## THE HIGH SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES OF AMERICA.

[By F. P. Matz, Sc. D., Ph. D., Professor of Mathematics, Defiance College, Defiance, Ohio.]

The American high school is a school *sui generis*. It has frequently been called "the poor man's college." This school makes paramount the greatest good to the greatest number. In a word, the American high school is a necessary good, an indispensable institution, and has come to stay. The North glories in these educational institutions. The South increases their number every year. The course of studies for American high schools, high and excellent as it is, bears the American stamp, "Excelsior;" and, as a consequence, is gradually made higher.

Experience teaches that the genuine college-spirit cannot be transferred to, and fostered in, the high school. The college is a necessity, and its sphere of usefulness should be to complete the grand educational structure begun in the high school.

The preparatory schools are the proper institutions for those who may be averse to having their sons and daughters fitted for college in the public high schools. They are thoroughly American institutions; and in this land of liberty, science and religion, the preparatory schools are eminently proper institutions of learning.

If the course of studies in our high schools be gradually and incessantly raised and advanced, even if the time required for graduation has to be extended, the preparatory schools will promptly raise and advance their courses of studies. As a consequence, there will be many Exeters, Andovers, and other places of equal name and fame.

### The Smaller Institutions.

Are not the courses of studies in all our American educational institutions gradually raised and advanced? A glance into the past for a decade will convince the most sceptical of this fact.

No young high school, or preparatory school, or technical school, or college, or university, which keeps in the educational procession during this great march, will necessarily die out. There is room for all our educational institutions, and more of them are needed every year.

These young and vigorous western colleges and universities, with their low expenses and with their work now done as thoroughly and as well as it is done at Johns Hopkins, at Yale, at Harvard, and at Clark, are the ones that have of late been making the most rapid and pronounced growth. Are not the courses of studies in all these western institutions of higher education every year advanced to a higher plane, are not their professors men of the highest scholastic attainments, and is not the sphere of usefulness and influence of these educational institutions thereby correspondingly increased? Western educational institutions may now justly be called America's growing educational institutions. Westward the educational Star of Empire takes its way; and this is not a descending star—as facts and history show.

### America to Be the Leader.

The final result of this gradual and incessant raise and advance of courses of studies in our high schools will necessitate a corresponding raise and advance in the courses of studies in our preparatory schools, technical schools and colleges. In fact, our American colleges, both great and small, and our universities, will become institutions of higher education or institutions of research.

As an ultimate consequence, America, which already has many universities on more than par in every respect but age with the universities of the Old World, will be the educational center of this mundane sphere before the next ten years have elapsed.

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## THE PRACTICABILITY OF CORRESPONDENCE INSTRUCTION.

[By H. M. Lavers, Supt. The International Correspondence Schools.]

Any system of instruction by correspondence must be practical to be successful. The extent of its success, therefore is a reflection of its practicability. Some systems are conducted solely as a financial investment, but true correspondence instruction does not make that feature a first consideration. Education is a product that takes slowly to commercial methods, and the attempt to make it an [object of sale is one great reason for the prejudice it has encountered. The prejudice was directed first, against a departure from the old plans whereby education was largely a scholastic affair, and second to the apparent impracticability of the method. The prejudice no longer exists. It has been set aside by results.

Ten years of careful thought and search for what were the educational requirements of thinking people, have given every man who watches the times, a clearer appreciation of the purposes and scope of corrsepondence instruction, and the system is, therefore, understood much better.

Instruction by mail is intended for the development of an ideal practical man, and does not aim for those fine effects that lead the followers of other systems into airy nothings. A properly conducted system of practical education is of the earth earthy at all times.

Instruction by correspondence is specific. There is nothing dilatory about it. It is direct and pertinent, with little respect for mental feats of an acrobatic nature.

It is a busy man's method and more than any other system has cultivated habits of self dependence.

It is the handmaid of every-day business, and is applied and modified in accordance with the rapid changes of the activities there. The improvements in it are, therefore, proportionately rapid, and represent the latest phase of every departure. It directs its instruction and examples to the heart of the business in hand, and as a result cannot be indefinite. In the language of simplicity it holds up for study the practices and processes of the immense industries by which the majority of men earn their daily bread.

It is endorsed by the "producers" of this country because of its simple thoroughness, but chiefly, in that it has rendered science a useable rather than an adorable thing.

All methods of correspondence instruction are not a success, but a criticism should be leveled at the manner of carrying out the method, and not at the method itself. The relative proportion of success and failure in this system of instruction, is, however, not much different from other lines of human endeavor.

The practicability of correspondence instruction has come into question by reason of the class of people it deals with. Its roll of students is highly cosmopolitan. Many of them are absolutely untrained in habits of study. A large number have neglected earlier opportunities and come to the correspondence method as a last resort. Circumstances drove them there. Ninety-nine out of every hundred earn their own living. They are busy—bread and butter busy. Some few have more leisure time at their command, and have been favored with a better start, but these are the exception. If, then, any system of instruction can enlighten them in the pursuit of their daily business, and can train them to a grasp of the subject, so that when confronted by difficulties that heretofore they could not master, they easily command the situation, must not then the method of necessity, be practical?

What shall we say of a man who gets a clear insight into the difficulties of compound proportion, who previous to study by this method, was stalled by a complex fraction? What shall we say of a method that renders the intricacies of algebra into the "language of babes?" What is the measure of a system that makes trigonometry the mouthpiece of everybody? Is machine design so simple that its successful exposition will entitle the system to no credit? What is there in the fact that clerks have become draughtsmen, apprentices have risen to foremen, superintendents developed into managers, and mechanics into engineers of great capacity? These men had no other avenue of advancement than through the correspondence method; but, backed by a wholesouled ambition and a determination to advance, they have profited by the corresondence method, and have proved that it is today the ideal plan of study.

The men of the present generation have in the correspondence method a means to intellectual advancement that is, more than any other agency, working out the trade supremacy of this great country. Three hundred thousand students in one institution alone prove that.

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