GIRLS' NORMAL SCHOOL.

Messrs. Editors: Knowing the interest you have manifested in the cause of public education, I ask the favor of being permitted to perform an act of justice to the Normal School of this city, by inserting a communication which has been denied by the public press, which, in common fairness, the justification deserved. In the Philadelphia *Inquirer* of the 19th inst., appeared a lengthy paragraphing of a rule in reference to admissions into the Girls' Normal School which does not exist.

In the same issue was published a communication criticising unjustly and unfairly the teaching in some of the departments in said school.

After waiting a week for the publication of a reply sent, I felt obliged again to call the attention of the *Inquirer* to said reply, in the following words: "I have felt it proper to give you an opportunity to do simple justice, in correcting an erroneous statement, as it might be construed into an act of hostility were the correction to appear in another paper." In the *Inquirer* of Monday last there appeared a reply to my communication, which they had refused to publish.

The conclusion, therefore, seems to be that the *Inquirer* volunteers to publish more than 100 lines in condemnation of the Normal School, whilst about half that number is too much for it to publish in justification; and whilst it is quite ambitious to "trot the dowager out," it cannot "stand the performance" because we do not admire the "length of its ears."

It was probably an experience of similar character which induced the late Dr. Rush to form the unfavorable opinion expressed by him in regard to the newspaper press.

I have submitted to a number of personal communications of an abusive character from the *Inquirer*, not concerning them worthy of notice, but when this attack is made on the Normal School, I think it my duty, as Chairman of the Committee, to state as follows:

There is no rule in the Girls' Normal School of this city requiring pupils to become teachers. The policy of having a school exclusively for teachers, I think, would be a good one, for there are very many things not found in text books, to be learned before the proper ability to teach is secured. That the teaching of the Normal School might be mainly directed to the preparation of teachers, the Board of Control established the "Senior Class" in the Female Grammar Schools. In this, I am well assured, the pupils may obtain all that is necessary for any position in life, other than that of a teacher.

The Boys' High School has little reference to the preparation of teachers, and therefore does not stand in the same relation as the Girls' Normal School, to our public school system. There are about 1,600 female teachers in the public schools, while there are but about 80 male teachers. With the exception of the Professors in the Boys' High School, the Principal of the Girls' Normal School, the Principal of the Boys' Grammar Schools, and a few consolidated schools, the teaching is done entirely by females, and these female teachers are supplied mainly from the Normal School, there is, I think, good reason, why this school should be entirely devoted to the preparation of teachers, especially when it is no uncommon complaint that it does not supply the teachers enough for the requirements of the public schools of our city.

The communication of "A Constant Reader" in the *Inquirer*, to which I have referred, says: "It seems to be the opinion of several of the teachers that the object of hearing a lesson is not to ascertain how much the pupils know about what they have studied, and to grade them accordingly, but rather to put the greatest number of irrelevant, catch questions which have about as much bearing on the lesson as the color of their mothers' eyes has on it. We will give a few specimens of this improved style of instruction and let the public judge of its value.

"A class of young ladies have a spelling lesson to recite; some one gets up to spell either a get up spelling as these (and we challenge denial): How many words in the lesson? How many begin with 'capital'? How many begin with small letters? (This is intended as an exercise in spelling. We suppose, the data being the answers to the two preceding questions.) What is the number of the page? How many columns of words in the lesson? How many words in each column? How many words are connected with a hyphen? Give me a word that commences with 'p.' Give me one commencing with 'l.'

"Let us shift the scene, and go by geography. Miss So-and-So, bound the United States? Pupil answers, 'On the north by Canada and British America, east by Atlantic ocean, south by Gulf of Mexico and Mexico, west by Pacific Ocean.' This is correct, is unsatisfactory, and the question is passed by half a dozen pupils before some one, tired of listening to nonsense to inquire what, then, is right? and is told that the boundaries of the United States on the west by Canada, the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific Ocean—Canada because that is west of Maine and the Gulf of Mexico, the Gulf because it is west of the peninsular part of Florida, and the Pacific ocean because it is west of the hindermost part of a donkey? Possibly some may say that it is the end of his tail, but we count it a failure, and assert that it is one of the hoofs, when he kicks."

The public will read the charge know nothing of its truth or falsehood; whether true or false, the injury is the same. If this school or any other institution is to be crushed, without proper redress, to the spiteful and anonymous abuse of disappointed aspirants or other prejudiced parties, its usefulness will be sadly impaired, possibly, entirely destroyed.

