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RELATION OF GRADED SCHOOLS
TO THE STATE UNIVERSITY.

The graded school has become the most important feature of popular education in the west. It is the grand consummation of the common or public school. The graded school has already, in a great measure, supplanted the seminary and academy, and all private schools of equal grade. It is the highest ambition of every hamlet, village, and city, to set in operation, as soon as possible, such a school, and to provide for that purpose a fine building and costly appliances.

These noble structures, erected at great expense, and frequently beautiful in architectural design, are the ornaments and pride of our land, and of no state more than of Nebraska. Ours is an enviable and satisfying boast, to be able to say truly "We have more, better furnished, and more costly school houses than any state in the Republic, in proportion to our taxable property." In fact, the people during the past two years have become frantic in their zeal to erect costly houses for both graded and common schools. And to what end could money be more wisely expended? To no nobler purpose, if the same zeal is shown in making the school an ornament and a blessing to the community, that is manifested in providing the house. But this is not always done. More than half our graded schools are almost nuisances. A beautiful pile of brick and mortar does not constitute a superior school. We are convinced that many of the graded schools of Nebraska are far inferior to the country schools. Instead of being hives in which the industrious inmates are laying stores of honey by, for future blessings to humanity, they are, too frequently, hives with nine or ten dreary cells, in which drones are bred, in which hatred of school and study are instilled into young hearts by unskilled and soulless teachers.

The methods of conducting graded schools successfully are receiving the earnest attention of our best educators. It is an undertaking by no means trivial, to say how these schools may be made to accomplish the greatest possible good. But there is no good reason why

they may not be made approximately efficient. However, something more must be done, than simply building a costly edifice, and crowding several hundred children within its walls. Of course the pupils are always graded, after a fashion, according to their scholarship; but there the *graded* feature generally ceases, and each department becomes a humdrum "common school," with the disadvantage of being in too close proximity to nine or ten others of like character. The most necessary thing is lacking. In order to make the graded school truly successful and an ornament to the community, a *thorough course of study from the Primary department to the High School* must be prepared, and rigidly followed.

But you say, Have not all our best schools such courses of study? Yes; but with an exception or two, they are only on paper—they are not carried out in practice.

WHAT SHOULD DETERMINE THE COURSE.

We do not intend to discuss a course of study for each department of a graded school. We shall limit ourselves to the consideration of what the course should be for the High School.

We already have the basis of an excellent school system. The State has lavishly provided for the support of our common schools. Our permanent school fund for this purpose is over eighteen millions of dollars. Besides this, the Nation and the State have endowed and organized a State University. Immense wealth has been poured into the coffers of the Regents for its support. Already it is the boast of our young State, promising soon to be the pride of the West.

The High School stands between the University and the Common School. Should it not be the *connecting link*, uniting the different parts of our system into a perfect unity? In no other way, from our very circumstances, as a State, will the High School fulfill its mission. If forced from the position of a bond of union, its true objects will, in part at least, be removed; thus impairing its own usefulness, and breaking our State educational structure into fragments. Here, then, we have discovered a relation which may teach us how to determine the course of study for the High School department. *The course of study in the High School should prepare the student for entrance into the Freshman or Sophomore class of the State University.*

All our graded schools, Lincoln excepted, have utterly ignored the University in this regard. The policy of one or two of our larger cities deserves especially to be condemned. To ignore the University on account of possessing a splendid school building and costly appliances is consummate folly. A high school education can not be glossed over and spread out into a college education. All ambition in this direction on the part of school authorities, is puerile presumption, and only destroys the usefulness of the school, by forcing it out of its proper sphere.

The course of study is generally too general, too miscellaneous. It is a conglomerate mess picked out, here a little, there a little. Here is the evil. The student leaves school unprepared to enter any higher institution. His attainments might *average* sufficient, but he can not enter without a great sacrifice of time and money, so the chances are that his education will end with his school days. School life is too precious to allow one to travel over the same road twice. Therefore we

would not have the course of study correspond to the requirements of the University for the aggrandizement of that institution alone, but for the lasting benefit of the students, and the inestimable good of society. The High School would thus become a permanent institution—an honor to itself and the State.

WHO SHALL DETERMINE THE COURSE.

