THE OWL

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO
MENTAL IMPROVEMENT.

EDITED BY
THE BOYS OF SANTA CLARA COLLEGE.

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## CONTENTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AN INCIDENT NEAR ORO FINO</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A CYNICAL VALENTINE</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A CALIFORNIAN'S OPINION OF HIS COUNTRY</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVALANCHES</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GUNPOWDER: ITS DISCOVERY, MANUFACTURE AND USES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Chap. I—Its Discovery</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECHOES FROM A NEST OF OWLETS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. A Rush Judgment</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The Dog and the Lion—A Fable</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. An Inhuman Official</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A HUSBAND'S VALENTINE</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUNRISE</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHRISTMAS AT SANTA CLARA OF THE MISSISSIPPI</td>
<td>264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LETTER FROM OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDITOR'S TABLE</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDLE NOTES</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OILY</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF HONOR</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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SANTA CLARA.
AN INCIDENT NEAR ORO FINO.

(EV'ERY body knows where the Oro Fino mines are,—but no; when I come to think of it, every body doesn’t know where they are, by any means; and my Eastern reader, who neither knows nor cares where they are, is just about to pass this article by, as requiring too minute a geographical knowledge of the Territories, to be interesting to him. But the truth is, that it matters little whether you know where they are, or not. And if you don’t know, you need not look for the name on the map; for it is not to be found there,—at least in Mitchell’s Atlas. Not even the little town of Oro Fino—which always seemed to be trying to scramble up that steep hill-side on which it was built, till, at last, it weakened, and died in the attempt,—is represented by the slightest hint of a dot; although its still smaller neighbor, with a high-sounding title—which I will not give, just for spite—is blazoned forth to the world and handed down to posterity as the capital of that county of Idaho Territory in which it stands.

But we will let that pass, with your permission. There is, between Oro Fino and the Clear Water River, a table-mountain, on the top of which the road is almost level for the distance of about twenty-five miles. And at either end of this piece of level road is a steep hill, the angle of elevation being an incredible number of degrees, which I will not mention, for the sake of my reputation for veracity. Altogether, the distance
between the river and the town is about twenty-eight miles.

The mountain is, for the most part covered with thick forests of tamarack or American larch; but here and there one might find patches of prairie land covered with the much prized mountain bunch-grass, and in some places abounding with wild hay. In one little neck of a prairie of this kind, several square miles in area, stands, or stood, a double log-cabin. On this cabin was a cloth sign on which was painted, in large black letters, that commonest of common names for way-side inns, "Half-Way House." The "ranch" on which it was, and the house itself, were conducted by a gentleman whose name we will change to Alton. And here we will also remark, that none of the names used in this paper, are the real names of the persons spoken of.

The distance from Oro Fino to this house was considered to be about fourteen miles. There was, however, a good deal of disputing about the number of miles, especially in winter, in which season it was variously estimated at from fourteen to thirty miles, according to the strength of the walker,—for riding was almost out of the question. I remember one occasion on which there was a party of about a dozen who made the journey in one day; and no two of the number agreed as to the distance. Finally, when all but one had straggled into the station, they began to compare estimates of the distance they had made. One said twenty miles, another sixteen, another twenty-five, and so on. Just then, the remaining man,—a short, fat Irishman, noted for his witty replies—came up, and on being asked the usual question, "How far is it?" replied, "Jist the length of a bottle o'whiskey, begor," and held up his empty bottle as a silent confirmation of the truth. And so, the point being disputed, the reader may choose for himself any number of miles which he would wish the distance to be.

During the winter of '61—2,—that hard winter that saw California flooded, Oregon drowned, and Idaho frozen,—many a man was rescued from death in the snow by the inmates of that house. The very dogs even may be said to have saved many lives; for oftentimes in the night, when the proprietor and his little family, and the weary travellers who would be resting there for the night, would be sitting together before the warm, bright fire, the dogs would begin their deep, loud barking, which was almost always a sign of the approach of some wanderer. As soon as they were heard in the cabin, the inmates would run to the door and listen, not even daring to whisper, straining their ears to catch even the slightest echo of a "halloo." If none was heard, they would take out pistols, and fire
them off in the air; and if these signals brought an answer, either in the form of the report of a pistol, or a shout, within three or four minutes, two, or mere, according to the number of men that were there, would start out, buttoned up closely, armed with a revolver, with a cruet full of the best brandy, and a little bread or a few cakes for the lost man. Sometimes they would find the object of their search within half a mile of the house, half crazy with hunger, bewildered by the waste of snow, lying in the well-trodden path, having, as they termed it, "given out", that is, being completely exhausted, and too weak to move another hundred yards, if that would have saved him.

Men thus rescued would sometimes complain of those who came after them, saying that they wanted to be left alone, that they did not feel uncomfortable nor cold. This was a sure sign that they had begun to be frozen, for in the first stage of freezing, a man whose strength is entirely exhausted, who has been worried by anxious cares for his life, during, perhaps, many days, feels a delightful sensation of rest stealing over his wearied limbs; he is too cold to feel pain any longer; and, in fact, the whole man—body and spirit—is benumbed. There is a total absence of pain; and in that the victim is pleased, and sleep steals softly over him. But if he is not soon aroused from that sleep, he will never awaken from it.

They would arouse the benumbed man, it being sometimes necessary to threaten to shoot him, in order to force him to come with them; and, sometimes, even this threat being of no avail, they would have to throw him around in the snow, and handle him roughly; meanwhile, receiving with indifference, his muttered curses, for "trying to bring him back to misery". Then they would pour down his throat the reviving liquor, which might then appropriately have been called the *elixir vitae*, and give him whatever they had brought for him to eat. He would thus be enabled to reach the house, assisted by his preservers; and when he had reached it, and fully awakened from his lethargy, never could man be more grateful.

One night, as the dwellers in this lone, though not lonely, mountain home, were sitting chatting around the bright hearth, where the fire crackled and blazed, lighting up the bare walls of the rough cabin—about nine o'clock—when they were thinking of retiring, suddenly, the dogs outside began to bark furiously; and shortly after, a horseman rode up to the door and dismounted. He was the first horseman that had come for a long time; and the poor beast he rode could not have carried him another mile that night. He had a couple of pairs of blankets on his horse, and
in them was rolled up a haunch of venison.

But none of these things were noticed at first; for the man said he was starving, and he was straightway brought into the house, his ears and feet examined, and a supper cooked for him; he in the meantime giving vent to many exclamations concerning the coldness of the weather, his very "narrow escape," (as he called it) etc.

When supper had been prepared, he sat down with an eager appetite, and remarked upon the quality of the coffee, the tenderness of the steak—which had been kept frozen during nearly the whole winter—and such like matters; until, when he had finished his meal, becoming communicative, he informed his hosts that he had come from Lewiston, and that there was another man along with him. "But why didn't you tell us that as soon as you came? It is now eleven o'clock, and it is death to venture out thus late, on a night like this."

"Oh, he's all right," was the reply; "I left him with matches, blankets, and a revolver, down in that deserted cabin about six miles below here. He said he did not want to come on. In fact, he didn't have but two-and-a-half in money; and I don't think he could afford to stop here."

"Hang the money," replied Alton. "Did you think that we could hesitate to save a man's life because he had no money?"

"Well," replied the traveller, whose name was Howard, "I think he is safe for to-night; so you need not trouble yourself about him. If, however, you fear for his life, you may go after him; as for me, I am going to bed."

Neither the proprietor, nor the other gentleman in the room—a certain Mr. Goodman—had been in good health for the past few days; and, under the circumstances, hearing that Howard's friend, whom we will call Langley, was probably safe, and the distance to the deserted cabin and back, being a good day's travel for a robust man, they did not venture on the enterprise of going after him.

In fact, they saw that it was impossible for two men in poor health, to do anything in the matter until morning; for had they started out, they would probably both have perished on the way. And besides, the man was, they understood, in comfortable quarters. For, although Howard had not left with him any of the venison which he had, the man would at least have warmth till the morrow, when he could be furnished with provisions from the "Half Way House."

All went to bed, somewhat ill at ease, however; and, as the fire went out, and the rafters began to crack with the cold, and the howlings of the wolves, and the long, pitiful scream of the panther, came closer
and closer, they thought of the man deserted by his "friend" in the snow, and probably sitting up through the night to keep a fire in that doorless, and windowless, and widely-chinked log cabin.

Early the next morning the proprietor arose; and he determined that the weary traveller who had been left behind, must be brought to the house, warmed and fed. At first he had intended to await his arrival; but when Howard appeared at breakfast, he for the first time informed them that his travelling companion had not been very well on the day before, and that he might not be able to reach the house alone. Alton then asked Howard whether he would not go back with himself and Mr. Goodman, to find the man and bring him to the house. No, he would not do it; neither did he wish them to take his horse in order that the sick man might ride. But Alton, after first offering to pay for the use of the horse, and for the horse itself if necessary, and still finding Howard stubborn, said that he valued the life of one man more than one day of another's time, or the life of another's horse, and that therefore he would take the horse, Mr. Howard's protestations to the contrary notwithstanding. And he did take it, and in company with Mr. Goodman, started out on the Lewiston trail on his charitable mission.

