

Cells can illustrate, or run a whole Voss-Holtz machine single-handed,
 Never leaves dishes and spoons around on the sills of the windows ;
 Never will talk to small boys, that is, not to boys under twenty ;
 Never does anything wrong—to be brief—or is never detected,
 Calm and serene is the Senior, and thoughtful and sensible always.



Some wicked voice in my ear only now had the boldness to whisper :
 " When the girls hold in their hands this Annual,—pride of the ECHO—
 Watch them with care and observe, if the very first glance of the Senior
 Be not directed at once to the page which is graced by her picture."
 Calumny false as unkind ! for conceit is a thing that we know not.

So, with our modesty rare we would beg your indulgent attention
 To this, our second attempt, the ECHO of Ninety and Seven.
 Read it, insure its success, and may each season bring forth a better !

The Echo, 1897 Second Annual
J. S. Babcock

The Establishment of the Normal College.

" Better the rudest work that tells a story, or records a fact, than the richest without meaning."

By one of those sudden revolutions in the government of the public schools of the city of New York, a Board of Education consisting of twenty-one commissioners, elected by the people, was legislated out of office in 1869, and a new board of twelve, appointed by the Mayor, installed in its place. This board, on account of its number, or perhaps its character, was nicknamed " Mayor Hall's Twelve Apostles."

Up to this time the people had voted for their school officers, and, as a rule, had chosen good men and true. It would be a long story to tell the hidden motives which impelled the political leaders of that day to destroy the elective and establish the appointive system of school government. Such a tale, however, is not pertinent to the subject in question. Suffice it to say that the majority of the new commissioners were men of excellent character and superior ability ; and without detracting from the merits of the other members, it may safely be asserted that William Wood was intellectually the best equipped man of the twelve, and, like Saul, a head and shoulders above his fellows.

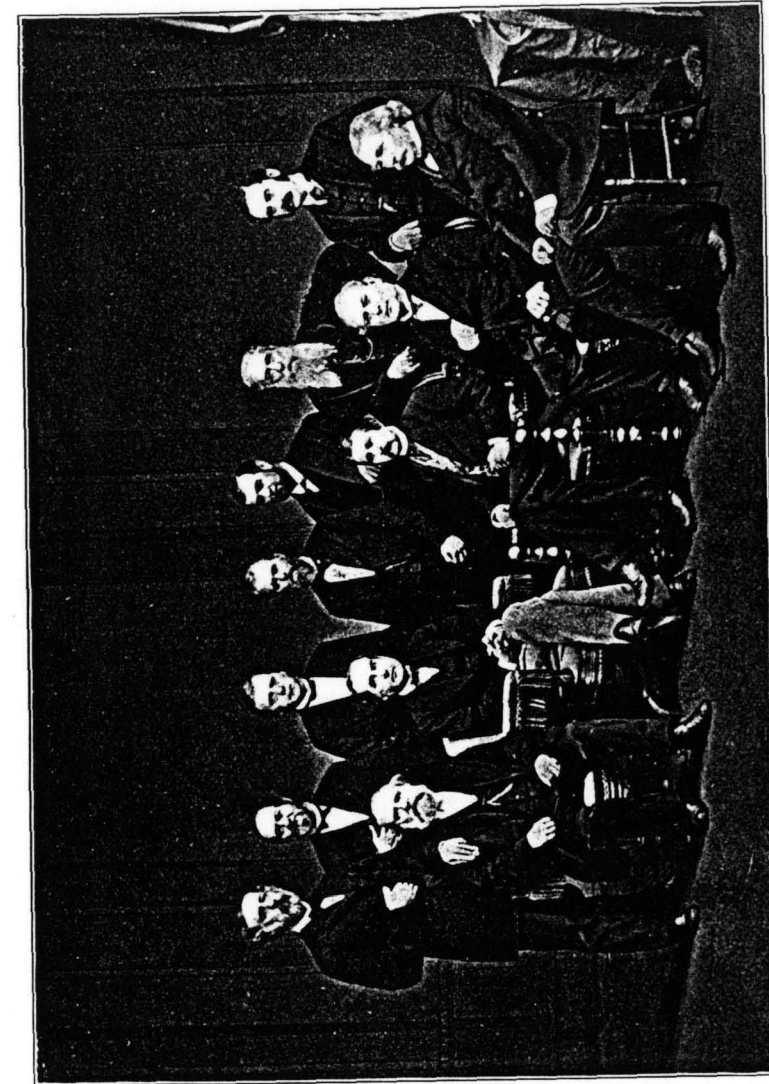
The new board, partly to justify its existence, and chiefly to improve the educational system, resolved to establish a normal and high school for the education and training of women teachers for the public schools of this city. The authority to do so was found in an old act of the legislature empowering the Board of Education to establish the Free Academy (now the College of the City of New York) and also *to establish one or more similar institutions for girls and to give each an appropriate name.* Such were the indifference of the people and the prejudice of the municipal government as regards the higher education of women, that the latter part of the act was permitted to sleep undisturbed for more than twenty years.