It is easy to break down, but when we have not the intelligence to build up, and even a "donkey" (if it may be permitted to use the illustration in Natural History presented by a "Constant Reader") may overturn with his heels what he could not improve by the use of his hands. I desire here to say the Girls' Normal School is open to public inspection at any time during school hours; if there is any cause for complaint I am sure no one can be more anxious to hear of it than the Committee having charge of the school. Doubtless the "Constant Reader" (who may have been a teacher) was fully aware that a Committee was appointed by the Board of Control to correct the affairs of the Normal School; if then, the object was to secure the correction of an evil, how easily it could have been accomplished by notifying the Committee. If, however, the object was to injure the school, it could be best accomplished by especially communications as that of a "Constant Reader."

Regarding the lesson in spelling referred to, I would say it is possible, in the familiar discussion of the subject, questions may have been given not directly connected with the branch under consideration. So far, however, as I am able to learn, no such series of questions, as a test of the spelling lesson, and no such lesson, was ever submitted. Every intelligent teacher is fully aware that, very frequently, more than the mere spelling of the word is requisite in a spelling-lesson; and, doubtless, that which would seem trifling to mere spectators would appear otherwise but they the full knowledge of the subject possessed by the teacher. It happens the branch of study named is in charge of a lady, who has no superior in her profession in this city.

In reference to the Geography questions, it is submitted, the "Constant Reader" has made objection to that which is strictly correct. In the Normal School, we do not give a full and precise answer to every question; and it would be simply the duty of the teacher to give, with proper explanation, the precise answer objected to by a "Constant Reader."

Respectfully,

DANIEL STEINMETZ,
Chairman of Com. on Girls' Normal School.

THE RICHMOND DISASTER.

RICHMOND, April 28.—Business is almost entirely suspended in this city to-day. The people are stilling, the loss of sincere, generous, high-souled and manly friendship. It is eminently meet and proper that we should meet together this day, and humbly recognize into an appropriate manner this terrible visitation of a mysterious Providence.

I pray God, my fellow-citizens, that during the remainder of my life and your lives, our eyes may never again rest upon a scene so appalling and heart-rending as that we witnessed here yesterday, where, when all was life and hope, over fifty of our fellow-citizens, in a moment, without warning or preparation, were suddenly plunged into eternity. It was, indeed, my fellow-citizens, one of the awful sights which rend the heart, which languages fails to describe, and which has to be witnessed to be appreciated. On a solemn occasion like this it is fitting that we should appeal to the Throne of Grace for aid and succor in this our time of affliction.

The Rev. Dr. Hoge then offered prayer, and a Committee on Resolutions was appointed, headed by Judge W. W. Crump, and the following resolutions were then adopted:

"With hearts crushed and bleeding, with a mournful and overwhelming sense of our bereavement, we have assembled to testify our sorrow for the dead, to offer our tenderest and deepest sympathies to the living, and to mingle our tears with those of the stricken households over which the Angel of Death has so suddenly passed. With heads bowed in reverential awe before the Great Disposer of events, we contemplate with shuddering anguish the fearful and terrible catastrophe which has hurried into eternity our friends and our fellow-citizens. The sudden and fearful disaster which has brought consternation and mourning to us all, without distinction, has, in the universal sorrow which it has diffused, touched that chord of sympathy among us which makes all mankind kin. We have but this dread calamity confined alone to this mourning city, but it has cast its sombre shade throughout and beyond the limits of Virginia. In the capital of our State, within the honored precincts of that hall where Jefferson and Madison and Henry, in days of profound tranquillity, at a season when Nature is renovating her life under the glowing warmth of a vernal sun, and when, in unison with the spring-time, heart and hope rose highest, without warning, in an instant, Death, the remorseless, has snatched from life scores of our most valued citizens, conspicuous alike in public and private life, and occupying every position of usefulness among us.

