

# THE STAR OF THE NORTH.

R. W. Weaver, Proprietor.

Truth and Right—God and our Country.

[Two Dollars per Annum.]

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## Choice Poetry.

**SUNDAY.**  
One more week of care and labor  
Has lazily crept away;  
To the weary word, rest and quiet  
Are sent down from Heaven to-day.  
The sun shines with holy splendor,  
The wind is little and mild,  
The trees and to fro heave so gently  
As the breast of a sleeping child.  
Scattered clouds are pacing slowly  
Over glittering fields of blue;  
And often they seem to turn and wait,  
As church-going people do.  
The bells are at morning service  
In the churches all around;  
They ring not their week-day clangor  
But a softened, Sunday sound.  
Ah, ring they sadly or merrily,  
Ring they loud or ever so low,  
They can not still the struggle  
That the living spirits must know.  
In sunshine and in stormy weather  
By night as well as by day,  
The soul must still be striving,  
Striving, laboring all away;  
Never feel the noisy passions  
The peace of a Sabbath day.  
Yet shall there come in the future  
A Sabbath for the soul;  
The bells shall not ring in the morning,  
Slowly, sadly, shall they toll;  
In the graves so dark and silent,  
Is the Sabbath of the soul.

**RACE BETWEEN WAR STEAMERS.**—On returning to England, after the failure to lay the telegraph cable, a trial of speed took place between her Britannic Majesty's ship Agamemnon and the United States steam frigates Niagara and Susquehanna. They started at nine o'clock in the morning, and by five o'clock in the evening the Agamemnon was so far behind that she smoke only could be seen, the Susquehanna was about seven or eight miles behind. The Agamemnon is said to be the "crack" vessel of the English navy, easily making eleven or twenty knots per hour.

**THE MISSOURI ELECTION.**—The official report shows that Col. Stewart, the Democratic candidate for Governor of Missouri, is elected by 324 majority. The official vote stands, For Stewart, 47,975; for Rollins, 47,641. In announcing the election of Col. Stewart, the St. Louis Leader, of the 27th, says:  
"The Democratic party has beaten the coalition, and remains on the field, in spite of the rage and disappointment of the enemies of the State and of the South everywhere, a clearly ascertained majority of the whole people of Missouri."

Here is a gem from Dombay that will never grow dim:  
"She died," said Polly, "and was never seen again, for she was buried in the ground, where the trees grow."  
"The cold ground?" said the child shuddering again.  
"No, the warm ground," replied Polly, "where the little seeds are turned into beautiful flowers, and where the good people turn into angels and fly away to Heaven."

A happy comment on the annihilation of time and space by locomotive agency is as follows:  
"A little child who rode fifty miles in a railroad train took a coach to her uncle's house, some five miles further, was asked on her arrival if she came by the cars. 'We came a little ways in the cars,' she replied, 'and then all the rest of the way in a carriage.'"

An intelligent lady, whose little boy was beginning to swear, anxious to express to the child her horror of profanity, hit upon the novel process of washing out his mouth with soap suds whenever he swore. It was an effectual cure. The boy understood his mother's sense of the corruption of an oath, which, with the taste of the suds, produced the desired result. The practice if universally adopted, would raise the price of soap.

A Nebraska editor announced his plans for celebrating the 4th of July:  
"We shall luxuriate over our dinner until about 4 o'clock, when we shall go and swim for half an hour, 'tetter' for another half hour, and then pitch pennies until dark. In the evening we shall go a-courting."

The best description of weakness we have ever heard is contained in a wag's query to his wife when she gave him some chicken broth, if she would try to coax that chicken to wade through the soup or coo more.

In France, all ladies who do not possess a decided ample fortune, make it a point to learn some practical art of business, which in cases of reverses of fortune they may use to obtain a living.

