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Second Annual Report of the Principal of Southern Illinois Normal University

Southern Illinois State Normal University Board of Trustees

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SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

—OF THE PRINCIPAL OF—

Southern Illinois Normal University.

CARBONDALE, ILLINOIS.

June 14th, 1876.

THE Principal of the Southern Illinois Normal University reckons himself honored by the liberal patronage given to the school during its second year. Hearty thanks are due to the people who have sent their children and wards to our care, and even more credit should be cheerfully accorded to the young men and women who have earned the means to instruct themselves, and who have committed themselves to our guidance. The several teachers are not less deserving of praise for the earnest support they have given to all our labors and for the ability and faithfulness with which they have discharged their individual duties. But above all, devout thankfulness should be rendered to the Giver of all Mercy for His blessing, without which no enterprise can command respect and no labor can win success.

The year has been marked with two difficulties, great stringency in financial affairs, and wide-spread sickness during the Fall and Winter. But notwithstanding these, the comparative numbers of advanced students and their attainments have

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75

increased. Last year, in all the departments, there were as follows, viz :

Normal.....	135	
Normal preparatory.....	207	
Model.....	61	
Total.....		403

For this year they have been as follows, viz :

Normal.....	123	
Normal preparatory.....	208	
Model.....	37	
Total.....		368

This decrease in numbers, as will be seen, is principally in the Model school and Special Session. There are two reasons for this diminished numbers in the Model, neither discreditable to us, and the second very gratifying and hopeful for the city of Carbondale. The fee for tuition in our school has been raised and the people of the city have such an increased confidence in their own public schools, and have employed such teachers, as to make it desirable to send their children to them. It should also be said that while the decrease has been chiefly in the Primary department, in times like these, young men dependent on their own resources are the ones who have been kept away from the school. But notwithstanding this less numbers of names enrolled, we have actually counted a larger number of terms' work than last year. The comparison by terms is very satisfactory. Last year our term aggregates were: Special Session, 54; First Term, 141; Second Term, 183; Third Term, 281—total, 629. The present year our enrollment has been: Special Session, 27; First Term, 226; Second Term, 214; Third Term, 253—total, 723—an increase of 94. This result shows that last year our students remained with us on the average only 1.561 terms, while this year they remain 1.996—a gain of nearly a half term on a student in a single year; and here again the Model room has been most irregular (a fact easily accounted for by the long walk and bad weather of the winter.

The amount of cash received from all sources has been as follows, viz :

Balance from last year.....	\$ 244 94
State appropriations, viz:—	
For salaries.....	14,100 00
For fuel and repairs.....	1,500 00
For grading.....	1,000 00
For fencing Campus.....	1,250 00
For library and apparatus.....	1,500 00
From students for incidental charges and for tuition.....	3,327 00
From rents and other sources.....	76 10
Total.....	\$22,998 04

The expenses for which the Principal has given certificates for orders have been as follows, viz :

Salaries.....	\$16,100 00
Fuel.....	293 11
Repairs.....	938 55
Furniture.....	300 00
Miscellaneous or incidentals.....	950 58
Fencing.....	1,250 00
Grading.....	1,000 00
Library and apparatus.....	1,500 00
Extra labor to aid janitor.....	121 00
Printing.....	369 50
Trustees' traveling expenses.....	37 00
Balance undrawn.....	138 30
Total.....	\$22,998 04

The appropriation by the State Legislature for the fencing was sufficient to build a very good paling fence on two sides and a plain plank fence on the other two. But that for the grading of the ground was altogether insufficient, and the campus therefore remains an unsightly place, quite an offense to the taste. A portion of it has been graded and the teachers and students have, at considerable private expense, planted a part of it with trees and shrubs for future ornament. It is the hope that this ground may yet be graded and made to produce every tree which will grow in this soil and climate. It will then be a means of educating the students in some practical knowledge of Botany and tree culture. A very small annual appropriation would, not only create a large amount of beauty, but might awaken an enthusiasm among the people of this section of the State for unexpensive experiments in tree culture, and diffuse a spirit which might be profitable in many directions.