"Though accustomed by years of painful experience to the sight of wounds and death, there were few in this city, yesterday, but, as those who stood upon the perilous edge of battle, and though Nature could fain have tears of anguish to flow, yet there was wanting to our grief this keen pang which has pierced our hearts in this unexpected, stunning shock, which has bowed our souls in woe under its dread dispensation. More than two generations have passed away since our people have been called to mourn a catastrophe so portentous as this. It is fit that we should follow the example of our fathers and bend before the Great Jehovah in humiliation and in prayer, and ask for His mercy and His grace to support us under this heavy affliction; be it, therefore,

Resolved, That we mourn with profound sorrow the loss which our State and our city has suffered in the death of her citizens; that we offer with saddened hearts and tearful eyes, our profound sympathies to the bereaved and to the suffering, and fervently pray that the days of affliction are, so may their strength be.

Resolved, That Wednesday next, May 3d, be set apart as a day of humiliation, prayer and religious services, on which day the people of the city are respectfully requested to assemble in their respective places of public worship, at such hours as may be prepared for them by the clergy, who are respectfully invited to cooperate in the purposes of this resolution.

The Judge followed in a few remarks.

Judge Quide spoke briefly of the horrors of the scene of yesterday, the dead and dying, the horrid pit where old and young were mingled, some crushed out of all semblance of humanity, and contrasted the beauty of the day with the grief of our people, and said Richmond was like a Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted because they were not.

Mr. A. M. Kelly briefly addressed the meeting, alluding in the most affecting terms to the death of little John M. Turner, one of the pages of the House.

Henry A. Wise drew a vivid picture of the horrors of yesterday, and, in alluding to the fraternal spirit which animated the sufferers and sorrowers on the occasion, asked what the spirit should not continue to animate us all?

The meeting then adjourned, with a benediction offered by the Rev. Dr. Hoge.

The streets are as still as on a Sabbath, and everywhere you feel the weight of the destitute families, and contributions are offered from all quarters.

The afternoon has been one of funerals. In some of the churches three or four bodies were placed side by side at the same time, and the ministers denounced the carelessness of modern architecture, which placed in jeopardy the lives of citizens. In nearly every principal street of the city funeral processions were going out to the cemeteries. All business was suspended. The *Dispatch*, *State Journal*, and other newspaper offices, were hung in mourning. The flags on the Capitol and Custom-house, and all public buildings, and on all vessels in the harbor, were at half-mast. The tolling trains coming into the city were covered with emblems of mourning, and many of the trucks and carts through the streets were also so covered. At all the funerals the old organizations to which the deceased were attached turned out, and in one of them the State Grand Division of the Sons of Temperance, now in session here, followed the corpse to the cemetery.

At a late hour this evening no more of the wounded have died, and their condition is not worse.

Governor Walker to-night received a telegram announcing that the Illinois Constitutional Convention had to-day adopted resolutions expressive of regret at the calamity in Virginia, and had adjourned out of respect to the memory of the deceased and their sorrowing sufferers, thanking Illinois on behalf of the State of Virginia.

A despatch to the *Enquirer* says that Fredericksburg has closed her business houses, the fire bells were tolled all day, and the inhabitants were arranging to raise funds for the sufferers here.

THE CHINESE MISSION.

Who is at the Head of it?

A Berlin letter has the following: "Mr. Burlingame, Secretary to the Chinese Embassy brought to Europe by the late Mr. Burlingame, has been here for some days and is to leave immediately for St. Petersburg. Since the death of the late chief the mission has been represented by the two native diplomatists. Some will shortly proceed to Brussels for an exchange of decorations or explanatory notes similar to those which passed at Berlin between Count Bismarck and Mr. Burlingame. Some journals of Berlin have announced that Mr. Brown was to remain here for some time to negotiate a formal treaty which the mission has hitherto only prepared, but there is no foundation for such a statement."

—"To Singel Rooms to Rent" are advertised on State street, Chicago.

AN ABLE-BODIED JOURNAL.

Some Model Arguments.

There is a peculiar journal published in England, known to compilers of newspaper directories as the *Anti-Tobacco Journal*. As a matter of fact, and as an entire generation of tobacco-users, this publication is unsurpassed. To convert the ungodly from their indulgence in the pleasures of the weed, it recently published a history entitled "An awful end of a smoker." It is told by a Pentonville preacher. There was in his district a smoker who had ruined himself by his "filthy habit." One day, it appears, he was disputing with his wife on the subject, and, finally relenting, he promised that he would never again smoke, adding: "If I do not keep my promise, may I lose my eyes; may I lose the use of my limbs; may my blood turn to corruption." The reverend story-teller adds that the man, having broken his promise, was punished as he desired. While tapping a beer cask he lost the use of his eyes; he became paralyzed; and on a surgeon attempting to bleed him, nothing followed the lancet but as he had previously prayed. Hence the *Journal* draws the moral "Don't smoke." But is not this style of argument simply horrible? If this is the usual character of the arguments used by the anti-tobacconists, of whom this paper is an organ, there are more insane people out of Colney Hatch than is generally suspected.

