two thousand pupils have come under her teaching in the Normal School, who rise up to bless her memory and to extend her influence throughout this land and in foreign lands, and through them thousands of other lives have felt the elevating, quickening influence of her life. She has entered into the reward of her labors.

NORMAL MUSIC.

Though sweetly sounds the cornet blast,
And wailing sounds tall thick and fast,
The Normal sits upon her chair,
The very picture of despair.
With stopped up ears the sound defies,
And thus from morn till eve she cries:
"Stop oh! stop oh!"
While echo faint and far replies,
"No, no! no, no!"
"Stop oh!" "No, no!" This wail and shriek
Is heard throughout the entire week.

No chanticleer doth wake her with his crow,
No barn yard babel, high and low,
For other sounds are these her lot to hear,
Across the wing they float, distinct and clear.
Though in her youthful bosom lies
The love of music, still she cries:
"Stop oh! stop oh!"
And many a violin replies,
"No, no! no, no!"
"Stop oh!" "No, no!" These answering cries
Reécho, as the morning flies.

Thus through the long and weary day,
She hears these sounds across the way,
And wonders why they love to make
Such fiendish sounds for music's sake.
And when at length the daylight flies,
She hears the same old sounds and cries:
"Stop oh! stop oh!"
And then a banjo chord replies,
"No, no! no, no!"
"Stop oh!" "No, no!" Alas that we
Find such distress in harmony.

Ah, why should Normals love the din
Of cornet and of violin,
Of ocarina and of flute,
And try, in vain, girl's ears to suit?
Her laughs are now replaced by sighs,
In hopeless tones once more she cries:
"Stop oh! stop oh!"
And echo loud and clear replies,
"No, no! no, no!"
"Stop oh!" "No, no!" Hark, hear the sweet
notes fall
That swell the music of our Normal Hall.

NATURE STUDY.

Of the different branches of natural science in which one may interest himself for the purpose of adding zest to his walks and entertainment to his rambles, I can think of none so well calculated to awaken a permanent interest or capable of furnishing so much of real enjoyment as the study of birds. I refer not so much to any scientific study of Ornithology as to a decided love for, and interest in the life and habits of these little neighbors. The flowers of the field in all their beauty and fragrance must ever be a source
of pleasure and thankfulness to the lover of nature, yet in their study there is lacking the joyous life and personality to be found in the feathered denizens of the wood. Insect life has its charms and interests, yet furnishes but little to recommend it to the aesthetic sense, and it is not without a feeling somewhat akin to repugnance that many, especially among the young ladies, bring themselves to the study of its lower forms. Indeed, I have seen many a member of the zoology class lose apparently all interest in the study of Insecta when confronted for a moment with the capture of a poisonous black-spider, or a harmless but unattractive “doodle” bug. With Mineralogy and Geology one descends to inanimate things and leaves behind him much of that absorbing interest which possesses him when confronted with life and feeling for his study.

Over all other branches which one may take up simply as a recreation, the study of birds, it seems to me, possesses this advantage—that it develops every part of a man’s nature. Among the manifold varieties which throng our forests, from the tiny humming bird, hovering delicately over some fragile woodland blossom, to the fierce eagle in his bold upward flight to meet the sun, one finds, in their classification by scientific technicalities, ample opportunity for a life-long development of intellect by means of scientific research. In the beauty of their coloring, the perfect poetry of their motions, and the sweet harmony of their morning chorus, he finds that which continually gratifies and strengthens his love of the beautiful in art and nature; while, from the distinct personality which seems to invest almost every species of bird, he is called to choose from among them certain ones to enliven his walks and direct his musings, and from the numerous beautiful incidents connected with their joyous yet mysterious life, he draws many a lesson to broaden his love and sympathy for Nature’s children and all mankind. In this last lies the difference between this and almost every other branch of natural science. The Geologist, holding in his hand a bit of stone, reads many a silent record of ages long gone by, records of fierce heat, of rolling floods, and mighty transformations—records before which he stands lost in wondering silence; the Ornithologist, standing before the open nest and watching the efforts of the patient mother as she draws the fledglings out on untried pinions, forgets his science in his sympathy, and reads the record of unselfish devotion in such a way as to make his own life better. It is from this last part of the study also that the lover of birds will derive the larger part of his pleasure, for just as one is most strongly drawn by pleasurable emotions to that person whose sympathies and experience he finds to be like his own, so will he be drawn to certain of the feathered tribes whose song or habits of life correspond and sympathize most closely with his own mood or disposition.

