

THE JUNIOR'S CRITIC.

We have watched with some interest and considerable pride the improvement that has attended the publication of our neighbor, the *State Democrat*. But while we congratulate the Democracy upon so able an exponent and champion, we are nevertheless compelled to refer to a few points that were somewhat indistinct in the mind of the reporter for the Junior Exhibition. We give to the *Democrat* the credit of, at least, endeavoring to erect a standard of criticism, that tends to remove the monotony of "puffing" every part of a programme that is presented to the public. But if we are not mistaken, the effect was too great for the caliber of the Democratic sheet. As this is the first opportunity, however, that the *Democrat* has had to witness a public exhibition of the students of the University, perhaps the plea of inexperience may be urged as an excuse for inaccuracies. But we must not ignore the criticism.

Since "we do not know if there is an Elocutionary chair at the Nebraska University," we are able to reply that after searching the storeroom of the University we have found no chair of so late a patent. But we have found a few elementary grammars that we are certain the University would loan on good security.

The advice concerning scepticism was indeed profound, and in this age of inquiry, an inspiring motto. He, who upon forgetting a carefully prepared oration, could excell it, by speaking extempore, would, it seems, meet the admiration of the critic.

But of all things considered we at least hope that our critic will not again try to exhibit his marvelous erudition by stating that a certain authority is better than the one quoted, when no authority was quoted upon the question under consideration. This act is beneath the dignity of the true critic.

With these few allusions we hope our friend will be more faithful to its profession in the future. After an enlarged ex-

perience and continued improvement, the journal will doubtless attain a position where it can win and maintain the confidence of its reader.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION.

In opposition to the particular methods of teaching now practiced in the University, we would not have these few remarks especially directed. But in as much as great differences exist among professional teachers as to the proper methods of imparting knowledge, we wish to speak of the relative merits and demerits of two systems practiced by Educators generally.

Evidently the greatest acquisition of knowledge is made when the student is caused to feel and realize that what he has acquired in the mental field, is his own to use and enjoy. How this acquisition is to be most facilitated, and at the same time the knowledge be made lasting, is the problem for solution. Some have endeavored to solve this problem by giving to the student a text-book to guide him, in the discussions of the class-room, and in the explanations of such points as may be alluded to by the student and elucidated by the professor. By such a method the student is supposed to gain his entire knowledge of the subject under consideration. Others, though perhaps able to compile a text-book themselves, give to the class such topics as can be mastered by reference to various books at the hands of students. By this means, the ground that the usual text-book covers is traversed, and the work completed.

In the system first mentioned, the student is left to attain nothing by his own diligence. What is brought out in the lesson, is taken from the tutor as the real and true answer. Thus the opinion of the professor is made the opinion of the student. In short, with no discrimination to be exercised by the student, the acquisition of knowledge can neither be of critical utility, nor lasting in its ef-