Before giving a brief sketch of the establishment of the Nor-

mal College, it may be well to mention the abortive attempts which were made at different times to introduce the normal system in this city. No doubt these successive failures dampened the ardor of enlightened educators who had studied the Prussian methods of training teachers. As late as 1870 many of the college presidents and professors pronounced normal instruction foolish and empirical. Every effort made by school officers, prior to the appointment of the Board of Twelve, to found a high and normal school for girls had proved more or less unsuccessful, with the single exception of the celebrated Twelfth Street School, and even this school made no pretensions to normal training.

The old Public School Society had instituted a Saturday Normal School for women teachers and a Wednesday Afternoon School for men teachers; but, as far as normal work was concerned, they might as well have been called medical or military schools. This much, however, was accomplished—for which the Society deserves great credit: to young teachers was afforded the opportunity to improve themselves in the elementary branches which they might be called upon to teach, and to extend their acquirements considerably beyond the highest grade of the public school. The next attempt to establish a normal school was made in 1855, soon after the absorption of the Public School Society by the Board of Education; but this, too, was only normal in name. Psychology, the Science and Art of Teaching, and the History of Education were not even mentioned in its curriculum. It was simply a daily high school of a very low order. It was badly planned, badly organized, and stupidly conducted. It is needless to say that, after a precarious existence of a year or two, it died, as it deserved, of atrophy, and was buried out of sight by the Board of Education.

In 1863 a new Saturday Normal School for both sexes was established under the principalship of Henry Kiddle, an able teacher and a superior scholar. As he was at the same time superintendent of schools, he had the moral influence to induce many of the best teachers to attend voluntarily. Others were obliged to enter the classes if they expected the first-grade license to teach. Among his assistants were such men as Thomas F. Harrison, David B. Scott, William Belden, Dr. Hugh Williamson, and Norman A. Calkens. While by far the greater part of the



instruction was purely academic, there was for the first time an infusion of normal methods. Indeed the very example of these able men was in itself normal instruction of no mean order. To Mr. Calkens, however, is due the credit of first instructing the young primary teachers in the underlying principles of their profession. This was the real beginning in this city of systematic normal work.

As previously stated, in the spring of 1869, Mayor Hall's Board of Education came into power, and immediately began an investigation of the public schools with the view of making certain necessary reforms; for, of course, every new board must justify its existence by discovering the derelictions of its predecessor, and proceeding forthwith to remedy or remove chronic abuses. Among the unfinished business of the previous board, plans and specifications were found for the establishment for girls of a daily normal and high school. These plans made provision for a suitable edifice to be erected on three city lots covering an area of 7500 square feet—less than a tenth of the square on which the Normal College now stands! The proposed edifice might have been placed in the college chapel and yet leave sufficient room for a walk ten feet wide around it. The ideas of the originators of this school were better suited for a town of five thousand inhabitants than for a city which at that time contained about a million of people. Crude and weak as this "unfinished business" was, it furnished William Wood the opportunity of his life. Mentally he was a large man, comprehensive of grasp, with the learning and executive force necessary for the accomplishment of "noble ends by noble means." With ardent zeal and untiring energy he began to extend the plans of his predecessor, and to secure ways and means to found an institution worthy of the American metropolis.