The appropriation for library and apparatus has all been expended,—divided nearly equally between the two objects for which it was designed, and it affords a good working laboratory for practical analysis in chemistry and instruction in physics. In connection with these objects we have devoted some attention to a museum of Natural History, and have procured specimens of birds, beasts and insects, which make a creditable beginning for work in this department of science. These departments are under the charge of Professors Thomas and Parkinson who instruct their pupils in the actual work of preserving specimens, in dissecting animals and in classifying and arranging cabinets. These parts of our work have been eminently successful, and we look to see our students spread abroad accurate methods of observation and much interest in these matters. This section of the State is, perhaps, as fine a field as is found in the nation for the study of the habits of birds, their

migrations, changes of plumage and times of breeding. Our students, after the training they receive at our hands, will, it is believed, communicate an enthusiasm in this and kindred branches of Natural History and Biology which shall prove invaluable to the commonwealth.

A better opportunity may not occur to reiterate a thought often touched in our exhortations to students. To secure the greatest profit of a course of study, and to reap the highest advantages of discipline, the time devoted to these purposes should be, so far as possible, continuous—a long period of diligent and uninterrupted application till habits of rapid, energetic work and patient self-control are formed and made into the substance of the soul itself. No growth anywhere is made without quiet. The tree constantly beaten by mountain winds is a dwarf; but in the stillness of the deep valley the giant sequoias climb five hundred feet toward the top of the cliff. Great strength, indeed, can be produced only by active strain on the energies. The growth is chiefly in rest: and a school life seeks to withdraw, for a time, the student into a place of calm and peaceful seclusion, where he may give his mind an opportunity to grow and acquire furniture for the future strains and battles of life. Two consecutive terms for this purpose are worth as much as three separated from each other by considerable intervals. And in this connection it is not improper to say that all interruptions of the work of study for visiting or pleasuring do injure and break up the work of a good education far more than is often supposed. The act of study is to form habits, and this end is only attained when the successive actions by which good habits are begotten are blended into a series. To stop study two days, or even a half-day, in a week, breaks the chain of sympathy, dis-joints the order, and compels to repeat, till the line which should have been homogeneous becomes in effect broken into strange materials and weak. It is like crystalizing the iron in a wire, which unfits it for strain and makes it often inferior in strength to a cable of hemp.

We ask those who have the responsible care of scholars sent to us to give no occasion by unnecessary absences for complaint on this score. Let those sent to school here, come prepared to remain till they have finished the short courses of study we have set down in our catalogue; and seek to impress upon their minds that the special order we have here prescribed is the best which, after trial, we have been able to devise. And to students we say, by all means begin with the lower and lay a good found-

ation for every thing thereafter. We will give certificates for each year's work done in either of the departments, giving none till the lower has been done with us or satisfactorily accounted for. Our course is so arranged that the Preparatory Normal well finished will be fully equivalent to the requirements of a First Grade Certificate; then one can begin the Normal work proper and go on to become a master indeed.

If we rightly understand the purposes of the Legislature in establishing this school in its present locality, it intended to give the people for their public schools a class of teachers who shall instruct their children by the best methods in all known sciences, and inspire in them the will to learn all new knowledge, and to follow all honorable actions in virtue and nobleness. To prepare our pupils for this work, we have sought three things: to impart accurate information—first, in all the common branches of English learning, and afterwards in practical and advanced science; to habituate those who are to be teachers to self-government and readiness in thought and action, to careful consideration of the wants of others, and to a cheerful obedience to all law; and finally, to give them a mastery of the methods of teaching—first, by witnessing our examples in the daily recitation, and then by reading and hearing the best plans of school work discussed in lectures and practiced in school duties.