In the song of birds there is a certain suggestiveness of human experience—a certain sympathy with human life to be found nowhere else in nature. To one in the morning of life, in the freshness of youth and health, what more inspiring than the loud “cheerily, cheer up” of yonder robin on the topmost twig of the maple-tree, or the long, hearty laugh of the golden-winged woodpecker as he teeters about the top of some old fence post? Or what more suggestive in nature of a cheerful, drinking, good-for-nothing Dick Swiveller than the bobolink swinging up and down on the end of some long, waving weed—anon dashing off after some hapless insect, tumbling heels over head in the pursuit, flashing his wings in the face of his heart, the small boy trudging homeward with the books and slate of the little brown-cheeked damsel whom he has already assured of his undying devotion. Ah, was ever a boy so interested in books or school as is that little fellow for the next few days in the bluebird’s courtship? How he watches every movement; drinks in every amorous note; sees with dismay that Miss Bluebird flies away modestly at the first advances, with exultation that she soon returns again; sees the final success of his suit and the preparations for housekeeping. And all the while there is with him in imagination the little brown-cheeked girl, demure and appreciative. In the low, beautiful notes of the rose breasted grosbeak, there is a
quiet thoughtfulness that is lacking in most musicians; while he, who walks the woods and fields burdened by the trials of his life, finds in the mournfully plaintive notes of the turtle dove, or the distant subdued call of the cuckoo a certain kindred melancholy which serves to draw him out of himself.

I wonder if any readers of the “Offering” will hear during the coming holidays such a Christmas carol as I listened to one cold, snowy Christmas morning a few years ago. It had snowed the night before and the snow, soft and wet, had clung to the objects it touched until every tree was transformed into a fairy tower. As I walked slowly through the old churchyard my attention was suddenly attracted by a beautiful succession of clear, liquid notes such as I knew could come from none of our common winter residents. For a long time I watched and waited before I finally located it in the top of a tall spruce. The small top branches, burdened by their weight of snow had sunk slowly down until their tips met the trunk and branches beneath, forming a complete bower, and hidden within was the musician. He had probably gone to sleep the night before on one of the small branches close against the trunk, and the others bending down about him covered by the falling snow, had made him prisoner. He seemed well content, however, for it was light and warm within, and he carolled forth his morning greeting until a patch of snow, loosened by the sun’s rays, fell to the ground and left him free. I had been listening to a male pine-grosbeak—a privilege not often granted to a resident of southern New England—and now stood admiring the beautiful contrast between the bright carmine of his breast and the dark green of the spruce tips, and the still more beautiful song. Could anything have been more in harmony with the peace and beauty of the morning than that bird’s song, so soon to be followed by the chime of church bells and the music of children’s voices? It was indeed a carol of glad tidings—the glad tidings of a cheerful little heart that even amidst its cold and bleak surroundings could still send forth its message of cheer and happiness to those around.

But it is not alone in the song of the bird that the naturalist finds so much of a personal interest. In the mystery of their coming and going, in their mating and nesting, and in the thousand curious and interesting habits connected with their daily life he finds so much to strengthen his interest and touch his own life that they soon become to him almost as companions. The instinct of many of our common birds leads them to build near man for protection against the birds of prey and animals that destroy their young, and when allowed to build undisturbed they soon grow quite tame, and seem to appreciate any kindness shown them. A friend of mine, by helping the birds in his orchard with occasional bits of string for their nests and by protecting their eggs and young from injury, has drawn quite a colony about his home, many of them returning year after year to build in the same place. Among them a few years ago was a pair of golden-winged woodpeckers—usually very shy birds—which grew so tame and confident from seeing him that they would allow him to touch them while on the nest. Every spring and summer they are a renewed source of pleasure as well as usefulness, and the many interesting facts he has learned about their lives would in themselves fill a volume.

My first experience of this kind was when, as a small boy, I furnished materials for an oriole’s nest near the house. At first the birds were shy, carefully avoiding the thread and string I placed for them until I had retired from sight. Soon they grew more confident and would take and use the materials while I watched them. When the nest was nearly completed I placed on the grass quite a large piece of cotton cloth, and for a time the birds seemed perplexed as to what use to make of it; it was too large to be used as it was, and when they attempted to fly away with a single thread the whole piece went with it. They had tried it for some time when an idea seemed to strike the female, and, seizing a corner of the piece in her beak, she flew away with it to a thorn bush which grew near the wall. Carefully fastening it among the thick thorns, she seized the end of one of the threads and, pulling it out easily, flew away triumphantly to her nest. Her mate followed her, and from the threads which the cloth furnished they soon finished the nest. A number of times during the process it became disentangled,
but as often as it did they fastened it up again and resumed work. I had furnished to the birds several bits of bright colored worsted and ribbon, and for a time the nest presented a pleasing contrast to the dark green of the apple leaves amidst which it was, but the sun and rain soon bleached it to a uniform gray. All that summer I watched them through the joys and vicissitudes of their housekeeping, and when at last the young birds were grown and all had deserted the nest, it seemed for a time almost as if a friend had gone.