The old act enabled the Board of Education to establish the Normal and High School without further legislation. By-laws for its government were passed and a president and vice president elected. Thomas Hunter and David B. Scott were chosen to fill these important offices. A floor and a half of a building at the southeast corner of Broadway and Fourth Street were hired for temporary quarters. When Professor Scott examined the premises and found a carriage salesroom below, an armory above, a

restaurant on the east, and a horrid din of omnibuses rolling incessantly over Belgian pavement on the west, he became discouraged, and informed the president that he could not accept the office to which he had been elected. He subsequently resigned, and the vacancy was filled by the appointment of Arthur H. Dundon. The president and vice president were directed by the board to visit normal schools in New York and other States and report the results of their observations. In the meantime Messrs. Gillet, Redfield, Schlegel, and Mangold were chosen to fill the chairs respectively of mathematics and physics (combined), natural science, French and German (combined), and music. Lydia F. Wadleigh was selected for the position of lady superintendent; and some of the best teachers of the public schools were appointed to serve as tutors under the different professors. The president was made professor of the science and art of teaching, and the vice president of Latin and Literature. A by-law was passed abolishing the "supplementary classes" in the public schools and transferring the pupils to the new institution. This naturally arrayed against the Normal and High School many of the principals, who lost their oldest and brightest pupils, to whom they were attached by many years of intimate association. Some of the inspectors and trustees who were deprived, to some extent, of their patronage assailed the reform in no measured terms. The superintendents were not pleased at the change because it curtailed their power. Never was an institution started under more adverse circumstances. New York is always a very conservative city and willing to bear many ills rather than make an effort to remove them. The Normal and High School was regarded by some with feelings of intense dislike, by other with cold disapproval, and by the great majority with absolute indifference. Perhaps the transfer of about three hundred "supplementary" students of superior caliber from Miss Wadleigh's school did more than anything else to make success a probable achievement. They belonged to the great middle class, were intellectual by study and heredity, and honorably ambitious to master the principles of their chosen profession. Able girls of the same class came from other schools, but they were few in number. Doubtless the very act which created so much ill feeling toward the Normal College in its infancy—the abolition of

the "supplementary" classes—was the act that enabled it to survive the assaults of all its enemies.

By a singular coincidence the Normal and High School was opened for the admission of students on St. Valentine's Day. About seven hundred presented themselves from all parts of the city with varied attainments, and claiming the highest classification. The work of organizing and grading such a heterogeneous mass of girls may be better conceived than described. For good and sufficient reasons the course of study was limited to three years. After due examination, the students were classified as follows: the poorest scholars in the first grade, the best in the sixth grade, and the others distributed through the intervening four grades, in the order of merit. It happened, fortunately, at this time that the Faculty and tutors consisted mainly of young men and women, or they could never have survived the difficulties they had to encounter.

Mr. Wood, foreseeing the future possibilities of the institution, had a bill passed in the legislature changing the name to Normal College. This name was clearly a misnomer. There was no deception, however, for every child knew that no degrees were conferred, and that the work was chiefly pedagogic. The President knew nothing of the bill until it was signed by the Governor. After all perhaps the chairman was right, for the name impelled us to work in order to deserve it. There is truly a great deal in a name, Shakspeare to the contrary notwithstanding.

