

ideal of self is high. To develop the emotion in its worthy and noble aspect, we must first foster and cherish self-respect, holding up noble ideals to be aspired to, thus preventing it from degenerating into self-sufficiency. The process of "sitting down on" a child is apt to snub, not the conceit out of him, but the self-reliance; and as Nature abhors a vacuum, its place is likely to be filled by anger or malice. If a child needs to be repressed, the impersonal and resistless force of circumstances may usually be depended upon to crush out any excess of conceit. Our kindly "Autocrat" has said:

"Talk about conceit as much as you like. It is to human character what salt is to the ocean; it keeps it sweet and renders it endurable."

MARGARET FEZANDIE.

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### The Natural Science Laboratory.

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In response to the request to say something about the Natural Science Laboratory, recently added to the Normal College equipment, I will give a brief description of its present use. I need not repeat the urgent need for laboratory work as the means of bringing the student to appreciate Nature and to gain actual knowledge of objects at first hand. An equally important function of the laboratory, and one which must always accompany the other, is that of training in original work, training in doing one's own thinking, and constructing one's own results unaided by book or companion. In a word, to secure knowledge and to secure power are the double but inseparable objects toward which the laboratory is a means. Every place where this is done is in so far a laboratory. To the mind open to learn from the singing of the brook down its rocky glen, and ready to reason there from the little visible erosion of the present to the accumulated effect of the erosion of the past, that glen may become itself the best of laboratories, in Nature's immediate presence out of doors, and a summer's day so spent may be not only the height of enjoyment, but of mental advancement.

And to what uses among the many forms of the study of Nature, is the new Natural Science Laboratory in the College turned? First, it forms a place of separate tables, drawers and shelving and lockers, for each young lady to have a certain recognized space of her own, and a definite place for the materials and accessories used. Each student in the fourth and fifth year classes has had, since the laboratories were ready with the end of February, one hour a week for laboratory work in place of recitation in the class-room. Twenty-four young ladies can work

together at a time—or, if necessary, a few more—in each of the two divisions of the laboratory, separated by a rolling partition.

Three kinds of work with objects are undertaken this spring—mineral lessons, work with contour maps, and work with the microscope. In the mineral lessons each student has a fragment of the same mineral to test for physical properties, as hardness and lustre, with qualities like crystal-form, color and cleavage. In the work with contour maps, I am able to utilize the generous provision of the United States Geological Survey, by which many of the contour sheets which exhibit most characteristic details of our country are supplied, as, for example, cañon country, mesa table-lands, ocean sand-dunes, contrasts of mountain systems, such as shown in the Rockies and the Alleghanies, etc. The object of this work is to give practice in the use of modern maps, so as to interpret surface forms with ease and to read the character of the country from the appearance of the map as if it were told in print. A beginning is all that can be made toward this end in the brief time allotted, and I may say the same of the use of the microscope; the aim is, first of all, that every student shall have an opportunity to learn how to use the instrument. I make no attempt to describe the gleam of the sand grains studied, nor the beautiful perfection of the minute shells from the ocean bottom; they must be seen to be appreciated. All of this work is but a beginning, and can be carried but a little distance with each student, for there are nearly four hundred who must share it. To many it may seem very elementary; it is, in fact, simply the opening of the door for the student's further progress. The means of progress have been much increased through the liberality of the Trustees, in making purchase, recently, of Professor Edward Day's private collections of minerals, fossils and animal specimens, many of which were greatly needed for immediate use. The work of assorting and labeling these collections has been actively pursued for weeks, and many minerals are already placed on the shelves designed for them in the new Laboratory. It is hoped that many additions to these resources will be bestowed by the friends of the College in the future.

EDWARD S. BURGESS.

The "News" is able to offer a first-class wheel, the "Acme" (see advertisement), valued at \$100, at a very much reduced rate. With this wheel and one of Mr. Dengler's much-praised cameras, the pleasure-seeker will be enabled to double the anticipated fun of the coming vacation. Visit Mr. Dengler's place and look over his cameras if you are intending to buy one.

### Natural Science Committee—Petition to Board of Education.

Hon. Charles B. Hubbell,

President, Board of Education:

Dear Sir—The Natural Science Committee of the Associate Alumnae of Normal College are greatly interested in the teaching of science in the public schools of this city. They regard this work as of greatest importance, not only because of the intellectual training thus acquired, but also because through those lessons thousands of our city children get their only glimpse of the world of Nature. To be of any use, these lessons must be "observation lessons," fully illustrated.

Many of the teachers say that they have no place in the class-room for the exhibition of material, and yet they feel most strongly that the mere presence of well-chosen specimens will be a source of the greatest pleasure and profits to the children. Hence, the Natural Science Committee most earnestly beg the Board of Education to put on the list of supplies small wall-cabinets with glass doors, that may be placed in every class-room. If your Board will do this, the Committee guarantee to do all in their power to help fill the cabinet with proper material.

Keenly alive to the difficulties of obtaining specimens in a great city, the Science Committee have endeavored to aid the teachers in this regard. Annual wild flower shows to which the children of the public schools have been invited, field classes in botany for teachers, the collection of hundreds of specimens, suggest what the Committee have done within the past five years.

At the February and March Alumnae "At Homes," the Committee have sought to extend the work by the distribution among teachers from various sections of the city, of bunches of twigs, birds' nests and seeds, for study in their class-rooms.

The eager interest manifested by the teachers induces the Committee to make this request for your co-operation.

Respectfully yours,

ALICE M. ISAACS,  
*Chairman, Natural Science Committee.*

The Treasurer of the Alumnae Association would be glad to hear from those members whose dues for the current year, ending May, 1897, are unpaid. According to the by-laws, names of members owing dues for two years must be dropped from the roll of the Association. Dues should be sent to Mrs. F. R. Douglas, 101 West Ninetieth street.