

There was a time when the world of letters was ignorant of astronomy, but powerful in astrology; unacquainted with chemistry but insanelly devoted to alchemy. In those days the wisdom of the world was usually a mass of egregious blunders, ciphered out by that falsest of methods, *logic*. The theology of that period was produced largely in the same way. By false logic (sophistry) any desired result could be reached. We all know how, in algebra, by using zero as a factor or divisor, we can prove that one equals five or fifteen. Just so those ancient noodles used to let some false step occur in their syllogisms, that not only misled themselves while they lived, but generation after generation of their unthinking followers. In some things our own people are still floundering in the meshes of error they wove.

Now, however, we think our science is all true, all sound and impregnable. Can it be that four hundred years hence the world will find our old books as ridiculous as we do those of ancient times? It seems impossible, because we think we can prove our science by tangible evidence and perfect demonstration in which logic bears a most unimportant part.

While some study the science of bugs, or of fishes or of mosses, or of rocks, there are others who have chosen a higher field and study the physical and hygienic life of man. Others again, disregarding the latter, observe with a critical eye the mental and moral life of our people, and enjoy social science keenly. The analysis of human life is "harder" than chemical analysis and its results less certain of truth.

A humble branch of that study of man is the comparison of various communities; the geographical and climatic influences on the life and pursuits of our fellow-men. In this line, I would like to discourse of what I see around my home on these boundless prairies of Dakota; then of what I noticed in a delightful sojourn in the flat, tropical, lacustrine regions of central Florida last winter; and lastly of my life as a U.S. deputy surveyor for four months recently among the cliffs, canyons and plains of western Colorado. But such extensive topics cannot be condensed into small bounds, and they are chiefly outside of the legitimate sphere of your paper. If a condensed paper of observations in Orange Co., Florida, would be acceptable, I may send one, when I reach that locality again next December.

Yankton, D. T., Oct. 19, '85.

A. W. BARBER.