## ABSURDITIES OF SPEECH.

Incredibly and extravagantly adulation often betrays people into uttering the most ridiculous absurdities quite unintentionally. A great man addressing the House of Lords, said, "It is my most painful duty to inform your lordships that it has pleased the Almighty God to release the king from his sufferings." This was quite equivalent to saying that he was sorry the king's sufferings were over. A maid of honor in France, being asked the hour by her royal mistress, obsequiously answered, "What your majesty pleases?" an answer even less indefinite than that of the cow-boy, who, after looking up at the town clock, said it was only "half an inch past eight." A nurse wishing to give a very polite answer to a gentleman who inquired after the health of a sick baby entrusted to her care, said, "Oh, sir, I flatter myself the child is going to die." A nobleman told a visitor that he had been talking to him in a dream. "Pardon me," replied the other, "I really did not hear you." A lady of rank having had the professional services of a village piper at a little fete which she had given on her estate, received the following ridiculously civil note from him: "Your ladyship's pardon for my boldness in thus applying for payment would be almost a sufficient compensation for the labor of your humble piper, Patrick Walsh." Lord Clarendon, in his essay on the decay of respect paid to old age, says that, in his younger days, he never kept his hat on before those older than himself, except at dinner. In the present day, the wearing of it at dinner would be thought more disrespectful than at any other time. George the Fourth, when Prince of Wales, used to return the bows of all persons in the street, except beggars. He justified this omission by remarking, "that to return a beggar's bow, without giving him anything, would be a mockery, and to stop for the purpose of bestowing a sixpence would seem ostentatious in a prince." Sir Robert Graham, being informed that he had been found guilty of a capital offence, desired the man to be again placed on the dock, and hastily putting on the black cap, he said, "Prisoner at the bar, I beg your pardon," and then passed on him the awful sentence of death. A country carpenter having neglected to make a gallow that had been ordered to be ready by a certain day, the Judge himself went to the man, and said, "Fellow, how came you to neglect making the gibbet that I ordered?"—"I'm very sorry; for had I known that it was for your lordship it should have been done immediately. While an officer was bowing, a cannon ball passed over his head, and decapitated a soldier who stood behind him. 'You see,' said the officer to those near him, 'that a man never loses by politeness.'" Napoleon's hat having fallen off, a young lieutenant stepped forward, picked it up, and presented it to him. "Thank you, captain," said the emperor, inadvertently. "In what regiment, sire?" inquired the sub, quick as lightning. Napoleon smiled, and forthwith promoted the witty youth to a captaincy.

Notwithstanding the fury with which the battle of Fontenoy was contested, it began with a great show of civility. Lord Charles Hay, a captain of the English guards, advanced before the ranks, and Count d'Auteroche, a lieutenant of grenadiers in the French guards, stepped forward to meet him. "Fire, gentlemen of the French guards!" exclaimed the English captain. "No my lord," replied the French lieutenant, "we never fire first." This reminds us of an anecdote told of Curran who, being called out to give satisfaction to an officer for some imaginary offence, was told by his antagonist to fire first, which he declined, saying, "As you gave the invitation, I beg you will open the ball."

## Who is a Gentleman?

A gentleman is not merely a person acquainted with certain forms and conventionalities of life, easy and self possessed in the world without awkwardness, and free from habits which are vulgar and in bad taste. A gentleman is something much beyond this. At the base of all his ease and refinement, and tact and power of pleasing, is the same spirit which lies at the root of every christian virtue. It is the thoughtful desire of doing in every instance to others as he would that others should do unto him. He is constantly thinking, not indeed how he may give pleasure to others for the mere sake of pleasing, but how he can show them respect, how he may avoid hurting their feelings. When he is in society he scrupulously ascertains the position of every one with whom he is brought in contact, that he may give to each his honor due. He studies how he may avoid touching upon any subject which may needlessly hurt their feelings—how he may abstain from any allusion which may call up a disagreeable or offensive association. A gentleman never alludes to, never appears conscious of any personal defect, bodily deformity, inferiority of talent, rank, or reputation, in the persons in whose society he is placed. He never assumes any superiority—never ridicules, never boasts, never makes a display of his own powers, or rank, or advantages; never indulges in habits which may be offensive to others.

## Counterfeit Liquors.

The London Times notices, in a list of joint stock companies in Paris, formally sanctioned by the prefect of police, the name of the "General company of Fictitious or Counterfeit Wines." The company boldly state that no grape juice or alcohol is used, but do not specify the ingredients. The article is sold at from four to eight sous per quart, and the company has a capital of six million francs. Our markets are flooded with spurious liquors, and no one can tell when he buys the genuine article. The Springfield Republican says that an informant of that paper was on a visit to a friend, a liquor dealer in a western city, and, in the space of an hour, he saw him transform a barrel of high wines into "pure French brandy." The barrel was stamped with the custom house brand, and had all the appearance of a sea voyage. The manufacturer poured in the basis of the ingredients (the high wines), and then, having scented it with about two ounces of the oil of cognac, added a full-pail of a compound which had mixed from one bucket to another, and which was to give to it its taste and color. The component parts of this last mixture were absolute poisons, directly destined to sap the energy, and finally destroy the life of the poor victims to a habit that leads them to the use of such stimulants. When such facts are taken into consideration, there is no wonder that a prohibitive law is demanded for the suppression of the traffic.