They found the man, Langley, about three miles from the cabin. He was as helpless as a child; and it was all that their united strength could do to place him on the horse. Then they led the horse back to the house-door, where, with a calm indifference, his late fellow traveller, asked him some commonplace question, the import of which I do not now remember. They helped him off the horse, and brought him into the cabin, his limbs being as useless as sticks.

When the man had been brought into the house, it was found that both his feet were frozen up to the ankles. They were as white as marble, and to the touch they were as hard; and they seemed to have been reduced in size, for they were hardly greater in thickness than the hand of an ordinary person. As for feeling, they might have been cut off without any pain to the owner.

When it was found that his feet were frozen, Mr. and Mrs. Alton, and Mr. Goodman immediately set to work trying to take the frost from them in such a manner that they might not become inflamed. By placing the patient near the fire, with his feet in a tub of cold water, they gave him the benefit of warmth for his body, and still kept the heat from his feet. Then, for three long hours they rubbed the poor man's feet with their hands, trying to restore some slight circulation in them. Thus
they labored until, their hands being blistered, they found it impossible to continue the operation. Then the lady of the house prepared poultices of scraped potatoes,—the kind usually employed in such cases—and Langley being placed in bed, the poultices were applied to his feet. In a few hours they were taken off, and found to be frozen into solid masses. They were then replaced by fresh ones; and so this work continued for several days.

Meanwhile, Howard had gone on to Oro Fino; and after he had gone, Langley, who seemed to have some secret dread of him, told the true story of the affair, which ran, as well as I can remember at this distance of time, as follows.

He had a wife and family, in Salem, Oregon; and it seems that he owned enough property in that place to support them. But in this hard winter he found himself away up in Lewiston, far from friends and home, communication between that place and the rest of the world being kept up very irregularly a part of the time, and sometimes broken off entirely, and with only five dollars which he might call his own. He wished to go to the mines, expecting to meet friends there who would lend him money to support him during the winter. The journey being a perilous one, and one which required many days at that time, he feared to undertake it alone; and as Howard, with whom he had been acquainted, and who, I believe, had been a friend of his, was about to make the trip on horseback, Langley asked him, for friendship’s sake, to help him along in his present straightened circumstances, making a promise which he would certainly be able to fulfill, which was, that he would soon repay him for his trouble. Howard was glad of his company, at first; and I believe that they made an arrangement that each should ride, a part of the time whilst the other walked. But when they had been a few days out, Langley became ill, on account of having, when thirsty, taken a handful of snow, now and then, and eaten it as he walked along—an imprudence of which many travellers are guilty, and which sometimes even results in death.

Often, as he walked along in the narrow trail, he would suddenly stop, and with a groan, lie back upon the soft wall of snow, and place his hands upon his stomach, indicating that he was in great pain. But his companion did not much notice this, though often he was obliged to force Langley along; the latter begging him, in a childish manner, to go on and let him die, or to shoot him on the spot. At last, one evening, when they were within two days’ travel of Oro Fino, Langley, sick and despondent, found that he could not continue the journey, and the
magnanimous Howard, instead of treating him as an invalid, and obliging him to take the horse and ride to the next station, or at least of making a fire and bestowing him as comfortably as possible in the deserted cabin above mentioned, left him with one blanket and a pistol, told him that he (Langley) would find the deserted cabin, on a-head, not far from the road, and with this, spurred on and left the sick man alone,—alone in the midst of a forest abounding with fierce wild animals, with six feet of snow on the ground, and six or seven miles from any inhabited house.

Had Howard given the truth of the matter on that night, Alton and Goodman, unwell as they were, and desperate as would have been the attempt, would have tried to rescue the man. But it seems that Howard was withheld by shame from telling the truth.

Langley, however, did not stop long where he had been left; but made a last attempt to reach the Half-Way House, desolate and dispirited as he was. But it was in vain; notwithstanding that he walked, during the night, to within about a mile of the station. Then, overcome by cold, fatigue and hunger, he lay down in the snow, fully expecting never to awaken from the sleep into which he was falling. He now lost all remembrance; but those who went after him saw the place in which he had lain down by the side of the trail, and came to the conclusion that he must, shortly after having done so, have been roused from his lethargy by the wolves. At any rate, when he arose from his cold bed, he was bewildered; so that instead of coming on towards the station, he mistook his way and was, when overaken by them, retracing his steps, crawling or walking as best he could.

This happened in the very coldest part of that cold winter; and Mr. Alton thinking it his duty to leave no means untried by which a life might be saved, undertook, one day, to make the dangerous journey to the town, fourteen miles distant, in order to procure a regular doctor for the invalid. It was on one of those cold, cold days, when not a breath of wind stirred, when the sky had a bright, leaden hue, but the sun never appeared during the whole day, and the morning and evening seemed blended into one, so quickly did one follow the other. It was not without fears for his life that he started from the house; and many an anxious prayer followed him on his way. He was, however, a vigorous man; and being now almost entirely well, he walked and ran the distance in two hours and a half. He found the “Doctor.” This individual would only come after being first coaxed, then begged, and finally threatened. Would that I could describe him. Oh, what tremendously big words
he always used, and how horribly he misapplied them! But time has obscured many things which were then deeply impressed on my memory; and I have even forgotten the name of this jolly, boisterous, drunken "doctor".

The "doctor" said the man’s feet ought to be off, but could not now be amputated, and that even if they could, he had not anything to perform the operation with.

It soon became plain that Langley must die. About two weeks after he had been brought into the house, he called Mrs. Alton to his bed side, one day, and asked her if she would write a letter to his wife and family. She was the only one whom he would allow to approach him in his ravings; for he seemed to think that all the rest were continually trying to shoot him. Even the very coats hanging on the rough pegs in the walls, were transformed by his raving brain into human forms pointing pistols at his head.

But now he was sane, and evidently knew that he must send his last words to his wife and children, whom it appears from the letter which he dictated, and the manner in which he spoke of them, he dearly loved.

The kind lady wrote the letter as he dictated, with the tears falling from her cheeks upon almost every word she wrote. That evening, just as a crowd of twelve or fourteen tired and hungry travellers had entered and were eating their supper, Langley breathed his last, going from this world with an indifference that could only have been begotten by the trials and sufferings of his illness. His last words were an expression of gratitude to those who had so kindly cared for him.

A rude coffin was made for him, from the bed of an old wagon, the only available lumber; and the lady of the house sewed together, as a shroud, some linen which his late fellow-traveller, who was a merchant, was generous enough to present, after having been frightened almost out of his wits by a number of men in town who had heard of the affair, and threatened to hang him. Then, on the opposite side of a sort of "dry creek", and also of the little neck of prairie from where the house stood, and about two hundred yards from it, the snow was cleared away, and in the frozen ground a grave was dug. Here he was interred, at the edge of the forest. After the grave had been refilled, the snow was replaced over it, in order the better to secure it from the keen-scented wolves.

And there they left him. The long hoary moss of the tamaracks hung down, silvered with frost, over the grave, fit emblem of mourning. The wind sighed through the tops of the rugged trees, making its sad forest music, uninterrupted by any other sound.
But the clouds have now cleared away; and as the sun goes down, and the long shadows of the trees stretch out over the bright snow, there comes from the far distance a sound that makes the blood of the traveller turn cold with fear. Nearer and nearer it comes, as faster and faster the shadows speed across the prairie. At last when the sun's level rays have kissed for the last time those grand old snow-clad mountains in the east, turning their white into golden, and green and violet, and all the bright colors of the rainbow, and when the moon arises to make her nightly journey, the faint sound that was first heard, having grown louder and louder, and more distinct as it approaches, becomes one universal roar. The short, sharp, fierce barking of a thousand coyotes, sounds and echoes in every direction; and then the long, doleful howlings of the many-voiced and myriad wolves, seem to fill heaven and earth with trembling sound; and ever and anon, the long, shrill, piercing yell of the panther, joins the mighty chorus, till sky and wood seem to be echoing back to each other the mournful music. And these are the sounds of woe, that echo over that lonely grave on the mountain.

A CYNICAL VALENTINE.

[An unmathematical, ungallant, and misanthropic wretch, whom we will not name, for his own sake, wrote on a piece of foolscap, which contains scribblings that clearly prove him to have just failed in demonstrating Napier's Analogies, the following acrostic.—Ed.]

February 14th: 1873.

Come to my longing lips mistress most sweet!
Innocent art thou of wanton flirtation.
Give me the art to write soft flowing feet,
And fill the smooth numbers with thy inspiration.
Raise up my thoughts as thou ever canst raise them!
Even though poor be these verses of mine;
Thou wilt accept them though no critic praise them;
To thee I indite them my sweet Valentine.
Ever through life shall my homage be thine.
A CALIFORNIAN'S OPINION OF HIS COUNTRY

(By Mrs. J. L. ROWE.)

WE'RE the finest State in the Union:
    That is what we are!
Do you know 'tis my opinion
    That that thar' Constellation up in Heaven
    Was named from our Grizzly Bar.

We're richer than our neighbors;
    That is why, I'm told,
To pay our State surveyor
    It costs such a heap of gold:
More than that bare Nevada
    Pays for her age, I'll be bold!

Not that I mean to complain, sir,
    Although the times are dull;
For do we not maintain, sir,
    We own the Pliocene Skull?

And the 'logical survey, sir,
    Has proved, beyond a doubt,
It belongs to the oldest man, sir,
    That's ever been found out!

We're richer than our neighbors;
    And older—though so young:
"You bet" this State belabors
    All foes she gets among.

