

Literary Associations.

One of the most creditable features of our northern society, is the numerous and influential literary associations, libraries, reading-rooms, lyceums and lectures that furnish food for the mind, and have been the nurseries for so many "shining lights" in the literary and political world. This spirit of self improvement is one of the marked distinctions between those States where Freedom exists, and those where slavery rules. In the free States, the tendency is to spread wide the sunlight of knowledge, and throw open every avenue to education, while, on the contrary, in the slave States, the tendency is to concentrate all knowledge and learning in the few, and leave the masses in ignorance, thus leading to an aristocratic, anti-republican system, and to make the privileged few arrogant, ambitious and overbearing; and the many, ignorant, depraved and ruffianly.

We have no where felt the force of the maxim of the celebrated English Jurist, Lord Brougham, that "Ignorance may make men slaves, but Education never," as we have done in Kansas. Our main support here has consisted, not in numbers, but in the moral and intellectual superiority of those who were on the Free State side, which has led them to adhere to principle, and to suffer rather than fail in adherence to its dictates.

We trust that this distinguishing characteristic of northern society, alluded to, will find ample encouragement on the soil of Kansas. We have, in our midst, large numbers of young men who have no place but their boarding-house, or the stores, in which to spend the long winter evenings. The establishment, in Lawrence, of a lyceum, with library, lectures, &c., would be found highly beneficial to this class of our citizens, as well as to the whole community.

Would it not be well to re-organize the Lawrence Athenæum, which was formed here the winter after the first settlement of the town, and which the more important duties and responsibilities of the exciting contest through which we have passed, has alone caused to fall into abeyance? There was quite a valuable Library, of over 500 volumes, belonging to the association, and if resuscitated, will form the nucleus of an institution second to no similar one. The excitement and dangers of war have, we trust, passed forever, and it becomes us to lay aside its influences, and cultivate the arts of peace and civilization. We ought to have a good series of lectures and debates in Lawrence, this winter, and we have available talent to make them alike interesting and instructive. Who will be the first to move in this matter?