## Spots on the Sun.

According to observations made by M. Rudolphe Wolf, Director of the Observatory of Berne, it appears that the number of spots on the sun have their maximum and minimum at the same time as the variations of the needle. It follows from this, that the causes of these two changes on the sun and on the earth must be the same, and consequently, from this discovery, it will be possible to solve several important problems, in connection with these well-known phenomena, the solution of which has hitherto never been attempted.

The bar-rooms in New York are closing on Sundays. No cock-tails, bitters, or eye-openers! Even the German lager-beer dealers have to succumb. One fellow put over his shop—"No admittance on Holy Sabbath, except on Private Matters," and in German, "Hintere Thuer Offen for Meine Boarders."

Flowers have bloomed in our prairies and passed away, from age to age, unseen by man, and multitudes of virtues have been acted out in obscure places, without note or admiration. The sweetness of both has gone up to heaven!

Labor and prudence relieve us from three great evils—vice, want and indolence.  
India rubber pens are said to go further than any other in use.

## The Philosophy and Beauty of Manners.

Manners are the garments of the spirit—the eternal clothing of the being, in which character ultimately itself. If the character be simple and sincere, the manners will be at one with it—will be the natural outbirth of its traits and peculiarities. If it be complex with self-seeking, the manners will be artificial, affected, or insincere. Some persons make up, put on, take off, alter, or patch their manners to suit times and seasons, and as much facility, and as little apparent consciousness of duplicity, as if they were treating their clothes in light fashion. The fine lady of this class may be polished to the last degree, when, arrayed in silks and laces, she glides over the rich carpets of the drawing-room—and yet, with her servants at home, she is possibly less the lady than the worst still, the fine lady, married, perhaps, to a fine gentleman of character similar to her own, in the privacy of domestic life carries on a civil war with him, in which all restraint of courtesy is set aside. The best manners possible are the simple bringing down of the perfect law of charity into the most external intimacies of social life. Until character tends at all times and in all places, and towards all persons, to ultimate itself upon a sure foundation. This is the golden rule of true manners.