We have been compelled to own that our progress in these last points have not equalled our hopes. Many things might be said here in extenuation of any blame which the public might lay to our charge. Two things shall be named: One, pupils come to us to learn the higher branches as they call them, without having a foundation of the elemental ones; and they have in their minds also a notion that about one-third of a year is sufficient to make them, if not highly accomplished teachers, at least very respectable incumbents of the school room chair of official dignity. Not only do these notions, in the minds of those who come to us, work injury to our labors, but similar ideas in the minds of the people, do us even greater injustice. It is bad that a young man or young woman who cannot spell the commonest words of the language, who cannot speak two simple sentences without errors in pronunciation and in grammar, should imagine himself fit to teach our schools; but if the people become satisfied with him and are willing to accept one who cannot explain the reasons for the common operations in arithmetic, or tell the names of the several United States and their capitals and cities and rivers, or, worse still, who cannot write these names

without fifty errors, the evil becomes far worse, for then the popular demand does not expect anything like excellence or progress. We do not state this to complain, or to find fault, but to prompt the thought of a remedy and a determination to apply one. We think the standard of education and of aspiration is as high among the youth who come to us, as in most other sections of our land; and the appreciation, if not the demand, for excellent teachers is certainly as high as any where we have known. All this, however, will avail little, unless the candidates for the office and emoluments of teacher, and also the people who employ them fix their minds unalterably, and enthusiastically insist on resolute efforts to attain the highest excellence. Students must from the beginning be better prepared and teachers must do this preparation at the demand and under the stimulus of the public sentiment, uttered in such a manner that no one can mistake its meaning, and so that none will dare resist its reasonable requirements. There must be a more thorough early training in our common schools.

The definite professional work of a Normal school has therefore as yet occupied our attention only incidentally. It is not in our case like professional schools for lawyers, clergymen, physicians, chemists, or engineers. If either the orthography of such men, or their grammar, or even their elementary arithmetic—or often all of these—is defective, the men are in some degree rendered ridiculous thereby, but their whole usefulness is not therefore destroyed. A man may become an eminently successful general and an energetic and honored president of the United States and be so ignorant of common astronomical geography as to believe that the earth is flat and cannot turn daily on its axis. But such an one cannot be a good teacher. Neither can he do the work of the school room unless he knows the reason why you carry one for every ten in addition and in multiplication, and why you begin your work at the left hand in division. In our school, therefore, we must insist on the thorough mastery of the elements of knowledge before the methodology of teaching and the science of pedagogics can be taught with any profit. If now the schools of our section of the State will do this elementary work they will aid us in a wondrous degree. And when they do not do this, our duty has seemed to be to insist on elementary training till it is made a fashion and a necessity every where. We appeal to county superintendents to aid in this endeavor, and we feel assured that they agree with us, and would, if their schools could be

supplied with good teachers insist on having such and none others. But, alas, men and women well grounded in all elemental work, are not always in the market, and the law is imperative that a school must be kept; and rather than deprive a given district of its share of public money for the next year, superintendents yield to a seeming necessity, and grant certificates to the imperfectly educated. We are in appearance doing the same thing. Students who have been with us a single term and then only in the lower branches, and with so imperfect a knowledge that we cannot even pass them to a higher grade, go from us and teach, some of them doing better work than the district has before known. While we cannot condemn, without qualification, such students, it is not a course to be approved. And we desire to warn the public that students who have been with us are by no means solely on that account to be reckoned worthy to be teachers; nor will such be a fair representation of our school work. We mean to graduate none who are not at least fair scholars and who certainly have completed with us or elsewhere our course of study, elementary and higher, and who also have an earnest character and a high standard of personal honor and scholarly ambition. We ask the public to judge us by these and not by those who have only been with us too short a time even to have proved that they are grounded in the elemental studies. Do not employ uneducated teachers, and least of all those who have been with us just long enough to have grown conceited on account of their relations to our school, but not long enough to have been taught how little they knew before they came, and to have become inspired with the love of study and the ambition to learn all things. While we bespeak the good will of the public most earnestly and devoutly for our students who shall go forth with our certificate of commendation, we do beg that all conceitedness and imperfect fitting for the work of the teacher in these same students may be as heartily discountenanced. We are glad to be held to the strictest accountability for the work we attempt to do, and we desire that our pupils be held to the same. But we do most earnestly beseech the public to send us those who are fit to begin to learn how to teach.