Yes, sirr! We'll whip creation;
    For—though I scorn to boast—
There's no or-gan-i-za-tion
    Like this "Pacific Coast."

We're the finest State in the Union:
    Yes; that is what we are:
And I'm fixed in my opinion
    That that thar'
Constellation up in Heaven
    Was named from our Grizzly Bar!
Avalanches

(W. Davis, 4th English.)

AN avalanche is the falling of a considerable mass of earth or snow, which has become loosened by the water made by the thawing of the snow in the spring; or by the rain of winter.

The word avalanche first originated in Switzerland, among the Alps; and is generally used in speaking of those terrific land, ice, or snow slides, which are there so common.

We do not often employ this word in speaking of the same phenomena in the mountains of our own country, which we call simply land-slides, or snow-slides, as the case may be. Our snow-slides are neither so frequent nor so destructive as the Alpine avalanches; and the word, so full of terror for the Alpine mountaineer, seems to me to belong to those regions which gave it birth. A light breeze, or even the tinkling of a little bell is enough to start an avalanche. Hence the Swiss mountaineers before setting out on a journey through the mountains, in the spring, fire guns and cannons to agitate the air, and thus hasten the fall of the threatening masses of rocks, ice and snow. During the whole of the journey the stillness of death reigns; for a whisper may bring death itself upon them. Each point or jutting cliff is an object of dread. Even the bells of their mules are stopped up with tow.

In the green mountains of Vermont and in the white mountains of New Hampshire, whole sides of mountains are loosened by the melting of snow and the spring rains, and slide with the rapidity of lightning into the valley or river below, carrying destruction and desolation in their path. Houses and villages are swept away, and their ill-fated occupants buried alive.

The mountainous districts of America are not so thickly settled as those of Europe; therefore, land-slides are not such objects of terror; although they are quite frequent and terrific in some parts.

Few things are more grand or more awful to look upon than
a mountain-slide or avalanche. No sooner has it begun than it is over. The traveller is fastened to the spot; he has not power to move; and when all is past, he rubs his eyes or pulls his hair to see if he has not been dreaming; but there is the bare side of the mountain which tells him that the sight he has just witnessed was but too real.

The avalanches of Switzerland are of ice and snow; while those of America, or at least of that part of it in which we reside, are mostly of earth and rocks, and are therefore more properly called landslides. As the avalanches rush down, they increase in size and velocity; and when they strike the valley, the ground is shaken, as if by an earthquake, for miles around.

The noise made by an avalanche is louder and more terrible than thunder. In the Alpine villages the very word avalanche is enough to strike terror into every heart. After the descent of an avalanche, the mountain presents a most desolate aspect; its sides are bare, its trees are torn up by the roots and their branches scattered about in every direction; houses are borne away miles from their original sites; and the mangled forms of their once happy occupants are dismal objects to look upon. The once beautiful valley is a dreary waste; its green fields are covered with the debris of the fallen mountain; and the inhabitants of the villages on the mountain side have met with a sudden and unexpected death.

The avalanche is more dreaded by the Alpine villagers than anything else. They can find shelter from the storm, and from the mountain torrent; but from the avalanche there is no escape.

When the bold eagle, the king of the mountains, hears the roar of the falling mass, and sees it bearing down rapidly upon him, he is frightened, and flies to a great height, and keeps soaring around the brow of his native cliff. His mournful screams for his lost brood add terror to the scene; and when the fearful event is over, he flies back to the place where his nest had been, and where he had raised many a happy brood, only to find its ruins. His laments are heard near the spot for several days; but eventually he flies away to build a new nest, with the assistance of another mate.
GUNPOWDER: ITS DISCOVERY, MANUFACTURE AND USES

(GERMANN B. PEYTON, Mental Philosophy.)

CHAP. I.—Its Discovery.

It is impossible to state with certainty when and where this most valuable and universally esteemed gift of science was discovered. Many views, however, some plausible, some highly improbable, have been advanced upon the subject; and it shall be my endeavor, in this brief paper, to weigh these impartially in the balance, so that we may ascertain, as far as may be, the real truth of the matter.

The honor of the discovery of this powerful explosive is popularly attributed to a German monk and alchemist, named Schwartz, who flourished towards the end of the fifteenth century. This man, as the story goes, was one day at work in his laboratory, (in search, probably, of the Philosopher's Stone,) when chance led him to throw into his mortar, simultaneously, some saltpetre, some sulphur, and some charcoal. These substances he proceeded to pulverize with his pestle; when, lo! a mass of flame suddenly sprang from under it, and injured him so severely that he was permanently deprived of his sight. To this story, however, many objections may be made. In the first place, it looks highly improbable that a man should place together three totally different substances, each of which is essentially necessary to the composition of gunpowder, without having any ultimate object in view. Secondly, we may argue that had Schwartz entertained any suspicion as to the probable result of the experiment, he would never, if he was a sane man, have exposed himself to injury by pounding such a mixture in a mortar. Lastly, even supposing the first two objections answered, he cannot be the real discoverer of gunpowder, since it is mentioned in documents written at a time far more ancient than that in which he lived; as I shall hereinafter demonstrate.

Roger Bacon is also credited by many with this discovery; and indeed his claims to it are far stronger than those of Schwartz. Writing in the year 1270, he mentions the compound
with much particularity, not claiming for himself the honor of its discovery, but speaking of it as something already in common use at that time, and adapted to the amusement of children. His receipt was: "But yet, take ye of saltpetre with pounded sulphur and charcoal, and thus ye will make thunder and lightning, if you know how to prepare them." This was written, as I have stated above, in the year 1270, and consequently puts the claim of Schwartz entirely out of the question. Neither can we infer with any justice, that Bacon was the discoverer of gunpowder. He may perhaps have been the first to introduce its use into England; but that he discovered it, there is, I think no proof whatever.

We must then look further back if we wish to come to any conclusion. And since the history of Europe throws no more light on the subject, let us turn to the East, where I hope our investigations will meet with better success.

In India, and in the empire of China, saltpetre exudes from the soil spontaneously; and consequently its properties could not have remained long unknown to the people of those countries; especially to such an observing and industrious race as the Chinese. It is the opinion of many savans skilled in the languages of the East, that gunpowder was known to the Hindoos at a period as remote as the time of Moses. This opinion is founded on the evidence of many ancient inscriptions and manuscripts, from one of which I will quote a translated passage, referring to some explosive material used at the time of Alexander the Great. The work I quote from is the *Life of Appollonius Tyanaeus*, written by Philostratus. Speaking of the method of defence used by the Oxydracae,—a people living between the Ganges and the Hyphasis,—against Alexander, he says: "For they came not out to fight those who attacked them; but those holy men, beloved of the gods, overthrew their enemies with tempests and thunderbolts shot from their walls." The history goes on further to relate that the Egyptians, Hercules and Bacchus, who overran India, were repulsed by these people "with storms of thunderbolts and lightning hurled from above." A doubt has been expressed, however, as to whether the explosive referred to in the above passage was really gunpowder. Philostratus, it is true, gives us no information in regard to the composition of the substance of which he speaks; but still we may glean enough matter from authorities either contemporaneous with him, or even more ancient, to solve the difficulty easily. These writers agree in telling us that saltpetre was one of the ingredients of the mixture referred to; and this gives us quite enough of ground for de-
ciding with almost absolute certainty, that the explosive of the Oxydraeceae was nothing but gunpowder. For we know that saltpetre when fired alone, will deflagrate but never explode: gunpowder is the only explosive mixture into which saltpetre enters. Who then will blame us if we conclude that these sons of the Ganges were the first to use gunpowder? Nor do we base our conclusions merely on the chemical proof I have given above. The view is furthermore confirmed by the statement of A. N. Wilson, a most learned man, who says that the composition of gunpowder is described in several very ancient Hindoo medical works, and also in Hindoo codes of law.

Let us now turn to China, and see whether anything is to be learned from that quarter. At a very remote period, fireworks, both for amusement and for warlike purposes, were in use in the Chinese empire; and these, like the Hindoo mixture, were made principally of saltpetre. Indeed, I think it is most probable that they were precisely similar to those of the Hindoos; since these two nations were not so far distant from each other, but that they must have had some kind of mutual intercourse; and this being the case, so valuable a discovery as gunpowder would scarcely have been confined to one of them alone.

Very ancient works from the pens of Chinese writers, inform us that, at least in the year 618 B.C., fire balls projected from bamboo tubes, and a sort of exploding shell, were in general use.

Again, we read that in the year 1232 of our era—(which was thirty eight years before Roger Bacon published his work)—when the Chinese were besieged by the Mongols in Kai-fang-fu, they defended themselves with cannon throwing stone balls, and used explosive shells, petards and other fireworks based upon gunpowder.

Hence, at least, the incredulous, even should they discard all other proof, may be certain that gunpowder was in actual use, and that the Chinese were in actual possession of it long before the "enlightened" nations of Europe.

Some may argue however that, notwithstanding the fact of the Eastern nations being acquainted with gunpowder, Europe was none the wiser on that account; and consequently that the man who discovered it there, deserves credit as its inventor.

If it ever had been invented there, the fact of its being already known in some other country, would not lessen in the slightest degree the glory of its inventor. The Northmen discovered America previously to the time of Columbus; and this takes not a leaf from his crown: but what we say in regard to gunpowder is this, that it was introduced into Europe from
the East, and that consequently no European can claim to be its inventor. We will endeavor to prove our assertion.