## Common School Matters.

**From the Penn'a School Journal for September.**  
**Monthly Decisions and Instructions of the State Superintendent.**  
**DECISIONS.**  
**Deduction for prompt payment of tax.**—Directors have no authority to allow a deduction of five per cent., or any other amount, for prompt payment of school tax. That provision of the law of 1849 was omitted in the act of 1854. The collector's warrant is broad enough and strong enough to ensure the payment of all taxes that the directors do not choose to exonerate.  
**To Superintendents.**  
**Permanent Certificates.**—The first three years of the county superintendent's term of office were naturally to be expected. The act of 1854 inaugurated an entirely new system of common school operations, especially as regarded the examination of teachers. But owing to the wide difference in the relative professional qualifications and judgment of the first corps of Superintendents, there were radical differences in the respective standards of attainment and skill to entitle an applicant to the permanent certificate. Some Superintendents, also, possessed more firmness and decision, while others feared to give offence and create undue opposition by a rigid adherence to the instructions of the Department. The cause of education was much more backward in some counties than in others; and in some instances it was unfortunately the case that first-class certificates were granted to incompetent teachers, from favoritism, or to accommodate influential districts. In addition to this, some Superintendents received none but first-class certificates, and of course could issue no others; and even the best and most cautious Superintendents discovered, in the course of time, that they had made mistakes in their estimates of teachers' qualifications.  
It results from these various causes, that a considerable number of teachers hold the permanent certificate whose qualifications do not entitle them to it; especially in that essential item, the "art of teaching." In order to protect the public and vindicate the school system, it is obligatory upon Superintendents, under the provisions of the 41st section of the act of 1854, to vacate and annul all such certificates when discovered; and if the holders desire to continue in the vocation, to substitute a temporary certificate of the proper grade.  
To facilitate this exchange, a new edition of the permanent certificate has been prepared, considerably modified in style and appearance, and will be mailed to Superintendents about the time this notice reaches them. They will deliver the new style of certificate, without re-examination, to all such holders of the old style as they are qualified, from what they know of their qualifications, are fairly entitled to it. In all other instances they are instructed to require a re-examination, and grant such certificates as the result may justify. The safety and success of the school system require that the standard of qualification should be high. In all cases a want of tact and skill in the "art of teaching" will be a fatal objection to the issuing of the permanent certificate, no matter how great the superiority of mere scholarship may be.  
**Temporary Certificate.**—A new edition of the temporary certificate, slightly modified, will be printed and mailed at the same time, and can be substituted for the old form as circumstances will permit.  
**Elementary Branches.**—There is a prevalent disposition amongst holders of the temporary certificate to extend their studies to branches not named in it, including even modern languages and the classics, and have them inserted by the Superintendent, while the figures in the elementary branches are not higher than medium; under the impression, apparently, that this addition to their accomplishments would look more respectable and increase their chances for profitable employment. This impression is erroneous, and the practice is not to be commended, because:  
1st. The great want of the time is a practical education.  
2d. The great defect in education, at the present day, is want of thoroughness.  
3d. Wherever else "smatterers" may be tolerated, they cannot be afforded in our common schools—where, above all other places, the instruction imparted, whether in the elementary or higher branches, should bear the impress of genuine merit.  
4th. Such enlarged certificates, if intended for private schools, are of no official value; and if intended for the public schools, would fail of their object, as the higher class of schools is not sufficiently numerous to afford employment to a tribe of the applicants who would thus present themselves. And if it were otherwise, such certificates would carry with them their own condemnation, and defeat their intended purpose.  
Thoroughness in the elementary branches is of paramount importance, and is earnestly enjoined upon Superintendents and Teachers.  
**County Institutes.**—Wherever Superintendents have had no experience in conducting Institutes, they should secure the best assistance that their influence or resources can command. After the ice is once broken, they can rely upon themselves and their principal teachers to a good purpose. But a great deal depends upon a right start; and to ignore or discard the assistance of experienced instructors would be as unphilosophical and impolitic as for the unledged teacher to work his own way in the school room, without the advantages of either experience or normal training.  
**Private Examinations.**—These have been tolerated heretofore to an injurious extent, and have consumed the time and seriously crippled the movements of Superintendents. The regularly appointed public examinations are open to all applicants, and it is their duty to present themselves in their proper district. Superintendents should refuse to make private examinations, except for special reasons, and not then unless applicants bring a written request from at least three members of the board of directors who desire to employ them.

## Philosophy in Court.

We observe that a prize is offered this year by Harvard College of \$500 to any pupil who shall be decided by the Corporation to have attained the greatest skill in mathematics. The person who offers the prize, which is only proposed for this year, is Uriah A. Boyden, a civil engineer of Boston.  
This gentleman was concerned in a suit last year, brought by him in the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, against the Atlantic Cotton Mills of Lawrence, which was of a very interesting character, but has never so far as we are aware, come before the public. Mr. Boyden had agreed to make a turbine water wheel for the Atlantic Cotton Mills, which should save or "utilize," as it is termed, seventy-six per cent. of the water power; if he succeeded in saving that per centage, he was to have \$20,000, if not, he was to have nothing; and for every one per cent. above that he was to receive \$350. Mr. Boyden went to work and produced a wheel which saved, as he affirmed, ninety-six per cent. The labor involved in this suit may be imagined, from the fact that Mr. Boyden spent more than \$5,000 in the mere mathematical calculations. The Company had provided no sufficient means of testing the question practically, and as the per centage claimed by Mr. Boyden was altogether unprecedented, they contested the claim.  
The case went into Court. No jury on the globe could comprehend the question, and the learned Bench also found himself entirely at fault. The case was accordingly referred to three well-chosen parties: Judge Joel Parker, of Cambridge; Professor Benjamin Pierce, the mathematician, and James B. Francis, of Lowell, the agent of the united companies of Lowell in the management of the common water power. Professor Parker furnished the law, Mr. Francis the practical acquaintance with hydraulics, and Professor Pierce the mathematical knowledge. That learned geometer had to dive deep and study long before the problem was settled. But settled it was, at last, and in Mr. Boyden's favor, to whom the referees awarded the sum of eight thousand seven hundred dollars. Mr. Boyden had previously constructed turbine wheels which utilized respectively the extraordinary amounts of eighty-nine and ninety per cent; the last wheel utilizing ninety-six per cent, exceeds anything of the kind that was ever made.—The wheel is one hundred and four and three quarter inches in diameter.—New York Post.