This uniformity cannot be attained in all our graded schools by common consent. A few schools may adopt courses very nearly such as we have mentioned, but many will not. School Boards, it is a sad fact, are not always alive to the interests of their schools; they are frequently entirely unfitted for their responsible duties. In order to gain harmony throughout the State in a movement of this kind, there must be a *power* to set it in motion. There must always be *authority* to put into execution any project for the advancement of the common good. It can not be done spontaneously. But what is this power? Clearly legislation, the strong arm of the law. Let our educators bring their influence to bear upon the legislature. Let a law be passed by which a *uniform course of study* shall be adopted for all the graded schools of the State, and let that course, in the High School department, fit pupils for entrance into the State University.

Let this be done, and we feel assured that the most satisfactory results will follow. We have now about fifteen graded schools, and, according to the authority of our honorable State Superintendent of Public Instruction, there are over forty schools that ought to be graded. In ten years we shall have an hundred. When these are properly graded, the course we have indicated adopted, and each begins to send out graduates year by year, well fitted for entering college, then will be a proud day for our State and the University.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

—We desire to call the attention of our readers to the article, on another page, entitled "Three." It is written by Emma L. Williams, a student of the University, and is the continuation of a series of papers, under the same heading, commenced in the September number of the STUDENT. It will richly repay the reading, as it evinces much culture and thought on the part of the writer, and is a discussion of some of the most vital questions of human life.

—Read also the serial story, by C. V. Martin, likewise commenced in the September number. The scenes are stirring and entertaining, the dialogues animated and instructive, and the language good. The description and topography of the country in which the plot is laid, especially in the opening and closing chapters, are accurate and can be relied upon.

—A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT.—Luther Kuhlman, Ponca, Nebraska, writes as follows:

The STUDENT is a welcome visitor, and I wait impatiently for its appearance. It comes to me as a letter from a friend, and as such I read all it contains. Success to your efforts—I wish I could be with you.

We are glad to hear from our old friend Kuhlman. His absence is greatly regretted by all his former friends. We trust he will soon be with us again. Mr. Kuhlman was formerly editor of the STUDENT, and we are pleased to know that he still has a deep interest in its welfare.

—The Palladians have recently passed through a frightful conflict. The question which has caused this fierce internal commotion was, "Shall we admit the ladies to membership in our society, and if so, shall we (the gents) pay their fees, or shall they have *equal rights*?" The girls will be admitted henceforth, and won't have to pay. Don't be alarmed or bashful, boys, they won't hurt you; we shall expect to see the Palladian prosper all the better for this innovation.

—The question of forming a glee club in vocal music is now being discussed by some of the students. This is correct. It is time some such step was taken. We do not remember that the young gentlemen of the University have ever indulged in a solitary song for the benefit of the public. The young ladies, unassisted, have frequently favored us with songs and duets. All are lovers of music. No entertainment is considered a success without this additional charm. But, though there is plenty of material, a number of excellent voices for each part, there has never been any ambition to form associations or clubs among the ladies and gentlemen for the cultivation of this art. We cannot afford to defer it longer. Every school of any pretension desires to excel in this particular. We now have numbers and talent sufficient to make music henceforth the most important and pleasing feature of our University exercises and entertainments. The social pleasure derived from regular meetings for practice alone ought to be a sufficient inducement, without the extra incentive of ambition, the desire to create a high reputation for the University, and for each of our respective literary societies in this regard. Young men, wake up from your lethargy, and display the musical powers with which Nature has endowed you, in the behalf of *Alma Mater*.

OUR EXCHANGES.

The *Mute Journal* of Nebraska has some choice reading matter. We are glad to receive its regular visits.

The *High School*, Omaha, is ably edited and has earned its wide reputation as a first class paper.

The *Index Niagarensis* is the most regular of our exchanges. The *Niagarensis* is "better'n it looks."

The *Institute*, Glasgow, Mo., is out in magazine form. It is greatly improved in all respects. We wish it prosperity.

The *University Missourian* has put on a new dress. It is now printed on the best tinted paper and in typography ranks first class. It is improving also in literary merit.

The *Annalist* always has some good literature. The October number has a good article, wherein the writer enforces the opinion, with strong argument, that "might is right."

The *Central Collegian* is a model paper in some respects. The October number has a great variety of short and well written articles. Variety of matter upon college topics is the life of a college paper.

The *Packer Quarterly*, Brooklyn, N. Y., is at hand. To read its charming, racy pages is to know that it is published by young ladies. We always spend an hour or two in reading it on first receipt; and the influence of its sunshine and humor amply compensates.