The Arabs, we well know, were in constant intercourse with the Hindoos and Chinese in ancient times, when they were wont to bring their gums, spices and scents to the markets of those densely populated countries. Such being the case, it would not be wonderful that these roving children of the desert, should catch with avidity at so valuable a mixture as gunpowder. This in fact, we have documentary proof that they did; and two of the Arabic words for saltpetre, used in their vocabulary even to the present day, signify China salt and China snow.

From the Arabs the knowledge of the manufacture of gunpowder passed, first of all, to the Byzantine Greeks, whose inveterate enemies they were. These people did not however pay much attention to the valuable discovery thus made known to them. It is not until the ninth century that we hear of their paying any attention to it. Marcus Gracchus, one of their authors, in a work written at that period, gave a receipt for making gunpowder, in which he said that six parts of saltpetre, two of sulphur, and one of charcoal, were necessary to obtain it of the best quality. This proportion, although not strictly correct, will still give a tolerably good powder.

This knowledge did not, however, (as we should naturally have supposed) pass from the Byzantine Greeks to the west of Europe. It was reserved to the Saracens to introduce it there by means of their wars.

While the Greeks were allowing the knowledge they had thus acquired to rest comparatively unimproved, the Arabs were not idle. On the contrary, they carried the Chinese receipt through various improvements. In the year 1118, we find them using it in Spain, at the siege of Saragossa. Abd-el-Mumen, one of their chieftains, took Mohadla, in Algeria—we have good reason to suppose, with fire arms, in 1156; and in the following year the Spanish town of Neible was defended against the Castilians with fire arms throwing bolts and stones. Again, in 1280, it is quite certain that gunpowder was made use of against Cordova.

Thus was gunpowder introduced into Spain by the Saracens; and as they made such constant use of it against the Spaniards, it is easy for us to see how the latter began, in the fourteenth century, to use it themselves. Now this, it will be remembered, is the very date at which Schwartz is said to have discovered it.

From Spain, its use was spread all over Europe; and in a short time it made its appearance in England. Whether Roger Bacon introduced it there or not, I am
not prepared to say; there is a possibility, nay, even a probability that he did so, judging from his works; especially from the one entitled “Liber de Nullitate Magiae.”

I hope I have succeeded in convincing the reader who has had the kindness to follow me through the maze of centuries through which I have been travelling, that the powerful substance, which wars and struggles in every firearm, and in almost every mine throughout the length and breadth of Christendom, is really of Oriental origin.

In my mind there is no doubt upon the subject. I firmly believe that gunpowder, in common with many other preeminently useful things, was known to the Chinese long before civilization had made any advances in Europe. Of course there is a possibility that my conjectures may be wrong; but still I think that if placed in the balance together with the claims of Schwartz and those of Roger Bacon, they will be found much more weighty than either.

I have brought authentic documents to corroborate all my statements; and I think that the manner in which I have accounted for this discovery and its introduction into Europe, cannot well be assailed. Roger Bacon did not discover the substance. The claims of Schwartz are absurd. If then gunpowder was invented in Europe, of what nationality and name was the discoverer, and at what date did he live? The question is not answered. And still the inventors of much less important things than gunpowder have come down to posterity, and will continue to be handed from generation to generation, till time shall be no more. Is it not reasonable to conclude, then, that gunpowder never had a discoverer in Europe?

The facts of the case clearly point to such a conclusion.

I hope this chapter may not be pronounced either dry or un instructive. Its materials are purely historical, it is true; but still they are of such a kind that they may, not improbably, prove interesting even to the general reader, and will certainly be so to him who turns his attention, in any special way, to the history of the East. I shall feel amply compensated for the labors I have undergone in collecting them, if I can but influence some inquiring mind to follow up the step I have taken, and thus throw more light upon this interesting subject.

(To be continued in our next.)
ECHOES FROM A NEST OF OWLETS.

(BY THE FIFTH ENGLISH CLASS.)

A RASH JUDGMENT.

(J. C. SANCHEZ, 5th English.)

MANY years ago, while California yet belonged to Spain, an execution took place at the Presidio, in San Francisco, which is still fresh in the minds of some few old Spaniards who witnessed it. A poor guiltless man suffered the penalty of the Spanish law for murder. He was accused of having killed three little children.

It happened that a party was given at the old Presidio by a Spanish captain. As the residents were very few, nearly all were present at it.

On that day an Indian had been whipped, for some offence which he had committed.

Night came; and the father and mother of the family to which he was attached, went to the party, leaving at home three children; the eldest of whom was about six years of age.

As soon as the Indian perceived that both the parents had gone, he determined to be revenged for the humiliation he had received: so he went into the house, and finding the three children asleep, he put his hands around the necks of two of them, and choked them to death. The third and eldest child ran out of the room, and hid himself behind a door. The Indian looked for him, but could not find him. He would have searched longer and would probably in the end have found him; but the fear of being caught made him hasten away.

The news of the murder soon came to the Presidio; and a great excitement prevailed among the people. A very honest and respectable man was arrested, and accused of the murder. He had killed a sheep on that day; and some blood stains had been left on his shirt. He had not been seen at the party; and this, added to the circumstance of the blood on his shirt, was enough evidence for excited judges. He was at once arrested and put on the rack; for in those days instruments of torture were still used, to force culprits to confess the truth. After suffering very much, he was taken from the rack, and brought before a Spanish Alcalde, named M——.
This judge was a very cruel man, and at once sentenced the innocent victim to be shot. Another Alcalde, of the name of Higuera, defended the prisoner with much vigor and ability, and tried his best to save him. He said that the man was not guilty of the murder, and that it was not right to condemn a man to death on such circumstantial evidence; or that, at least, his execution should be delayed until the case could be sent to Spain.

He therefore appealed to the king, praying that the sentence might be given by the king himself. Accordingly he sent a messenger to Spain, to inform the king of the facts, and to beg him to save a poor and innocent man from an unjust death.

Higuera was well known to the king, who in course of time gave him a favorable answer; but M—received the news with indignation, and urged on by some demon ordered the prisoner to be put to death immediately.

The prisoner was brought forth and was asked if he had anything to say before the signal of death should be given. Availing himself of this unexpected privilege he said, "My dear friends, you all know that I have been sentenced to die. I am accused of murdering three children. I am not guilty; and I declare it before my God, Jesus Christ. I may deserve this punishment for other sins I have committed, but not for the one I am accused of now." He declared his innocence over and over again, but the time for his execution was at hand, and he was told to bid farewell to all his friends and relations. He bade them all good-bye, and told them to pray for him. "I am only going before you," he said, "where my God will judge me. He knows all the sins I have committed in this world; and He knows also that I am not guilty of what is laid to my charge." These were his last words.

Almost every one present was moved to tears. The executioners bandaged his eyes with a handkerchief, and told him to stand up. A priest stood by his side, encouraging and preparing him for his departure into eternity. Three soldiers had been appointed as executioners, and were posted at a short distance from the guiltless man. He had once been their comrade. He told them to shoot without fear. Two muskets were aimed at his head, and one at his breast. The command to fire was given, and the innocent man fell dead.

Through the efforts of Higuera the body was buried with much honor, and Mass was said in the old Mission Church for the repose of his soul.

Not many months elapsed before the true murderer was discovered. The Indian confessed his crime to some other Indians; and one of these not being very friendly
towards him, went immediately and related the whole affair to Higuera who had lately been appointed a Lieutenant by the King. The Lieutenant went himself with some of his soldiers, and arrested the murderer, made him confess everything, found him guilty, and shot him instantly. Higuera had an interview with Alcalde and discharged him from the office which he had proved himself so unworthy to fill. This was a very light punishment; but Heaven was more just, and therefore more severe, towards the iniquitous Alcalde. His conscience was a cruel executioner, and he could never forget the wrong he had done an innocent man. Besides, he was stricken down by a painful disease which tormented him for more than twenty-five years, till death put an end to his life and sufferings. Terrible was the account this man had to render to God.

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**THE DOG AND THE LION—A FABLE.**

*(JOHN WARD, 5th English.)*

**O**ne day a lion, the mightiest monarch of the plains, was crossing a farm yard which was filled with horses, cows, oxen and sheep. His expedition was a revengeful one, for he was going to attack a large and faithful mastiff, which a few days before had baffled him on one of his thieving excursions. The dog was waiting for his majesty; but he was not alone: he had with him the farmer with his sons and some workmen.

The lion said to himself as he went along, "The dog is a strong animal, but I am much stronger; and to-night I shall find him unaided, and shall have it all my own way. The farmers who were on the watch for me last night, think I will not come to-night and hence they will not be prepared for me. Ha, ha!" He continued, as he smacked his lips, "How I will crush that ugly cur who humbled me so much the other day, and deprived me of such a savory meal."

But the lion was much mistaken in his calculations. The farmer had set a large steel trap in the narrow path over which the lion would have to pass to get at the dog.

As he passed through the farm,
he espied a poor calf that had been forgotten; and being hungry, he killed it, ate a portion of the carcass, and hid the rest. He then went forward; and when he saw the chain which held the trap, he said, "This would be a good thing to beat the dog to death with."

