

**GRADED COURSE OF
INSTRUCTION FOR THE PUBLIC
SCHOOLS OF CHICAGO. ADOPTED
BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION,
APRIL 16, 1872**

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J. L. PICKARD

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FOR THE

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF CHICAGO.

FOURTH EDITION—REVISED.

Chicago
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PREFACE.

THE Graded Course of Instruction originally prepared by W. H. Wells, Esq., for eight years Superintendent of Schools of this city, has been thrice modified, and yet in substance it is but little changed.

The work of revision has been carefully prosecuted during the past year. The experience of teachers has suggested modifications. The aid of teachers, in all parts of the revision, has been most cheerfully given, and it is most thankfully acknowledged.

To the Principals of all our schools credit is due for some of the most valuable suggestions, and for timely aid in the preparation of the work.

The suggestions in regard to Elements of Geometry are mainly from the pen of Prof. Safford, Director of the Dearborn Observatory, who has kindly copied the same from his manuscript work on Geometry.

The book is presented to the teachers for their guidance, in the belief that it is yet imperfect, but with the hope that in their hands its errors may be so corrected as to make it subserve the good of the schools and the advancement of sound learning.

In the Appendix will be found a list of the Text-Books used, and the portions of each allotted to each grade.

J. L. PICKARD,
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS.

CHICAGO, *April*, 1872.

INTRODUCTION.

WHAT CONSTITUTES AN EDUCATION.

THE opinions that prevail as to the nature of a good education are as various as are the estimates put upon human life and destiny. The extremes are found in the intensely animal man, who makes his study bear upon the sources of animal gratification, and who seeks to obtain skill in securing the means of gratification—and in the intensely spiritual man, who passes the life of a hermit in bewailing the existence of a body, and in attempting to crucify all those desires and affections that connect him with the things of this world. The latter is, without doubt, the nobler of the two, but to one who recognizes man's double nature, neither can be regarded as entirely satisfactory to man or to his Maker.

In general terms, that education is the best which best fits man to make the most of all his life relations. In other words, he is best educated who makes of himself the best son, the best brother, the best husband, the best father—the most successful artisan or tradesman—the most useful member of society—the best citizen—the most enlightened patriot—the most intelligent lover of his race and of God. In pursuit of such an education the studies of our schools serve as efficient means towards an end, but they are not the end sought.

Those who make Arithmetic, Grammar, Geography and History, Natural Science, Classics or Metaphysics, the end of their study, will never attain a good education. All these have some intrinsic value. The necessities of trade and of commerce make Arithmetic and Navigation valuable in themselves. Our social relations make knowledge of the rules of speech

very desirable. Knowledge of Geography and History is essential to one who would become an intelligent citizen, more especially in this land where the citizen is responsible for the conduct of public affairs; added to this, the knowledge of other times and of other lands, much of which is locked up in forms strange to us, may be made available through the study of Ancient Classics. The principles of Chemistry are of value to one whose lungs and whose stomach are vast laboratories, as well as to one who would, from the hard soil, bring forth the materials to be wrought over into bone, and muscle, and strength. So in each department, the study has some value in itself considered, and the more one knows of books the better, if he stops not with the books, and makes not the acquisition of their contents the end of his study. What others have written, and said, and done, may help us towards the end of study—the ability to write, to say, and to do of ourselves. Books are as needful to the mind as is food to the body; useless, unless digested, and made a part of ourselves—nay, sometimes worse than useless, as undigested food is often the source of a positive injury. The proper question for each teacher to ask is, not how much have my pupils swallowed, but how much have they digested—not how full are they, but how much strength have they gained—not how many rules have they committed, but how many principles have they mastered—not how far have they traveled, but how much have they observed by the way—not how much more do they know, but how much better have they become? The higher and better uses of all studies are their indirect uses, the benefits that flow through their proper prosecution, in greater power of attention, enlarged comprehension, quickened curiosity, greater self-control, and wider and more far-reaching influence over others. We are told that knowledge of self is the best knowledge. The best self-knowledge is consciousness of power in all departments of our being. He who is conscious of the most of this power, has the best education, no matter what his merely scholastic attainments may be.