I have often thought that a little personal experience of this kind with some of our birds, on the part of those who do not seem to care for them particularly, would result in the discovery of so many interesting facts about their lives that a permanent interest would be awakened in the study. It is a source of wonder, why, with all the variety and beauty of bird life about their very doors and gardens, people can be content to know so little about it. Especially does it seem strange that a teacher will study almost every other branch of natural science and continually neglect this—strange not only because of the amount of pleasure it furnishes to the student himself, but also because in the whole range of his education he will find no exercise capable of arousing a more genuine enthusiasm among the little people than a lesson on the life and habits of these beautiful summer visitors.

PERSONALS.

Miss Hunt is teaching in Norfolk.
Miss Smith is teaching in Quincy.
Miss Grace Parker is teaching in Atlantic, Mass.
Mr. William Keyes is Principal of the Evening School, Dedham.
Messrs. Whitney and Kelley now have charge of the Gymnastics.

Among recent visitors from the last graduating class we were glad to see Misses Edson and Hutchinson.

Miss Alma F. Silsby has obtained a position as assistant in the Brockton High School. Did our esteemed Exchange, the Stylus, make an oversight in regard to this in its last number.

LOCALS.

A large number of students attended the Teachers Convention at Hingham.

Once more we ask,—What is to be done in regard to the subject of prize essays?

An uncommonly large number of feline deaths have been registered this term in No. 9.

The Seniors and E Section are said to be quite confident of their ability to teach Elocution.

We have been shown a group picture of six Normal students. Our only criticism is that it presents a rather pale appearance in several places.

One of our geology students after studying for some time the structure of Back Bay, came to the conclusion that it belongs to the Cartiferous Period.

Now the question faces us, What is to be done for seating room next term? The class which is leaving is not large and the prospect for a large entering class is good.

"I know sweet songs I cannot sing," says an amateur poet. We long to have this man take the room next to us. The present incumbent of that apartment sings sweet songs he does not know, and oh! we are weary."—Harvard Lampoon.

Practical application of Physics.
If falling bodies tend to move in a straight line downward, why did the jars of mustard and pickles prove an exception to the law.
Because the force of attraction was stronger than the force of gravity.

A delegation of six of the "Gentlemen African" visited Norton on the fourth of this month to appear in an entertainment given for the benefit of the Public Library there. We understand that their reception was as hearty as on the occasion of their last appearance in Bridgewater.

The lecture delivered at the Lyceum by the Rev. Mr. Wright on "Travelling in the Old World," visited Norton on the fourth of this month to appear in an entertainment given for the benefit of the Public Library there. We understand that their reception was as hearty as on the occasion of their last appearance in Bridgewater.

The lecture delivered at the Lyceum by the Rev. Mr. Wright on "Travelling in the Old World," was thoroughly appreciated by all fortunate enough to be present. The subjects discussed were not only interesting in themselves but were treated in a very attractive way. Those who have heard Mr. Wright's Sunday Evening Lectures on the Holy Land have also been very fortunate.
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We understand that there is a young lady in the Hall who believes that meat should not be eaten.

On Saturday evening, Dec. 3d, the Young Peoples Society of Christian Endeavor was organized with 120 members, the Constitution was adopted and the following officers elected: Pres., Mr. A. C. Boyden; Vice Pres., Mr. S. W. Hines; Sect., Miss Gardner; Cor. Sect., Miss Wilbur; Treas. Mr. Drake.

LYCEUM ORDER OF EXERCISES.
Nov. 4, 1887.

Piano Solo, Miss Crane
Reading, Miss Snow
Violin Solo, Mr. Kirmayer
Song, Mr. Palmer
Piano Solo, Miss Whiton
Lecture, Rev. T. F. Wright
"Travelling in the Old World."

RECENT ADDITIONS TO THE SCHOOL LIBRARY.

Keith Johnson's Geography, physical, historical and descriptive.
Ritter's Comparative Geography by Gage.
Huxley's Physiography.
Scott's Elementary Meteorology.

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A. G. BOYDEN, A. M., will have a series of articles upon "The Art of Teaching," appearing every other week from the first of October to July. Mr. Boyden has been urged to give his graduates and the teachers at large the benefit of his experience and research, and their appearing will be heralded with delight.

LARKIN DUNTON, LL. D., Headmaster of the Boston Normal School, has the best, practical articles on psychology for the teacher that have ever appeared in book or periodical, and these articles alternate with Mr. Boyden's.

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