

# HESPERIAN STUDENT.

Issued semi-monthly by the HESPERIAN STUDENT  
Publishing Association of the University of Nebraska

## EDITORS:

C. S. ALLEN, CHIEF; A. G. WARNER; S. D. KILLEN;  
C. G. McMILLAN; WM. OWEN JONES.

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One copy, per college year, . . . . .	\$1.00
One copy, one half year, . . . . .	.50
Single copy, . . . . .	.10
Single Copy, to Members of Association . . . . .	.05

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All communications should be addressed to the HESPERIAN STUDENT, State University, Lincoln, Nebraska.

PRESS OF THE UNIVERSITY PRINTING COMPANY.

## *Editorial Notes.*

NUMEROUS constitutional amendments and an uncontested election have at last done their perfect or imperfect work, and have placed this paper under the management of a board of five editors, who have been elected for the calendar year of '85. In entering upon their work they would make no promises and offer no apologies. That the STUDENT can and ought to be improved goes without saying; that the new editors are willing to do all they can to help towards this end may possibly indicate but little; that they are capable of achieving the measure of success that the U. of N. is justified in demanding is not a thing for them to claim in the initial number, but a thing for them to prove—if haply it can be proved—by the character of this, and of each succeeding issue.

"Does it cost the state two thousand dollars a year for each student that takes the agricultural course?" This was the question asked by one of Nebraska's industrious legislators, and a committee was promptly appointed to find out.

WE have not yet been summoned to testify, but we would like to suggest that Nebraska is not alone in finding an industrial school an expensive luxury. To be sure there has not been enough spent on ours to show as yet whether it could amount to anything, or not; and what has been granted it, has been in such a dribbling, stingy way that it was impossible to expend it in the most advantageous manner. But local bungling aside, it is still true that a creature half laboring man and half scientist has been found one of the most expensive of all domestic animals to

rear. He who merely theorizes about industrial colleges has ever had a most delightful and exhilarating task; but the unfortunate man who has laboriously attempted to put these splendid theories into practice has been confronted by some of the most difficult educational problems of the day. Dean Bessey in his inaugural, said that an industrial school should not teach theories but such things only as are positively known; and that experiments that self interest would lead individuals to undertake, should not be undertaken by the state. Thus limited (and the limitations are surely wise, an industrial college becomes little but a scientific school where experiments in the natural sciences and instruction in the same are the principal part of the work performed. But such an institution bears no more resemblance to what the average man understands by an industrial school than a telescope bears to a plow. As yet, then, we believe that the most important experiment which this or any other industrial college can undertake, is the all important one the object of which is to determine the best method of conducting this class of schools. Such an experiment is necessarily expensive, and will require an, as yet, undetermined amount of money and of time; but if the knowledge sought can be eventually obtained it is an experiment that in the fullest sense of the word, will pay.

SOME of the members of our faculty who have come recently from eastern colleges are peculiarly horrified at the style of literary composition to which our students are addicted. The professor who is burdened with rhetorical says that writers make too hard work of preparing an essay or an oration. They read everything they can concerning the subject they are to write upon, then they groan and worry and perspire in a herculean attempt to unearth some original idea, and at last they clumsily spin such thought as they have been able to accumulate, into a bundle of verbal shoe-strings that spread themselves over the paper in a dreary labyrinth of bad penmanship. The charge is true, and, in a measure, we glory in its truth. That is, we would rather be clumsy than effeminate, and would rather that our efforts should make us awkward than that elegance should be obtained through acquiescence in our own stupidity. The tendency of college life is too often towards self-satisfied mediocrity. When a student tries to do something specially good, he often succeeds only in getting himself laughed at, and he is in the future tempted to be satisfied with perfecting himself in the mediocre. Even the organizations kept up entirely by the students in our modern colleges, show an inclination to so train the individual that he may be able to avoid ridicule, rather than to command admiration. Pruning is a very