## Every Man His Own Insurer.

The following suggestions to housekeepers, merchants, and those erecting new buildings, may not be valueless:  
Keep matches in metal boxes, and out of the reach of children. Wax matches are particularly dangerous and should be kept out of the way of rats and mice. Fill fluid or camphine lamps only by daylight, and never near a fire or light. Far better deposit them with them altogether. Do not deposit coal or wood ashes in wooden vessels, and be sure burning cinders are extinguished before deposited. Never take a light or ash-pan under a stair case. Never take a light to examine a gas meter. Be careful never to place gas or other lights near curtains.—Never take a light into a closet. Do not read in bed by candle or lamp light. Place glass shades over gas lights in show windows, and do not crowd goods near them. No smoking should be permitted in warehouses or barns. Where furnaces are used, the principal register should always be fastened open. Build all chimneys from the earth. Stove pipes should be at least four inches from woodwork, guarded by tin, and enter substantial brick chimneys horizontally.  
A young man, desirous of marrying a daughter of a well known merchant, after many attempts to broach the subject to the old gentleman, in a very stuttering manner commenced—"Mr. O—, are you willing to let me have your daughter Jane?" "Of course I am," gruffly replied the old man; "and I wish you would get some other likely fellows to marry the rest of them!"

## How to Educate Children.

Hall's Journal of Health contains the following suggestive paragraph, which ought to be remembered and acted upon by every parent and guardian in the land. The writer says:—"Had I the choice of only four things to be taught my children, they should be: To sing well, to read well, to write well, and to sketch well. Perfection in these will earn their possessor a maintenance in any country, and will enable him to amuse himself or entertain a company, whether it be under a rock in the desert or upon a crag in the sea."  
The price asked for Mount Vernon and the Tomb of Washington is \$200,000.—It has been proposed in Virginia that the Freemasons make up the money necessary to purchase it by the subscription of one dollar or less from each individual.  
The Masonic Order of the United States numbers three hundred thousand persons, and includes a large portion of all the distinguished civil, military and professional men.

## A Few Words on Dogs.

At this season of the year much fear is entertained for dogs becoming rabid or mad from the supposed effects of hot weather.—Statistics of rabies go to show that, contrary to popular prejudice, it occurs most frequently in cold countries, and during autumn, winter and spring, (Trans. Am. Med. Ass. 1856.) In Prussia, from 1810 to 1819—1658 persons died from hydrophobia. (See Edinburgh Med. and Surg. Jour. 1821.) It is of frequent occurrence in Russia, Poland, Northern Europe, and in the Northern States of this Union. Dr. Mease says:—"During several hard winter months, within my remembrance in this city, (Philadelphia,) especially 1779 and 1780, dogs very commonly went mad." Rabies seems to be a rare disease in tropical climates. Dr. Savary says:—"The disease is not known in the island of Cyprus or Syria." Larrey and Volney say:—"It is never seen in Egypt." Dr. Barrow says:—"It is extremely rare at the Cape of Good Hope, and in the interior of Caffaria." Drs. Hamilton and Mowley both say that "there was not a single case in Jamaica for a period of fifty years previous to 1783." The prevalence of rabies in the island of Crete is in consequence of the occupation of the inhabitants, who are dog fanciers, and the breeding of choice varieties of dogs for exportation is a source of considerable revenue.  
The bite of an enraged dog (as when fighting) not affected with hydrophobia, may produce hydrophobia in man, (see Morgagni, Dr. Le Dux, Dr. Pispombe, Dr. Newman, &c. &c.) The true cause of the disease in the dog is not known, but the most probable causes are want of proper food and pure water. An abundant supply of cold water for dogs would be a greater protection against hydrophobia than "muzzles," which are worn only a part of the year, while hydrophobia occurs almost as frequently in winter as in summer. It is a common practice and a very serious mistake, when a person receives a bite from a dog supposed to be rabid, to kill the dog; this should in no case be done, but secure the animal and keep it in a safe place until it is fully known whether the dog really has hydrophobia. Dogs are subject to fits, when they foam at the mouth and run around barking in a strange and somewhat dangerous manner, and persons are frequently bitten during such a paroxysm. Such bites are dangerous, certainly, but not necessarily fatal. Hydrophobia, which is fatal, may or may not follow such bites, but if the dog is killed the awful dread and uncertainty of that frightful disease hangs over the unfortunate sufferer, lengthening his agony until death itself would be a relief—whereas if the dog is kept and does not become rabid, the mind is at once relieved from all anxiety. Hence, as a matter of prudence and relief to the patient, the life of the dog should not immediately be taken.—Lodge.