A lambkin heard this remark; and as she had a very gentle and forgiving heart, she said to the lion, "Sire, I beseech you to listen to the voice of a poor little lambkin. I warn you not to pass through that narrow path. Go home. Forgive the dog." But the lion, disdainful even to look around at his monitors, said, "Go preach to cowards, and not to me, the monarch of beasts!" The lamb replied, "Revengeful persons more often harm themselves than their intended victims."

But the lion went forward, paying even less attention to the last remark of the lambkin than to her previous warning. He had not gone far before he fell into the trap prepared for him, and was securely caught. He gave a roar that shook the whole country around and terrified all who heard it. But this roar was his last. The farmer came out and easily killed him. If he had heeded the warning voice of the lamb, he would not have died so soon or so ignominiously.

Moral.—We should not despise the counsel of the humble.

AN INHUMAN OFFICIAL.

(J. SANROMAN, 5th English.)

ONE day, while walking up and down the play ground, a friend who had been in Ireland related to me the following little incident, which happened in the city of Cork, in the year 1865.

A poor woman owed a very small amount of taxes; and when the tax-collector called to collect them, she had not the money to give him, but promised to get it soon. At this the fellow grumbled, and threatened to seize upon what she had. In fact, he came back again, with a policeman, and proceeded to take what he could lay hands upon, to pay for the taxes.

Now this woman was exceedingly poor; and the only things of value in her house were a kettle and the dinner then cooking in it; and this the vigilant officer took off in triumph, leaving the miserable woman and her children to get their dinner the best way they might.

We could not believe that such inhumanity could be perpetrated in our enlightened time, did we not know the story to be perfectly true.
The case, of course, had to be brought before the Justice of the Peace, on the following day. This was a Mr. Martin, an Englishman. He heard both parties; and he was astonished and highly indignant at the conduct of the cruel tax-gatherer. He administered a severe rebuke to the vile wretch, telling him that though he had been a Justice of the Peace for twenty-five years, never before had he witnessed such cruelty, such brutality, such inhuman conduct. He said that vile beings like this wretched fellow, whose official position made them seem to represent the Government, were just those whose conduct caused the Irish to hate England.

He warned him against proceeding thus in the future.

The kettle and its contents were restored to the poor woman, and she went home happy.

A HUSBAND'S VALENTINE.

(PROFESSOR H. DANJE)

'Tis the day when tender vows,
Whispered under arching boughs,
Or on paper fairly writ,
Test one's love and tax one's wit.
Tell me, little wife of mine,
May I have a Valentine?

Underneath the Church's shade,
Years ago, my vows were made.
Must I now make vows anew?
Then I'll make them, love, to you.
Little nut-brown wife of mine,
Will you be my Valentine?

Still, in better times or worse,
Solemn prose or merry verse,
Health or sickness, land or sea,
Near or sundered though we be,
Faithful little wife of mine,
You shall be my Valentine!
"Many a time and oft
An hour before the worshipped sun
Peers forth the golden window of the
East."

I have hied me to some secluded
spot, where I might witness, in
undisturbed quiet, the magnificent
spectacle of sunrise.

To enjoy the feeling of freedom
—to inhale the fresh odors and
breathe the pure atmosphere of
early morning—to allow yourself
to be overcome
by that feeling of
peaceful contentment, which steals
over you in the contemplation of all
these things—is a delight of which
many, even in their wildest Uto-
pian dreams of mundane happiness,
have never thought.

No sound disturbs the calm
serenity of the scene; not a sign
of life profanes the hallowed hour.
Gradually the day dawns, and a
few solitary streaks, of roseate hue,
are remarked in the Eastern sky.

Soon the light increases until the
streaks become more clearly defi-
ced. The rosy fingered Aurora has
appeared. She is once more sum-
moning Tithonus to guide his dazz-
ling chariot across the heavens.

The red sky now assumes a gold-
en tinge, which imperceptibly in-
creases in brilliancy until the veil
of shadow has altogether disapp-
peared, and the glorious sun mount-
ing above the horizon, floods the
earth with his genial light.

The verdure seems to have ac-
quired new vigor during the night;
the first rays of morning guild it,
and the sunbeams seem to laugh,
as they play hide-and-seek among
the sparkling dew-drops, which in
their turn reflect the prismatic
colors.

The birds, too, unite their voices
in a hymn of praise to the Father
of Life and Light, and with their
happy and melodious notes, banish
every care from the mind, leaving
us conscious of nothing, but the
calm pleasure which they have
awakened in our hearts.

It is indeed an hour of enchant-
ment—the hour which we thus
spend in the contemplation of the
wonders of creation. Its influence
is of a kind which even a selfish
man cannot entirely resist; for the
scene is so beautiful and so sublime
as to preclude indifference.
CHRISTMAS AT SANTA CLARA OF THE MISSISSIPPI.

[Owing to peculiar circumstances, we have been unable to insert this letter until this month. We trust, however, that it will still be interesting to our California readers.—Ed.]

ST. CLARA ACADEMY,
SINSAWAWA MOUND, WISCONSIN, JAN. 2nd., 1873.

Dear Owl:—We have long admired your wisdom from afar; though never before have we dared, either by voice or pen, to invade your silent retreat. Time, however, and cautious observation have at last convinced us that so sunny-hearted an owl is not a being to be feared, and that notwithstanding his high appreciation of the charms of “the twilight hour,” he loves light and cheery voices as well as more flippant birds.

When you next plume your wings for flight, please fly high and far Eastward; for we are longing to hear the flutter of your pinions amongst us.

The holidays are nearly over now—for your owlets, probably, as well as for us,—but I hope they rested as brightly over your dusky flock, as upon our grand hill-side. Assuming that a description of our manner of passing the Christmas holidays may interest your readers, I will proceed to tell you something of our doings.

Angelic voices, mingled with the rich tones of the harp, aroused us early in the morning watches, on Christmas Day. According to a time-honored custom of St. Clara, a band of angels had descended to chant “Gloria in Excelsis Deo,” (as a thousand witnesses can prove); and after this sweet awakening we proceeded to our Chapel, which seemed as radiant to our eyes, as we might suppose was that field in Galilee, where glory shone around the startled shepherds. Fair and rosy as it was with blossoms, one could not remember that elsewhere were darkness and desolation, but could only believe that earth had burst suddenly into light, and bloom, and song, and that all the world, forgetting sin and sorrow, was grouped around the Crib.

Once in the year, one finds the dawn of day unwelcome,—on Christmas morning. It calls one back to earth, when half-way up to heaven.

Then, at night, we had an immense Christmas Tree, laden to breaking with glittering fruit, and shining with many tapers. Statues and lovely pictures, too cumbersome for the branches, crowded
around its foot—many of them gifts to our beloved Sisters,—and long before the busy "Christmas Committee" had finished the work of distribution, they were weary enough to need rest from their labors.

On the 30th came our grand concert, or rather, "Musical and Dramatic Entertainment:"—Tableaux, Fairy Land, duetts and trios on pianos, vocal pieces, solos and choruses. The closing piece was a classical drama, entitled, "Genius of Harmony," composed for the Philharmonic Class. It represents Music as she was and is, in her place and power among the nations. The "Spirit of the Past," in dark, misty robes, enters, and laments bitterly that the mercenary Present has driven Music from the earth, where she will never again deign to find a home; and calls upon ancient Greece and Rome to come forth and vindicate their former glory. They sadly respond, but only to deepen her gloom, by revealing pictures of former triumphs, never to be restored. The "Spirit of the Present" issues forth, and elegantly and indignantly denies that true music is dead to man,—and, claiming that modern nations alone have worshipped her with true worship, summons the nations of our day to uphold her;—when Italy, eager and triumphant, calls over her own glorious roll of honor, resonant with the names of mighty masters of song; the "Genius of Harmony", pure, radiant and majestic, welcome her; and in turn, France, Germany, and green-robed Erin lay their offerings at her feet, and claim their places at her shrine. Spain alone, dejected and humiliated that war and dissension have left her so few great names wherein to glory, shrinks back, till the calm voice of the "Genius of Harmony" wins and soothes her into hope and submission. America, youngest daughter of the nations, ardent and ambitious, is about to advance, when a grotesque figure styling herself "Modern Music" elbows her way into the midst, and—flaunting aloft streamers of street-ballads—clamorously demands her rights as a progressionist, expresses her scorn of the old beaten paths of Science, and undertakes to teach her votaries in six months, that for which the old Masters would have demanded as many years. Finally she announces herself as "the youngest daughter of America, fitting type of her progressive spirit." America, in indignant astonishment, disclaims all kinship with the noisy babbler, who is driven from the scene in shame and confusion. The "Genius of Christianity" next appears, bearing a radiant cross, and invites all to bow before the sign of Faith, as the beacon which all true worshippers of Harmony must follow. All the nations join in the "Gloria in Excelsis Deo." They bend in adoration
before her who bears the cross; and
the scene closes with this grand
tableau and chorus.
I trust I have not wearied you,
my dear Owl. Had I a plume
from your own dark wing, it
might, perchance, impart more
solemnity to my pages,—but as I
deal with daylight only, I can find
no darkness—save the ink—where-
in to dip my pen.
May your wisdom and grace
ever flourish with the same fresh
young life as now! That your
Santa Clara of the Pacific may
ever grow and rise, till it reaches
the stars, is the earnest wish of

A PUPIL
OF SANTA CLARA OF THE MISSISSIPPI.

LETTER FROM OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT.