Let the common branches be well taught at home in your own district schools, and it will save us and you very much money and considerable annoyance. We prefer to prepare teachers for the public schools rather than educate the scholars of those schools, and we think we can most profit the peo-

ple and the State by so doing. Look at this point a little with patience. It will cost a young man or young woman not less than \$125 to \$250 per annum to attend our school and pay board and travel. If four are sent from one district this amounts to \$500 or \$1,000. Would it not have been cheaper to hire a teacher fully competent to teach all the common branches in that district and to have had your children learn them fully under your own guardianship? When it comes to Algebra, Geometry, Philosophy, Chemistry, Natural History and Sciences we have facilities which no country district can easily have, and it will be profitable to send to us even if the cost is \$500 a year. But for the Arithmetic and Geography and Grammar, these can be more cheaply taught at home, and these branches ought to be taught there as well as we do them. What we ask is to make the district schools so good that the scholars shall delight to learn all common English studies before they come here. And if we can aid in making these country schools such as they ought to be we shall be instrumental in saving to the people of Southern Illinois many thousands of dollars a year. Let it be repeated; we desire to fit the people and the teachers so that the children of our towns may be educated in all elementary learning at home, and thereby save money to the farmers and mechanics, and at the same time diminish the risks to the young attendant on absence from home. This will also increase the love of home and rural life among our population. As circumstances now are we are compelled to teach the most elementary knowledge and to repeat and reiterate spelling, and writing, and reading, and even to teach the addition tables, to those who have for years attended schools at home. We seem to be compelled to do these things, yet we cannot believe they are most profitable for the community, or at least will not be if we are obliged to continue them long. As temporary expedients, and as leading to something better they are allowable.

Our object is to prepare teachers who shall do all this in every school district and thus accomplish what the State designed a Normal should do—diffuse better methods of teaching to the country towns. We can teach your children, good people of Southern Illinois, we believe as well and with less cost than you get the same work done out of the State or in any other section of it. The saving to you even in this way will be thousands per annum. But let us send to you teachers well prepared for their work and we will save you tens of thousands

and give you a far more equally diffused education. We can teach but few of the tens of thousands of children in Southern Illinois in our Normal, but we can, if they will come prepared, teach all those who shall instruct all the children. Do not, therefore, conclude there is no reason for our Normal. The statements above made are the strongest arguments we can adduce for its existence and hearty support. It will, if sustained by a few thousand dollars annually for ten years, make it possible to educate all your children and those of your neighbors at home in the best manner, and provide intelligent and inspiring teachers in all parts of the land. We trust that we shall be supported by the people and in all these matters be aided in our design of making teachers at first thorough and finally skillful in all school work and duty.

Nothing is more vital to our national and social life and in no form of public expenditure produces so much profit at so small a cost as our school work. The average cost of educating a scholar in our school has been to the State \$43.81, and when it is remembered that each one of the more than two hundred taught by us who will teach the public schools the next winter, will be actually worth fifty per cent. more to the schools than he would have been without the instruction he has had; and that he will in all probability receive not a dollar more from the public than would have been paid to persons almost uneducated, the profit to the State can be seen. These two hundred young men and women for five months teaching will receive on the average \$45 per month, or in all \$45,000, fifty per cent of which is \$22,500, or in a single year more than the whole of what the school has cost the State. And these teachers will average nearly three years each, which give the State a clear gain of \$67,500 for an expenditure of \$16,121.04—a paying profit if the work should stop there. But every one of these young people on the average has a life of thirty years of greatly increased value to the commonwealth. So that the school promises to return to the public welfare manifold its actual cost. And another element in this thought ought not to be omitted. The expense of tuition, even when it is largest, is but a small portion of the cost of an education. Board, books, clothes, travel, and other items are several times larger than that which the State contributes to the payment of the bills of the school. This sum the student pays, and in many cases pays it out of his own earnings, not from money contributed by his parents or inherited from ancestors. By offering gratuitous instruction, there-