The Board of Education applied for and obtained money to erect a suitable edifice, and a part of Bryant Square was chosen for a site. Here again fortune favored the young institution. The Mayor's residence on Forty-second Street fronted the square, and Mr. Hall objected to a school because it would injure his property. The best part of Hamilton Park was offered instead and thankfully accepted. Many months of vexatious delay ensued. Rewards were offered to architects for plans: \$1200 for the first, \$500 for the second, and \$250 for the third; and although \$1950 was thus expended, none of them was practicable for school purposes. Finally in 1871, when it became apparent that a municipal revolution was impending, which would include the Board of Education, and therefore prevent it from finishing the work it had commenced, the President of the College prepared a sketch

of a building which was accepted by the Executive Committee, elaborated by the architect of the board, and became the working plan of the present edifice. Even then there was danger that the Commissioners would not adopt the Committee's report. Mr. Wood desired a larger and handsomer building, and another warm friend of the College demanded as a condition for his vote the present unsightly stoop at the front entrance. At length, the necessary seven votes were obtained, chiefly through the exertions of Isaac Bell, and, in the summer of '71, work on the foundation was begun.

In the spring of '73, Mayor Hall's board was, in its turn, legislated out of office, and in its place a new board of twenty-one commissioners appointed by Mayor Havemeyer. Then there came into power a "Pharaoh who knew not Joseph." Some of the new members were gentlemen who had planned the village normal school for this great city, and one of them especially disliked Mr. Wood and his work simply because it was comprehensive and farseeing. The scheme of this minority was gallant and chivalrous; they resolved to prevent the girls from occupying their new edifice, now nearly finished. It was their intention to give it to the boys, to convert the building on Twenty-third Street into a hall for the board, and to sell the Grand Street building in the interest of retrenchment and reform. It is but just to say that the great majority of the commissioners were strongly opposed to this ungentlemanly and un-American treatment of young women; and it is only mentioned now to show the animus of two or three of the most influential members, who hated the new institution and all connected with it. Thank Heaven! the passions of hatred and vindictiveness are usually blind—blinder a great deal than love. These enemies of the Normal College were unable to see that the building could not be transferred without an act of the legislature, and, as it was too late to present a bill, they were simply "biting a file." The question now became, Could the edifice be ready for occupancy before the 1st of January, 1874? The foes of the college said, no; its friends said, yes. During that hot summer some of the latter remained in town to urge on the work; and so, in spite of every obstacle, the girls took possession (and "possession is nine points in the law") on the opening day in September, 1873. The friends of the college well knew that no legis-

lature or Board of Education would dare in the face of public opinion to oust the girls from their "local habitation," in order to make room for the boys. Such a thing might be done in the far East, where women are degraded slaves, but never in the new West, where they are respected and honored.

One dark, drizzly and gloomy day in November, soon after the election, word was brought to the Faculty that an ignorant member of the Assembly had a bill prepared by some qualified person to abolish the Normal College. This man—a tool in the hands of others—was forced to silence by a power stronger than that that used him. It would take too much time and space to tell all the various attacks of the enemy, and how they were overcome. William Wood, the Bayard of the educational system, the bold and the chivalrous, fought with all the skill and energy which trained faculty enabled him to employ. To the President he was like "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Ever cheerful, ever buoyant, he worked incessantly for the elevation and welfare of the college.

In 1880 the course of study was extended to four years, and in 1888 to five years. Both these extensions of time were bitterly opposed. Some of the Commissioners thought that a lengthened course was severe on poor parents, and others that the children should not be educated above their condition in life. But the then President of the Board, J. Edward Simmons, and the Chairman of the Executive Committee, William Wood, entertained a different opinion. In their view no education could be too high for women or no training too good for the teachers of this city. They carried a majority of the Committee and of the Board of Education in favor of a bill to make the institution a college in reality as well as in name. The vote in the former body was four to one and in the latter twelve to nine; and strange to say, the two ladies in the board at that time voted against the bill. Every member of the Assembly supported it except one from the Murray Hill district, and in the Senate the vote in its favor was unanimous. Governor Hill signed it, and thus it became a law.

With a few excerpts from the bill, I shall conclude this brief history.

