

Office), Gen. A. W. Greely (chief signal-officer), Dr. C. Hart Merriam (Department of Agriculture), A. H. Thompson (United States Geological Survey); treasurer, C. J. Bell; secretaries, Henry Gannett (United States Geological Survey), George Kennan; managers, Dr. J. C. Welling (president of the Columbian University), W. B. Powell (superintendent of schools, Washington), Capt. Rogers Birnie, jun., U. S. A., W. D. Johnson (United States Geological Survey), Henry Mitchell (United States Coast and Geodetic Survey), Marcus Baker (United States Geological Survey), G. Brown Goode (National Museum), Cleveland Abbe (United States Signal Office).

— 'Little Poems for Little Children' and 'Stories for Little Readers' (Chicago, Interstate Publishing Company) are books of elementary reading for students in primary grades. They are considerably above the average of such books.

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

\* \* \* Correspondents are requested to be as brief as possible. The writer's name is in all cases required as proof of good faith.

Twenty copies of the number containing his communication will be furnished free to any correspondent on request.

The editor will be glad to publish any queries consonant with the character of the journal.

#### A New Meteorite from Texas.

WE have this day received a new entire meteorite from Texas, weighing about two hundred and eighty pounds. It belongs to the class siderolites, although the nickeliferous iron apparent to the naked eye is scarcely more than in some of the aerolites. Olivine is present in great abundance, giving a yellowish-green appearance to the whole mass. A hasty examination also reveals anorthite and a few specks of a bronzy looking metal, which is doubtless noilite. The meteorite was brought to us by one of our assistants, who found it near the south-west bank of the Colorado River, about three miles south-west of La Grange, Fayette County, Tex.: we would therefore suggest the name of 'The La Grange Meteorite' for it. A fuller description, with complete analyses, will be published later.

WARD & HOWELL.

Rochester, N.Y., Jan. 31.

#### Jacobson's 'Higher Ground.'

YOUR notice of 'Higher Ground' in *Science* (x. No. 254) was so kindly, that I hesitate to impose upon your good nature by asking you to devote additional space to the subject. And whatever I may say will not be said in a spirit of controversy.

You approve of manual training in public schools, and you approve of the succession-tax as a means of enabling all children to get the benefit of the schools. Your only question is, Would the proposed succession-tax pay the bill? and your answer is, that it would not.

If a change so great as the one proposed could be made all at once, the proceeds of the succession-tax would not be sufficient to pay the bill. But it would take years and years to bring about so vast a change; and I believe that the proceeds of the succession-tax would be sufficient to pay the bill as fast as the change could be brought about, because wealth is increasing much faster than population. As an illustration of a change to which there is comparatively little opposition, see the length of time it takes for the high-license movement to make its way, — a movement full of good sense, to which, from pecuniary interest only, the liquor-dealers are opposed. What would not the opposition be to the succession-tax movement, and the apparent absurdity of paying people for keeping their children at school?

To say that there were in this country, in 1880, 8,347,731 children of the age in question; and that to pay, at the rates proposed, three-fourths of their number for going to school, would require \$919,502,737.50; and that this sum could not be raised by the proposed tax, — is not that very much as if some one had said in 1830, "To do the transportation business of this country, we shall need 140,000 miles of railroad, costing eight thousand millions of dollars, and such a sum could not be raised for such a purpose?"

The money for the railroads has been found, because it has been

found that railroads develop and enrich the country; that the money spent for railroads comes back, and comes back a hundred-fold.

The money for the education which I propose will be found when the people shall become convinced, that, invested in improving the brains of the people, — the motive power of all motive powers, — it will be more profitable than money invested in railroads or in any other enterprise whatever; that the money spent will come back, and come back a hundred-fold.

If in 1830 any one had predicted that in 1888 we should have our present mileage of railroads at its present cost to the country, he would have been laughed to scorn, because such an expenditure for highways must then have appeared absurd to the average man. But we spend all this money for highways, and thrive by it.

The figures in 'Higher Ground' are only tentative, re-adjustable at every point. Any public body into whose hands the practical working should fall would of course cut its garment according to the cloth on hand. My proposition is, that children shall be paid for going to school from twelve to twenty years of age, and that the amount to be paid for the eight years shall be \$1,200. But if only money enough could be raised to keep them at school till eighteen, then the pay must cease at eighteen. That would require, in all, only \$575 for each child. If at first only enough could be raised to keep the children at school till sixteen, then sixteen must be the limit. That would require, for the four years of each child, only \$250. Even then the gain of the people in intelligence and efficiency would be immense, and the expense for the four years would be \$250 only, instead of \$1,200 for the eight years.

My proposition is, that all children from twelve to twenty years of age shall be paid for going to school substantially what they could earn out of school: at the age of twelve to thirteen, \$50; thirteen to fourteen, \$75; fourteen to fifteen, \$100; fifteen to sixteen, \$125; sixteen to seventeen, \$150; seventeen to eighteen, \$175; eighteen to nineteen, \$225; nineteen to twenty, \$300.

This, I think, would keep the children at school, and we should have an intelligent and efficient population, such as the world has never yet seen. Perhaps a trifle less annually would keep the children at school. I should be in favor of the smallest amount possible that would accomplish the object. But of course this could not begin all at once all over the country. If the proposition shall ever be carried out anywhere, it would take years and years after the beginning before all parts of the country would adopt it. All the children would not go. Wealthy people would still prefer to send their children to private schools; perhaps some Catholics, not many, would persuade themselves that the supposed interests of their children in the next world demand their absence from the American public school; and there are perhaps people among us so shiftless or degraded that they would not send their children to school, no matter what the inducement.

It is not necessary that I should be able to show that we could to-day provide for a state of things which can only be brought about after years of agitation. The state of things which I advocate can only come about gradually. The people will have to be convinced. Schoolhouses will have to be multiplied, and these things can only be done slowly and gradually. That the tax would be sufficient to begin with in large cities, there can be no doubt; and, as wealth increases more rapidly than population, the proceeds of the tax would tend constantly to come nearer being sufficient than it would be to begin with. In discussing matters of taxation, the *Chicago Tribune* said a few days ago that there are five hundred millionaires in New York City: there were probably not fifty millionaires in New York twenty years ago. There are probably one hundred millionaires in Chicago to-day: twenty years ago there were not five. Smaller fortunes are increasing in proportion. Wealth is increasing much more rapidly than population.

No man can tell what the succession-tax would yield: it can only be found out by experiment. Did we not lower the tariff in 1883 to decrease the surplus, and then find that we had a steadily increasing surplus? I do not pretend to be able to calculate what the succession-tax would yield in the whole country, nor in any one state or city. On p. 44 of 'Higher Ground' I gave it as an estimate that the tax would yield annually from three to six millions in Chicago, and from twenty to fifty millions in New York. To this estimate I still adhere. The many large estates falling in from