fore, the State gets a sum probably five times as great added by the pupil himself, and all this is by solemn act, set apart for the uses and improvements of our public schools and brings returns directly to the people, probably thrice its own amount within the space of three years, and in the course of that student's life of thirty or forty years more than twenty fold. What other investment is so profitable?

Our course of study embraces everything from the A B C to the University. We indeed even want a part of this lower in order to make practical application of our instruction in methods of teaching. But we want to devote much attention to professional training; and we have arranged a Post-Graduate Course, which may be devoted to reading and hearing lectures. We now have a very good library of works on the Science of Pedagogy and kindred branches, and instruction will be given in higher Logic, and Methodology, and in Metaphysics, and the Science of Literature and School Laws. Young men and young women who have taught awhile and who desire to extend their acquaintance with these topics will find profitable employment in our Library and Rooms, and can do both themselves and the public good service by reading and studying in this way. The Principal's time can be almost wholly devoted to such hereafter.

Our teachers have done some work at Institutes during the year, and have delivered lectures in many places with good results. The Principal has given daily lectures on many topics to the several departments: To the Normal Department one day in three on the English Language; on the order of the Development of Knowledge; on the Methods of Study, and on Methods of Teaching. In the Preparatory Department two days in three on Methods of Study, Importance of Writing and Speaking Good English; on Habits of Neatness and Order; and on the Necessity of Character. In all these departments he has conducted examinations in Spelling, Writing, Geography and other studies. He has also conducted recitations in Logic, in Mental Philosophy, in English Literature, in Moral Philosophy, in Criticism, in Geography, on the the Constitution of the United States, on the School Laws of Illinois, in Methods and in Grammar.

Professor Jerome has instructed classes in both the Latin and Greek languages, reading Cæsar, Sallust, Virgil, Cicero's Orations and Tacitus. He has also read Xenophon's *Anabasis*, *Cyropædia* and Homer.

Professor Hull has been in the University a single year and has taught classes as follows, viz.: Algebra—Elementary, Advanced, Geometry, Trigonometry, Surveying, and Analytic Geometry. He has made a fine success of his work.

Professor Foster has taught classes in Geography, Physical Geography, Physiology, History of United States, Ancient and Modern History, and has had charge of the observations for the United States Signal Service and has acted as Librarian.

Professor Hillman has attended to the Arithmetic and to Astronomy.

Professor Parkinson has instructed in Natural Philosophy, in Chemistry, in Chemical Analysis, and in Algebra, and has given lectures on Chemistry as applied to Art and Agriculture.

Professor Brownlee has had charge of the classes in Reading and Elocution, and has taught the Music and had charge of the Calisthenic exercises.

Miss Buck has taught the classes in Grammar and in Book Keeping.

Mrs. Nash has taught the Writing Classes and the Drawing with large success.

The Model Department has been controlled by Miss Mason and has been an auxiliary of our teaching of great value. The two difficulties—the cost and the irregular attendance of pupils on account of the distance—have made this experiment a doubtful one, and it is not improbable that it may be discontinued. It seems almost a necessity with us that something of its kind shall be maintained, but possibly all the advantages of it as an experimental school can be gained in the other departments of the Preparatory.

This report is submitted to the Trustees and to the public with diffidence but with the thought that as our school is a public institution its affairs and methods, its aims and its accomplishments should all be public. The Principal trusts that his frank confessions will be received in the spirit in which he makes them, and that his suggestions will be candidly and carefully considered and that the public will endeavor to work with our Professors to elevate the character and increase the usefulness of all our public schools.