I. The Normal College of the City of New York is hereby declared to be a separate and distinct organization and body corporate,

and as such shall have the powers and privileges of a College pursuant to the Revised Statutes of this State.*

II. The President of the College shall be a member of the Board of Trustees . . . and of the Executive Committee.

III. The said Board of Education as Trustees, upon the recommendation of the Faculty of the said College, may grant degrees and diplomas in the Arts to such persons as shall have completed a full course of study in said College.

Class Presidents.

Class of '97.—Annie Elisa Finkenaaur.	C ^{II} .—Lillian Cahn.
AC ^V .—Edyth Ryttenberg.	D ^{II} .—Alice Russel.
BC ^V .—Annie Eliza Finkenaaur.	E ^{II} .—Florence Moffit.
A ^{IV} .—Emma C. Gerdes.	AC ^{II} .—Grace Lowry.
B ^{IV} .—Ella G. Mitchell.	BC ^{II} .—Irma S. Bock.
C ^{IV} .—Jessie McPherson.	CC ^{II} .—Adele Dahn.
D ^{IV} .—Ella G. Ostrander.	DC ^{II} .—Helen Sardy.
E ^{IV} .—Irene C. Fowler.	EC ^{II} .—Jessie L. Gregory.
AC ^{IV} .—Maud G. Hopkins.	Acf.—Lucretia Torrence.
BC ^{IV} .—Jessie L. Patchen.	Bcf.—Alberta Beatrice Keen.
CC ^{IV} .—Martha E. Hyatt.	Ccf.—Grace E. McLaughlin.
A ^{III} .—Maerose Collins.	Dcf.—Helen Heath.
B ^{III} .—Emma M. Wynn.	Af.—Agnes Peterson.
C ^{III} .—Helen Curry.	Bf.—Mabel Feakins.
D ^{III} .—Florence Neu.	Cf.—Ange M. Ficker.
E ^{III} .—Lillie Bleyer.	Df.—Margaret Littell.
AC ^{III} .—May Hopkins.	Ef.—Julia Miles.
BC ^{III} .—Cecelia Cahalan.	Ag.—Pauline Schmitt.
CC ^{III} .—Zaida Weeks.	Bg.—Mamie Todd.
A ^{II} .—Hannah Marks.	Cg.—Lillian Reshower.
B ^{II} .—Caroline W. Brindley.	Acg.—Edythe Hathaway.
	Bcg.—Marie Fitz-Gerald.

* This bill was drawn by Thomas Boesé, Esq., former Secretary of the Board of Education.

For the Class of '97.

MAYTIME hath brought her welcome gifts at last :
Blue skies, the robin's song, the blossoms—all,
All that e'er doth offer—em'rald turf
Bestarred with flow'rets, dainty bells and small.

Hers is a gladsome time, a season fraught
With freshness, rest from storm—a time of calm—
When days are golden, blue, and tender rose,
When Nature wears a smile of healing balm.

On such a day, O sisters, ever dear !
At such an hour this song I fain would bring,
Poured from a heart full of a glad spirit
Yet wistful as the blossomed winds of spring.

Ours is the fate to-day, our home to leave—
Onward to go in the grand search for Truth.
Ours at this hour to bid a last good-by
Unto this vine-empurpled House of Youth.

Many the gifts of Her who dwells within,
The Loving Mother we have never seen—
Ah ! but she lives and breathes and ever shall,
What though unnumbered years may intervene !

With grateful hearts to her, my sisters, look,
With tear-filled eyes, yea, and with reverent head,
Thanking Her that She hovers near us' still,
Tho' all the books are closed—the lessons said.

We feel her presence, beautiful, serene,
The guide, the guardian of our happiest years;
She smiles upon us now—and sends us forth;
Her starlike eyes gleam softly thro' her tears.

Ah, gentle Mother ! thou dost point the way;
Ours but to follow, led by thy white hand
Into a world of which we little know—
E'en as a ship turned toward a foreign strand.