SUMMER RESORTS.

Congress Hall,

CAPE MAY, N. J.,

Opens, June 1st. Closes, October 1st.

TERMS—$3 00 per day June and September. $4 00 per day July and August.

The new wing is now completed.

Mark and Simon Hassler's full Military Band and Orchestra will be present.

Applications for Rooms, address

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Bedford, Pa.

Reference—WILLIAM S. ROYD & CO., No. 25 South Water street.

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Grand Opening of Spring Fashions

IN IMPORTED PAPER PATTERNS,

Which are cut to measure, and are superior to any other. Ladies are invited to call and see the elegant styles, which are now ready at

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Send for a circular and price list. Agents wanted. Liberal discount to the trade.

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Machinists, Carpenters and other Mechanics' Tools.

Hinges, Screws, Locks, Latches, Bolts and Forks, Spoons, Bolts, Nuts, Screws and Washers, Files and Taper Tape, Coffee Mills, Stocks and Dies, Files and Taper Tape, Glue Pots, Mortise Locks, Door Locks, Door Springs, Butts, Screws, Knobs, Escutcheons, Window Springs, Sash Locks, Hooks and Eyes, Screws, Nails, Spikes, Lamps, Oils, Turpentine, Glue, Brushes, Paints, Varnish, Putty, Glass, Window Frames, Sash, Doors, Blinds, Nails, Spikes, Locks, Hinges, Screws, Glass, Putty, Paints, Oils, Varnish, Brushes, Glue, Pumps, Lead Pipe, Sheet Lead, Tacks, Brushes, Brooms, Buckets, Tubs, Chisels, Gouges, Bits, Gimlets, Axes, Adzes, Shingle Nails, Hatchets, Drawing Knives, Knives and Forks, Spoons, Butters, Files, Rasps, Horse Rasps, Door Springs, Bolts, Manilla Rope, Cotton Rope, Clothes Lines, Stencil Plates, Brass Cocks, Tacks, Glass, Putty, Nails, Spikes, Locks, Hinges, Screws, Lamps, Oils, Turpentine, Glue, Brushes, Paints, Varnish, Putty, Glass, Window Frames, Sash, Doors, Blinds, Nails, Spikes, Locks, Hinges, Screws, Glass, Putty, Paints, Oils, Varnish, Brushes, Glue, Pumps, Lead Pipe, Sheet Lead, Tacks, Brushes, Brooms, Buckets, Tubs, Chisels, Gouges, Bits, Gimlets, Axes, Adzes, Shingle Nails, Hatchets, Drawing Knives, Knives and Forks, Spoons, Butters, Files, Rasps, Horse Rasps, Door Springs, Bolts, Manilla Rope, Cotton Rope, Clothes Lines, Stencil Plates, Brass Cocks, Tacks,

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CHEAPER THAN ANYWHERE
250 N. BROAD street, below VINE. 4p12 1m*

PROPOSALS.

Proposals for repairing fire breaches in the River walls, extending the base of JAMES RIVER, Richmond, situate between the City Gas Works and Fish House, upon the River Schuylkill. Twenty-sixth Ward (as laid down on Smedley's Atlas), will be received until THURSDAY, 12 o'clock, May 5, 1870, at the office of the Secretary of the Executors, No. 410 Locust street, where a map of the property can be seen.

JOSHUA LIPPINCOTT,
Secretary of the Executors of James Dunlap.

apl26 4t6

MORTGAGES.

$10,000 TO $20,000 TRUST FUNDS TO LOAN, at par, on Mortgage of City Property. Also, $2,000 $3,000.

G. D. WELDIN,
No. 307 Walnut street.

apl26 31*

COAL AND WOOD.

E. SMITH, WOOD AND COAL DEPOT, 1844 SHIPPEN street, above Broad.

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Spring Mountain, Lehigh and Locust Mountain Coal.

Yard and Office, Twenty-fourth and Lehigh av., or 1844 Shippen street.

Office, Franklin Institute Building, No. 15 South Seventh street.

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