London, February 1st, 1873.

*Dear "Owl":—We have had
the wettest and warmest winter
ever known in England; and it
seemed, until two days ago, as if
the frost had altogether forgotten
to put in an appearance. At last,
however, it has actually set in;
and we are beginning to look for-
ward to ice and the skating conse-
quent upon it, as probabilities.
The feature of the season has
been the enormous price of coals,
which has been kept up mainly by
strikes among the colliers, who will
only work three days a week,
whilst they insist on having wages
that will keep them and all belong-
ing to them in a state of idleness
for the other four. And you may
guess what a collier's idleness is.
During those four idle days he and
his family are either drunk, or, if
sober, are at any rate provided with
prime joints of meat at high prices,
and with all the luxuries of the sea-
on. This is the secret which ac-
counts for the rise in the price of the
best parts of an ox or sheep, whilst
the price of the entire animal re-
mains so comparatively moderate.
The working men will have the best
the butchers' shops afford, cost what
it may. So up goes the price of the
prime joints, until it reaches a point
which almost debars middle-class
people of small incomes from be-
coming buyers.

The labour-market is quite unhinged, all over the country; and even the agricultural labourers have at last caught the epidemic. I see lots of trouble in store for farmers, manufacturers, and all employers of hand-labour; and lots of misery for the men.

A gigantic strike is now "on" in South Wales, amongst the colliers and iron-workers; and, as the masters are rich, and hold out, the men must eventually yield: but think of the misery of their families before the point is reached at which their obtuse intellects will see the necessity of so doing!

We are fast becoming Yankees on this side of the Atlantic. The bottom is coming to the top. Nice prospect—for babies in arms: isn't it?

The ex-emperor's death excited great sympathy here. The mistakes of his political life were forgotten in his exile and illness; and his death consequently drew forth an amount of kindly feeling from all classes, which must have disgusted his French enemies. They say he had, from land and jewels sold, about £10,000 a year. He saved nothing when his chance for saving was so good. Friends at Chislehurst tell me that the pretty little village was in a state of great excitement over his death. He was immensely respected there. His affability and courtesy made him very popular with his rural neighbors; and the Empress and Prince Imperial fully shared in this good will. Nearly every one in the place was in mourning, the Sunday after his death; and on the day of the funeral all the village shops were closed, and the blinds were down in every house. The Church bells, too, (of the Protestant Church, I mean) were tolled during the morning; and muffled peals were rung in the afternoon. The Chislehurst tradespeople regard themselves, it seems, as having suffered a great loss, even in a pecuniary sense; for the late Emperor dealt with them largely and paid well and regularly. He also employed in his service a great many of the men and boys of the village, and contributed to many of the parish charities: so that almost every member of the little community has reason to regret his loss. From the time of his death to that of the funeral the village was crowded with French people of all ranks; and at the funeral itself the number of mourners, both French and English, was enormous—not to speak of the vast outside crowd of respectful and sympathetic spectators.

Disraeli is feeling crushed at the loss of his wife. They were devoted to each other. He means politics again, however, and will be in his place to badger Gladstone. The principal fight this session will be on the Irish Educational Scheme, which I will leave the
politicians of the immediate future to discuss.

Russia is making ominous advances in Asia, and has been told by England that if she steps beyond a limit assigned, she must fight. No doubt the scrimmage will come bye and bye; though now the Russians are most polite—not being ready.

The fat Tiehborne “claimant” is on the scene again. He has been starring it in all sorts of places, to make money; and at meetings held in various towns has been backed by Onslow, and that true “friend of the Pope”, the ultra-Protestant idiot, Whalley—two empty headed M. P.’s, who have been abusing judge, jury, counsel, and every one concerned in the last trial. Can you guess why they do this? If not, let me tell you that it is simply on account of the true Tiehbones _being Catholics_, and consequently (in Whalley’s opinion) capable of any enormity. Capable, accordingly, of the _particular_ enormity of holding, by plot and conspiracy, the property to which (according to Whalley) they know that the false Tiehborne (the claimant) is entitled. It matters not to a poor fanatic like Whalley that there is not a shadow of proof for such a charge. The Tiehbones are “Papists”; and that’s enough for him.

By the bye the “claimant” has hitherto professed to be a Papist too; as, if a true Tiehborne, it would be natural that he should be. But I scarcely think Mr. Whalley would have taken up his cause, unless he (Whalley) saw some Protestant promise concealed beneath that load of fat. _Nous verrons._

Any how, he and Onslow have been going too far for their own good, lately. They were both had up for “contempt of court” the other day. Upon which they begged pardon, and were fined £100 each.

The very next day, the “claimant” and a certain Mr. Skipworth, of the Lincolnshire family of that name—who is himself a member of the Bar, but who, nevertheless, took the M. P.’s place as danger-general—were at it again; and now they have been up in the Queen’s Bench for contempt of Court; and the result is that Skipworth is fined £500 and sent to gaol for three months, and the “claimant” bound over to hold his tongue or forfeit £500. Lord Chief Justice Cockburn would naturally have presided on this occasion; but as the “claimant’s” abuse had been directed principally against himself, and any sentence passed by him might have been attributed to improper motives, he cried off; and Mr. Justice Blackburn took his place.

The long expected trial of the “claimant” for perjury, is to come on in April, and will feed the papers and the lawyers. Result—I hope—the extinction of our fat
friend. Virtually all his chances of the estate are gone already; for he cannot proceed further in his claim, till he has paid the costs of the last trial,—viz: £60,000;— and, as he is now in the Bankruptcy Court, that will be a puzzle to him.

We are going to cut you out again in guns; or to try at it. Hitherto the biggest guns have been made on your side of the Atlantic. Only a little while ago a 600 lb ball was considered a prodigy. What do you think we are taking in hand now? Why a gun that shall fire a ball of no less than five tons weight—and one ball a minute "at that," (as you Yankees say) ! Nay, the inventor declares —("Credat Judexus Apella")—that he can produce a gun, if necessary, which shall fire even a ten-ton ball. Of course this enormous gun needs proportionate steadiness in the platform from which it is to be fired; and you will therefore say at once, that of course we can only mean it for land-service. "No Sirree!" You are mistaken. The projector of this gun is no less a man than the well-known Mr. Bessemer, who is so shortly to give us ships that will save us from motion in a storm; and it is this principle which he is going to apply to the platform of the new gun; so that, if the thing succeeds, (and there seems to be no valid reason why it should not,) we shall be able to fire a ball of five or ten tons weight at our enemies—among whom we hope you will never be—just as steadily from a big ship as from a fort. The old lion is not dead yet, you may depend upon it.

And now, old blinker, I shall conclude.

Stay!—As you ask riddles of your friends, here is one for you.

What relation is a loaf of bread to the electric telegraph? Mother. Why? Because bread is a necessity and the telegraph an invention; and necessity is the mother of invention.

If you care for figures; here's something in that line: quite as good, in my opinion, as the estimates of the estimable Dr. Cuming about the period of the imminent destruction of the "Man of Sin."

The Emperor Napoleon III. was 64 when he died:

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>1808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coup d'etat</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emperor</td>
<td>1852</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dethroned</td>
<td>1870</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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or, if you add them vertically thus:

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<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q.E.D.

Don't you think that, after furnishing you with a calculation like this, I may fairly aspire to the post of your Prophetic Correspondent? —that is, if you want one.

Yours truly,

Deadlock.
NEW EXCHANGES. — The Hesperian Student is our last new college exchange. It is a four-page monthly, coming from the State University at Lincoln, Nebraska. Welcome to our list!

We have received the Oxford Undergraduate's Journal. We can only say of it that it fulfils the expectations which we should naturally have of a paper published by the students of one of the greatest universities of the world.

The Westminster Monthly, is another new exchange. Small,—sensible,—badly printed.

Harvard College has another paper—The Magenta. It is a twelve page fortnightly paper, contains good matter and is neat typographically.

WHAT an array of papers and magazines adorn the files in this little office! How many pens have written, and scratched out, and corrected; how many brains have been exercised; how many hours of labor have been expended to produce what now is ranged about us on the walls and shelves. But whence, one might ask, do all these printed expressions of feeling come? It were perhaps easier to answer the question, "Whence do they not come?" They are the epitome of the thoughts of the best educated of the rising generation. They come from almost every college that worthily bears the name, in the Union; and from England and Canada. The man of literary culture, who has been educated in a time when there was hardly such a thing as college journalism, might be tempted to consider this very modern institution as hardly worthy of notice. But when one considers that the ideas expressed by the writings in these papers, though as yet perhaps not fully developed, are those which in after years will be matured and brought prominently before the world by the men who are to wield a mighty influence over our country, he will see that it is undoubtedly worth his while to watch the progress of this ever strengthening institution.

The Union College Magazine is authority for the statement that fourteen men in the graduating class at Dartmouth (one-fifth of the class) are Roman Catholics. Truly these are the days of liberal views. Would such a thing have been possible fifty years ago? Let them come into all our institutions.—Ezr.

Yes, Isn't it really wonderful that a being who has the audacity
to be a Catholic in this enlightened age should be tolerated in an American college. And "let them come into our institutions!" Why what in the world are we coming to? If we are not careful, Catholics will soon be considered men! Awful!