I have thus far spoken of books as means to a good education, but there are other means to this end which no good

teacher will overlook or lightly esteem. The teacher is studied more than all the books used in our schools, and order, neatness, cleanliness, quiet earnestness, punctuality, truthfulness, self-respect, self-control, obedience to rule, kindness, forbearance, courtesy, considerateness, affability, politeness, sympathy and love wrought into the life of the teacher, so as to be recognized at all times as a part of his very being, will do more towards improving the character and developing the power of the student than all other agencies combined. The absence of any of the qualities named above does seriously impair the influence of the teacher, however great it may be in other respects, and the very best instruction in matters treated of in books can not atone for the lack of a good personal influence.

THE GRADED SYSTEM.

That system is essential to success in any course of study, is apparent to all. All attempts at systematizing a course of study must have some attendant evils. But these are rather accompaniments, than necessary results.

A brief notice of such evils may help toward their eradication.

The Graded System cuts up the work of teaching into parts, which may easily become disjointed fragments, even in the hands of teachers who strive to be faithful in the performance of their allotted work. The tendency of the system, fostered somewhat by our imperfect human nature, is to make the teacher feel that his predecessor *has finished* the work assigned him, and that he has a work *to finish* for his successor. Hence each does his work without much regard to the work of others. This view of the system is a false view. The work is one work, and each part has its relations to, and bearings upon, every other part. There must, therefore, be a *review* of the past, that it may be more firmly connected with the present, and the future must be constantly present to the mind of the teacher, that his work may be preparatory to that which is to follow. It is not expected that the teacher will anticipate the

work of the following grade in the requirements made of pupils, but that, understanding thoroughly the whole course, he will do the work of his grade in such a manner as to make it helpful to the pupil after promotion. The difficulties to be mastered, the obstacles to be surmounted, must be present to the mind of the teacher, that the pupils may, while receiving instruction, be gaining strength also for future need.

This is not like that division of manual labor, in which each does his work according to a given pattern, not knowing or thinking how his work is to be fitted to that of his fellow, but like that of the architect, who lays out his plans upon separate sheets, but in preparing each he has remembered the previous one, and has had his mind upon that which is to follow, so that each is fitted to each, and when the work is completed there will be no lack of beauty, or of strength.

Let each teacher bear in mind that his work is twofold: *First*—to impart knowledge; and, *Second*—to develop strength, and this evil will be entirely eradicated.

Familiarity with the subjects of a grade may lead to a little letting down of the teacher's watch, and a lack of study. The topics can never be so thoroughly mastered but that something new may be learned; at least some new illustration, some new method of presentation, some change of order may be gained by fresh and often-renewed study. In each new class will be found some new phase of character, some mental peculiarity never before presented; and the teacher who sits down in the belief that he has long ago learned all that can be learned of the topics assigned, or of the wants and the capabilities of children, will soon have enough of that contempt which is begotten of familiarity, and will find his task growing less and less pleasant, and his success less marked. He who keeps alive his interest in the work of a single grade, for any length of time, must put forth more effort than he who has a greater range or frequent changes. But this greater effort will make him a more valuable teacher. Let each so cultivate his own powers as that his interest may be ever fresh and absorbing, and this second evil may be eradicated.

The iron limits of the Graded Course serve as bars to some

who, from lack of early advantages, desire to go faster than their classmates are able to do, and to others who, from limited opportunities, wish to pursue certain portions of each grade, neglecting others that seem to them least important. The greatest good of the greatest number is the rule; but to meet these exceptional cases, which are really rare, some provision may be made, such as the good sense of the teacher or the knowledge of the Principal of the school would suggest. The rules of the Board seem wisely adapted to such exigencies. During a portion of the year evening schools are maintained that meet the wants of many, so that this evil does not weigh with any great force against the system.

The good of the pupil should never be sacrificed to the maintenance of a system.

Experience has shown that the system herewith presented does subserve the good of a vast majority of pupils. For the rare exceptions provision may be made at the time, and with special reference to the individual cases.

It is often the case that those who have taken the least pains to master the work assigned them, become the most impatient of limits. The desire to rove into others' fields of labor is generally born of unwillingness to cultivate thoroughly one's own field.

The routine of a part of the course is no duller than the round of the whole. It may require more frequent turns and oft repeated cultivation, but it certainly will stimulate an earnest teacher to the discovery of new methods. No live teacher can under any circumstances be made a machine.