## Drougham on the Press.

In the course of a discussion in the British House of Lords, on an article in the London Examiner, alleged to be a libel on Lord Plunkett, Bishop of Tuam, Lord Brougham remarked that, with regard to the article which he had read, it was, no doubt, strictly speaking, a breach of the privileges of their Lordships' House; but of what use would it be to contend with the press in such cases as these? He remembered, on one occasion his friend, Mr. Marriott, was represented in a newspaper as having said, at a public meeting in the city, that he would not go in procession to that "d—d old church," meaning some particular church in the city of London. He felt much annoyed at the circumstance, and wrote a letter to the editor, in which he stated that his actual words were, that he would not go to that "damp old church." [A laugh.] The next day there appeared in the newspaper a statement to this effect:—"We have given a place in our columns to the contradiction which Mr. Marriott has made; but at the same time, we think it right to say that we have referred the matter to our reporter who is certain that he used the words 'd—d old church,' and to add that we have the most perfect confidence in the accuracy of our reporter." [Great Laughter.] The gentleman complained to him of that treatment, and he (Lord Brougham) recommended him in future not to be too hasty in contradicting any statement that might appear in a newspaper.

## County Superintendent's Postage.

The postage on all official letters and documents to and from the School Department is paid by the Department. But each district should defray the expense of its own local correspondence out of its own treasury. County Superintendents are not provided with funds to pay postage on their home official business, which, though made up of small items, amounts to a large sum in the course of a year, and becomes oppressive. Teachers, directors, and others, who have occasion to write to the County Superintendent on official business, should always enclose a three cent stamp to pay the return postage. The postage paid by directors should be duly refunded to them out of the district treasury.

## Suggestions.

Some of the suggestions to Superintendents this month will interest Teachers; and their co-operation in the views of the Department, and the movements of Superintendents, is respectfully invited. The success of the school system, and the dignity and prosperity of the profession, depend upon the impartial fidelity of the Superintendents, and the voluntary efforts of Teachers.

## Spots on the Sun.

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2d. The great defect in education, at the present day, is want of thoroughness.  
3d. Wherever else "smatterers" may be tolerated, they cannot be afforded in our common schools—where, above all other places, the instruction imparted, whether in the elementary or higher branches, should bear the impress of genuine merit.  
4th. Such enlarged certificates, if intended for private schools, are of no official value; and if intended for the public schools, would fail of their object, as the higher class of schools is not sufficiently numerous to afford employment to a tribe of the applicants who would thus present themselves. And if it were otherwise, such certificates would carry with them their own condemnation, and defeat their intended purpose.  
Thoroughness in the elementary branches is of paramount importance, and is earnestly enjoined upon Superintendents and Teachers.  
**County Institutes.**—Wherever Superintendents have had no experience in conducting Institutes, they should secure the best assistance that their influence or resources can command. After the ice is once broken, they can rely upon themselves and their principal teachers to a good purpose. But a great deal depends upon a right start; and to ignore or discard the assistance of experienced instructors would be as unphilosophical and impolitic as for the unledged teacher to work his own way in the school room, without the advantages of either experience or normal training.  
**Private Examinations.**—These have been tolerated heretofore to an injurious extent, and have consumed the time and seriously crippled the movements of Superintendents. The regularly appointed public examinations are open to all applicants, and it is their duty to present themselves in their proper district. Superintendents should refuse to make private examinations, except for special reasons, and not then unless applicants bring a written request from at least three members of the board of directors who desire to employ them.