ANNUAL PUBLICATIONS.—

The *Elocutionist’s Annual*, comprising new and popular readings, recitations, declamations, dialogues, poems, etc., etc., by J. W. Shoemaker, Professor of Elocution, J. W. Daughaday & Co., publishers, Philadelphia.

This book contains many pieces well known to the popular ear, besides some which have not before been published in an elocutionary work. The work is very cheap, and in such a form that it can easily be carried in one’s pocket. On this account it would be a very convenient thing for such students of elocution as may not have access to libraries from which to select their readings, and do not wish to purchase a more costly work.

The selection on page 90, entitled “Patrick Dolin’s Love Letter,” might advantageously have been omitted. For although it is somewhat humorous, yet we think it entirely wrong to place before the young and untutored mind such a sentiment as that expressed in the lines

“I’m a Catholic ye know, but for the sake of relation
Wouldn’t mind to change creed, and sign a recantation.”

Whether, in a book of this kind, it is better to insert a new imitation than an old original, is, under any circumstances, somewhat doubtful; but when the fact that it is an imitation is so visible, and when the new production is so far inferior to the old, both for recitation and in its literary merits, as that imitation (of a part of Tennyson’s “May Queen”) entitled, “Will the New Year come to-night?” it certainly should not be inserted.

Notwithstanding these and several other similar faults, the book, taken as a whole, is, though small, a good compilation of well selected pieces for dramatic reading.


This work contains in a small space, a variety of useful information, besides many curious facts connected with phrenology and physiognomy. It is well worth the perusal of the curious.

THE MILLS QUARTERLY says that the Senior Class is thinking of paying us a visit. The Owl will smooth its feathers to receive them.

As the reader will see by referring to the index page, there has been a change in the Board of Managers. Mr. M. J. Walsh offered his resignation as Fourth Editor, at a special meeting of the Board, held February 3rd. The resignation was accepted; and at the next regular meeting of the Board, Mr.
J. L. Carrigan was elected to fill the vacancy. This gentleman enters on his duties as Fourth Editor and Olio-writer, this month.

It has been remarked that complaints have been made, and justly, too, that the Owl did not come out in time. Now, who make these complaints? The students of Santa Clara College. Whose fault is it that the magazine does not come out promptly, at the right time, every month? That of the students of Santa Clara College. For, until we receive from them that regular and constant literary support which is our due, it will always be difficult and sometimes impossible for us to bring the magazine out in time. Our outside patrons, who subscribe and advertise, do all that we can expect from people who are interested in education and literature; and we thank them sincerely for the support and encouragement which they have afforded us. But those within our walls who should give us their literary support, are often very deficient in this respect. Happily there are some among us who really consider the College Magazine in its proper light,—that of the true exponent of the literary merit of the students,—and to these we are truly thankful. The highest class of "English," and the lowest,—the First Rhetoric and the Third Grammar,—have nobly done their duty towards us this year. But neither the "Poetry" class nor the First Grammar have been represented in our pages at all.

We have not received the Echo. What is the matter? Does it resound no more?

The Georgetown College Journal has enlarged from four to eight pages, and it is improving in every way. It will soon, if it does not already, take a prominent place in the first rank of college papers.

We see by the February number that the Rev. Edmund J. Young, (long to be remembered with gratitude by the Owl,) holds the chair of Rhetoric of Georgetown College.

The Catholic Sentinel comes to us changed from a four to an eight-page paper, and enlarged with regard to reading matter. We are glad to see it prospering.
CALMLY and beautifully dawned the 22nd of February upon our valley. Nature seemed determined to repress, at least for one day, her dreary winds and rains, and to show her brightest side in commemoration of the mighty man whose natal day it was. At an early hour the stars and stripes were raised above our college buildings, and as they waved brightly in the mellow sun-light, they seemed in themselves to suggest the memory of him who fought and won so many gallant victories under their folds. After breakfast the college band assembled around a bust of Washington which stood on its pedestal in the yard; and soon the strains of the "Star Spangled Banner" arose sweetly and majestically on the balmy air. It was touching to see so many reverential hearts clustering around the effigy of the Father of America; to gaze upon his noble and commanding features; and to contrast the United States' government as it was under him, with the United States' government of to-day. Alas! do modern times bear the comparison?

The dinner served up for us in the Refectory, at twelve o'clock, was indeed a lordly one; nor did our boys fail to show, by their devoted attention to it, that they all thought so.

In the afternoon the band played once more; and the younger boys, with their fire-crackers, kept up a perpetual din until night-fall.

In the evening the doors of the theatre were thrown open; and in a short time an immense crowd had assembled within its walls. The entertainment was both literary and dramatic, and on the whole reflected much credit upon those who took part in it. The "Introductory" was delivered by Master James Walsh. It was a beautifully written little piece; and the young gentleman just named, with his full rich voice, did not fail to do credit to it. This was followed by an oration on "The Integrity of Washington," by Mr. F. McCusker. The speech was well written; and if we make allowance for the fact that the speaker had but very imperfectly committed it to memory, it was very well delivered also. Messrs. V. McClatchy and C. Friedlander, entertained the house with a Dialogue entitled "Big Men and Small Men." This was very fairly rendered; and as the two gentlemen named were most appropriate re-
presentatives of their respective sides, they did not fail to give much amusement. Mr. Friedlander showed, it is true, a little timidity on the stage; but as it was his first appearance, he can well be excused. Mr. R. Del Valle came next with an oration on "The Reward of Heroes." This was another very well written speech; and as the gentleman spoke well also, it was listened to with much pleasure and attention. The literary portion of the entertainment closed with a poem entitled "The Passage of the Delaware," by Mr. A. L. Veuve. This gentleman did full credit to himself, and handled his subject with much skill and feeling. A comic drama, in two acts, entitled "Twould Puzzle a Conjurer," closed the entertainment. The character of "Peter, Czar of Muscovy," was impersonated by Mr. Vau, who spoke well, and showed that he understood and appreciated his part. Mr. Poujade appeared as the "Baron Von Clump." He was a veritable baron. Mr. Jas. Dunne made his debut as "The Count de Marville." We compliment the gentleman on his acting, and take pleasure in telling him, that behind his fine moustache, he looked every inch a Frenchman. Mr. Carrigan's rendering of the part of "Van Dun- der," was one of the most pleasing features of the evening. He acted with his usual humor, and highly amused the audience. "Peter Stanmitz" was taken by Mr. A. O. Arguello. We never saw this gentleman act so well before. He surpassed everyone's expectations. Mr. McCusker took the part of "Van Block," and took it in a capital manner also. The minor parts of the "officer" and "waiter" were well taken by Messrs C. Friedlander and T. Morrison. The music during the whole evening was good, as usual. We hope our College may see many more such gala-days as this, and that the Birthday of Washington may be everywhere celebrated with as much zeal, as the Students of Santa Clara College have shown in its behalf in 1873.

Preparations are being made for the celebration of the birth-day of our President, the Rev. Fr. Varsi, which will fall on the 11th of March next. The programme of amusements is a fine one, and if carried out will render the day most pleasant. In our next issue we hope to give a detailed account of the exercises.

The recently organized Orchestra of this College, has consolidated with the Cecilian Society; and has consequently the same officers.

Last "First Wednesday," we had the pleasure of listening to a contest in declamation between the third and fourth English classes.
We have not time to criticise all the speakers, but there are some few points which we should like to mention.

Mr. Jas. Walsh was undoubtedly the best speaker of the day. He delivered a poem entitled "Caius Marcius," giving much pleasure to all who heard him. Mr. Peter Mallon literally "brought down the house" with "The Maniac," bouncing around the stage in a most tragic manner. The students showed their appreciation of his efforts by a liberal supply of bouquets, culled from the grass-plots in the play-ground. Mr. McCarthy gave us "The Execution of Montrose." This gentleman did well enough, so far as his delivery was concerned, but we would recommend to him a more strict adherence to the text, especially in speaking a piece of poetry. Mr. Wallace was somewhat too tame in the delivery of "The Triumph of Truth"—(a very pretty little piece of verse by the way)—but, with perseverance, he will succeed. Master Wm. Davis spoke a piece, entitled "Rome and Carthage." In his gestures he was rather stiff; but notwithstanding this, he did very well for a little fellow. Altogether, this contest was pleasing to the audience and creditable to both the classes.

An Athletic Club (so we have heard) has been organized among the students of the Second Division. Really, the little fellows are wide-a-wake, now-a-days; and that too while their big brothers lie asleep. Come; rouse up, ye veterans, and imitate the example you have before you! Do something to show that you are alive.

It affords much pleasure to the "Idle Notist," to report the substance of a conversation which he had the other day with a very scientific gentleman, on electricity. Wishing first to know the real nature of this powerful agent, we asked him what it was. "Red hot iron," he answered, "condensed out of a body of gas rushing into a vacuum." We next proceeded to inquire how, if it was a metal it could flow through a wire. The explanation was ready: "It passes through the wire on account of the particles which ignite to the fulminating principles which it possesses!" We then proceeded to inquire if electricity could by any means be imprisoned. "Yes," he replied; "you take a glass bottle, and fill it up with gilt paper; from the bottle you raise an iron rod three miles into the air. In a short time the electricity will come down and get entangled in the paper. Taking advantage of this, you take out your rod, cork up the bottle, and thus imprison the electricity." The gentleman gave us information on many other points, but we are afraid that if we were to submit too many such startling
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theories to the world at one time, all the savans would go crazy, and thus science would lose instead of gain.