## To Directors.

The Secretary, whether appointed District Superintendent or not, by the school directors, should be selected with care, and should be a man of business to see that all needful preparations are duly made for the opening of the fall and winter schools. Public notice should be given of the time the schools of the district will open, so that parents can have the children's clothing ready, and text-books provided, in order that pupils may commence punctually on the first day of the term. He should see that the school houses are in order, broken windows mended, general repairs made, and fuel provided. When the board have engaged the teachers, the Secretary should see that a written contract be entered into with each one, so as to avoid dispute and consequent ill-feeling afterwards. Blank contracts can readily be procured of the printers at the county seat for a mere trifle. The will save much labor and insure greater accuracy. The collector and treasurer should also be looked after, in order that the funds may be at hand to punctually meet the teacher's wages and incidental expenses.  
This forethought may be a little troublesome, but will save a vast deal more of trouble and perplexity in the outcome. And at any rate, public duties are of public importance, and not to be lightly regarded; and if any incumbent is not satisfied with the duties belonging to his position, nothing can be easier than to vacate the post, and permit it to be filled by some one who will not shrink from its responsibilities.  
The Secretary should, however, receive a reasonable compensation for his services, wherever the resources of the district will justify it.  
**Uniformity of Text-books.**—The provisions of the 25th section of the act of 1854, were intended to secure good text-books and exclude poor ones, but more especially to establish local uniformity, for the reason that without such uniformity pupils cannot be arranged into suitable classes, and the different branches taught to the best advantage.—Without proper classification, the efforts of the teacher can accomplish but little practical good for the school; and the school term results in little better than a loss of time and money for all parties. Text-books are now published in almost countless thousands, and book agents are to be found everywhere, seeking to introduce them; so that directors cannot justly complain that ample facilities are not furnished to their hand, for the discharge of this important branch of their official duty. They should make the best selection that may be practicable, and then firmly adhere to it until fully introduced. But this done, frequent changes are to be avoided, and the annual meeting required by the law, only used to correct palpable mistakes that may have been made in former selections. But directors should resist importunities to introduce the works of one author or publisher merely to displace those of another when the difference between the two is practically immaterial. Frequent changes of this nature defeat the object of the law, create great dissatisfaction on the part of the parents, and prejudice the public against the school system; and are therefore greatly to be deprecated. The greater portion of text-books now issued from the press are so nearly equal in substantial merit, that the particular series selected is of much less importance than the uniformity of such as are used.—The great dependence of the school, under all circumstances, must be upon the Teacher, not upon the text-book. A good teacher can be very successful with an inferior set of text-books, if he but have enough of the same kind to enable him to arrange his pupils into classes; while a poor teacher will fail, no matter what the character and assortment of books.

## County Superintendent's Postage.

The postage on all official letters and documents to and from the School Department is paid by the Department. But each district should defray the expense of its own local correspondence out of its own treasury. County Superintendents are not provided with funds to pay postage on their home official business, which, though made up of small items, amounts to a large sum in the course of a year, and becomes oppressive. Teachers, directors, and others, who have occasion to write to the County Superintendent on official business, should always enclose a three cent stamp to pay the return postage. The postage paid by directors should be duly refunded to them out of the district treasury.

## Suggestions.

Some of the suggestions to Superintendents this month will interest Teachers; and their co-operation in the views of the Department, and the movements of Superintendents, is respectfully invited. The success of the school system, and the dignity and prosperity of the profession, depend upon the impartial fidelity of the Superintendents, and the voluntary efforts of Teachers.

## Spots on the Sun.

According to observations made by M. Rudolphe Wolf, Director of the Observatory of Berne, it appears that the number of spots on the sun have their maximum and minimum at the same time as the variations of the needle. It follows from this, that the causes of these two changes on the sun and on the earth must be the same, and consequently, from this discovery, it will be possible to solve several important problems, in connection with these well-known phenomena, the solution of which has hitherto never been attempted.

The bar-rooms in New York are closing on Sundays. No cock-tails, bitters, or eye-openers! Even the German lager-beer dealers have to succumb. One fellow put over his shop—"No admittance on Holy Sabbath, except on Private Matters," and in German, "Hintere Thuer Offen for Meine Boarders."

Flowers have bloomed in our prairies and passed away, from age to age, unseen by man, and multitudes of virtues have been acted out in obscure places, without note or admiration. The sweetness of both has gone up to heaven!

Labor and prudence relieve us from three great evils—vice, want and indolence.  
India rubber pens are said to go further than any other in use.

In France, all ladies who do not possess a decided ample fortune, make it a point to learn some practical art of business, which in cases of reverses of fortune they may use to obtain a living.

The price asked for Mount Vernon and the Tomb of Washington is \$200,000.—It has been proposed in Virginia that the Freemasons make up the money necessary to purchase it by the subscription of one dollar or less from each individual.  
The Masonic Order of the United States numbers three hundred thousand persons, and includes a large portion of all the distinguished civil, military and professional men.