The above conversation reminds us that we had a splendid little thunder storm the other night. The lightning flashed quite brilliantly for a little while, and the thunder rolled proportionately. Our readers in the far East will bear in mind that thunder storms are almost as great rarities in California as earthquakes are with them. Consequently, when we get one, we become slightly excited over it.

Base-ball, it seems, is just now entirely dead here. We have received no score for insertion. Nor do we hear the noble game even so much as mentioned in the yard.

Large numbers of little snow birds have for the past few days been chirping away merrily in the still leafless trees of our playground. They are welcome little visitors.

The tops of the mountains around us are covered with snow. During the spell of wet weather which we had some time ago, the snow-line extended more than half way down the mountains. This is lower than we ever saw it before. In fact, the climate seems to be getting colder and colder every year; and no one in this vicinity would be surprised if in a few years we should see our fields covered with snow and our lakes with ice.

Mr. J. L. Carrigan, has been elected stage-manager of the Junior Dramatic Society.

We have very often heard people say that they pitied us poor college-boys upon whose hands the hours and days must hang so wearily. This is a mistake. Our systematic division of time causes it to fly more rapidly than it would seem to do were we in daily intercourse with the outside world; and if you were to ask any of our students which seemed to them the shortest years of their life, they would answer, without a doubt, "The years spent at college." The week here has hardly begun; when it seems to end; months and half-sessions slip past almost unnoticed; and when at length the June Vacation comes, many are puzzled to say where all the time is gone to. Therefore, although we like to be pitied when we deserve it, in this case we must say that pity is entirely unnecessary.
WHY was Pharaoh's daughter like the brokers on Wall Street? Because both got a little prophet out of the rushes on the banks.

An illegal corn measure.—A tight shoe.

George Washington was once at a dinner-party, where his host had set him with his back to a fiery red-hot stove. Finding it quite too hot for comfort, after some squirming, he beat a retreat for a more comfortable position, at the same time explaining the reason. "Why," said the hostess, jocularly, "I thought an old General like you could stand fire better than that!" "I never could stand fire in my rear," replied the General.

"We acknowledge our indebtedness to Messrs. Fordham," says the editor of Public Opinion, "for a dish of very superior soup. We marked it inside matter, and gave it an early insertion. Our contributors can always send such articles, without any fear of their being crowded out, or laid over until next week." The editors of the Owl, in noticing and adopting the above sentiment, feel it almost a duty to authors of such articles as those referred to, to say that the editorial staff of this magazine has peculiar facilities for doing immediate justice to them, and will welcome them accordingly. Collegiate institutions, and not least among them that of Santa Clara, have many advantages, in this respect, over mere individual editors, such as he of Public Opinion, whose plurality consists only in the use of the editorial "we."

Our corpulent friend, Mr. ———, called us into his office a few days ago, and asked if we wanted a conundrum for the "Olio." Of course we answered in the affirmative; and he gave us the following, stating that it was original:

"What is the difference between a boisterous laugh and the maker of a celebrated kind of bitters?"

We gave it up.

"One," said he, "is a hoarse laugh, and the other is a Hos-titter."

Hotel-keepers are people we have to put up with.—Am. Newspaper Reporter.
Probably the largest and heaviest single family in the world, is the Howard family, of Kentucky; and, possibly, there has never, at any time, existed a parallel to it. In the subjoined table, the accuracy of which may be relied upon, we give both the weight and the height of its members:

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<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>6 ft.</td>
<td>285 lb</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thomas</td>
<td>6 ft 4 in.</td>
<td>230 lb</td>
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<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>6 ft. 6 in.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>6 ft. 2 in.</td>
<td>165 lb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>6 ft 11½ in.</td>
<td>266 lb</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elijah</td>
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<tr>
<td>Matthew</td>
<td>6 ft. 6 in.</td>
<td>220 lb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eli</td>
<td>6 ft 1½ in.</td>
<td>197 lb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughter</td>
<td>6 ft. 3 in.</td>
<td>160 lb</td>
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</table>

Total: 70 feet, 2,298 lb

Computed strength of father and sons, 6,500 lbs. Entire ages, 557 years. Many of the grandchildren of this family are 6½ feet in height, and weigh over 200 lbs.—Phrenological Journal.

Where did Charles the First's executioner dine, and what did he take? He took a chop at the King's Head.

The physical constitution of Australia is different from that of any other part of the world. The ordinary rules and operations of nature in the animal and vegetable parts of creation are reversed. The following are some instances in illustration of this anomalous character:

There are birds without wings, as large as deer, their bodies covered with hair instead of feathers; beasts with beaks of birds; swans that are black, and eagles white. The ferns, nettles, and even grasses grow to the size and shape of trees; rivers run from the sea and are lost in interior swamps; trees are ever green in spite of frost or snow; there are extensive plains in which one tree, one soil, one water, and one description of bird, fish, or animal prevails, alike for ten miles or one hundred.

This is Australia, where it is summer when it is winter with us, and vice versa; where the barometer rises before bad weather and falls, before good; where the north is the hot wind, and the south the cold; where the humblest house is fitted up with cedar; where the fields are fenced with mahogany, and myrtle trees are burnt for fire wood; where the kangaroo, an animal between the squirrel and the deer, has five claws on its fore-paws, and three talons on its hind legs, and yet hops on its tail; where the mole lays eggs, and has a duck's bill; where there is a bird with a broom in its mouth instead of a tongue; where there is a fish one half belonging to the ray, the other to the shark; where the pears are made of wood with the stalk at the broader end, and where the cherry grows with the stone outside. — Round the World.
**Table of Honor.**

Credits for the month of January as read on Wednesday, Feb. 5th, 1872.

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| V. McClatchy | 100       | J. Azurais | 70   |
|              | J. Barrenechea| 70 |       |
## Table of Honor

### Arithmetic

1st Class - J. Barrenechea 78, A. Bell 95, J. Bernal 75, J. Chavez 70, J. Callaghan 90, W. Davis 78, T. Durbin 90, D. Furlong 88, J. Machado 90, A. McConne 78, A. Garresche 70, L. Palmer 92, N. Robles 80, J. Roundey 100, J. Walsh 85, R. Wallace 70, B. Yorba 98.


3d Class - E. Auzerais 75, F. Chavez 70, E. Sheridan 70, S. Sheridan 90, L. Shinn 75, F. Chaves 90, C. Welti 90.

### Book-Keeping

1st Class - V. McClatchy 100, N. Camarillo 100, R. Soto 96, S. Fellom 80.


### Reading and Spelling


2d Class - J. Barrenechea 77, F. Chavez 72, T. Hanley 73, J. McDonald 81, G. Norris 82, J. Phippen 80, J. Sanroman 80, L. Shinn 88, S. Stevenson 80, C. Welti 74, J. Chavez 73.


### Executive

1st Class - W. Hereford 70, V. McClatchy 77, A. Veuve 77.

2d Class - C. Friedlander 70, D. Furlong 80, T. Morrison 70.


4th Class - J. Barrenechea 70, W. Davis 70, W. Furman 80, J. McCarthy 85, A. McCono 85, P. Mallon 90, A. Pierotich 70, C. Welti 70, J. Smith 85.

5th Class - J. Auzerais 70, F. Chavez 70, H. Downey 85, C. Floed 70, C. Gambill 70, J. Sanroman 70.

### Penmanship


3d Class - M. Chevalier 73, J. De la Cruz 70, J. Eldridge 72, F. La Coste 80, J. Perrier 75, E. McLaughlin 74, G. Markham 74, J. Smith 71, G. Seifert 75, A. Spence 72.

### Piano

1st Class - R. Bowie 90, C. Elmer 80, B. Smith 75, A. Arguello 75, N. Camarillo 80, A. Den 75, H. Bowie 75, Randall 75.

### Drawing

1st Class - J. Carrigan 90, R. Enright 80, P. Mallon 70, T. Morrison 80.

2d Class - H. Bowie 70, F. Burling 70, G. Seifert 89, V. McClatchy 100, R. Remus 100, E. McLaughlin 70, A. Pierotich 100, J. Sanroman 100, P. Soto 70, F. Vidaurreta 95, P. Mallon 100, D. Harvey 80, R. Brenham 70, H. Martin 100, C. McCarthy 100.

Highest number of credits given, 100. Recipients of 70 and over only mentioned.

---

[Classes of the Preparatory Department are omitted.]
LOUIS CHOPARD,
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Balls and Parties supplied on reasonable
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City Market, Market Street, San Jose.

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(Proprietor.)
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wants, and situated in the City Market,
in the midst of all the delicacies of the
season, feels confident of success.

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Cor. Main & Franklin sts.
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E. LAMORY,
Proprietor.

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Washing, per quarter ................. 12.50
Physicians' fees unless it may be preferred to pay the bill in case of sickness, per quarter .... 2.50

Piano, Vocal Music, Drawing and Painting form extra charges; but there is no extra charge for the French, Spanish or German Languages, nor for Plain Sewing and Fancy Needlework.

Payments are required to be made half a Session in advance.
Pupils will find it much to their advantage to be present at the opening of the Session.

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This Institution is conducted by the Sisters of Notre Dame, and was opened in August 1872, to afford those of moderate means an opportunity to procure for their daughters, at a trifling expense, a sound, moral and intellectual education, such as will help them become useful and intelligent women.
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