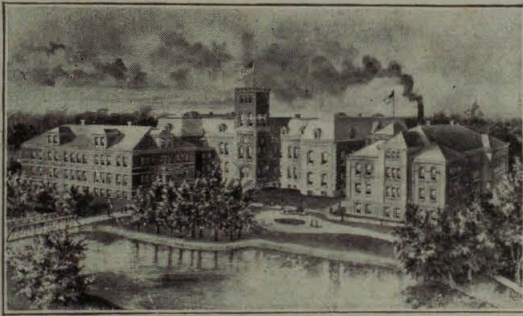


**FIRST DISTRICT
NORMAL SCHOOL
KIRKSVILLE, MISSOURI**



**SUPPLEMENT TO THE
SEPTEMBER BULLETIN**

1 9 0 8

**DISTINCTIVE FUNCTION OF UNIVERSITY, COLLEGE, AND
NORMAL SCHOOL IN THE PREPARATION OF
TEACHERS.**

DISCUSSION IN THE COUNCIL OF THE N. E. A.

Synopsis of Remarks of President John R. Kirk, following Addresses of Dean Russell, Teachers College, N. Y., and Dr. Elmer Elsworth Brown, U. S. Commissioner of Education.

The university represents academic freedom. All agree that it may have any kind of school or college that its means will support. Hence, the university has no distinctive function in the preparation of teachers. Its sphere is unlimited. The University of Missouri has a Teachers College, with an elementary school and a large high school for purposes of exemplifying all phases of public school education. This is a genuine pedagogical laboratory, useful in preparing teachers of all kinds from kindergarten to high school inclusive. Normal school men in Missouri encouraged and urged the university to establish the Teachers College. They welcome such competition.

It is conceded that the college may have any subordinate college, sub-college or department which its funds will support. So the college too represents academic freedom; and surely no sane man would seek to restrict any college to any alleged distinctive function in the preparation of teachers, especially while the typical college in our country is growing into a university and may become a university.

For too long a time the normal school has represented a journey into a blind alley, but sound education of every kind demands academic freedom. The normal school demands freedom. There is no restricted sphere which the normal school is destined to fill. There is no exclusive field in education. Restriction means educational cramp and narrowness and lack of initiative and lack of outlook. Overlapping is healthy and invigorating. Restrictions upon a normal school are no more sane than restrictions upon a university or a college. The normal school demands liberty to give academic courses, parallel-

ing the best of college work. Pedagogy itself is not in good pedagogical form. As a subject to be taught it does not now give and for a long time cannot give the mental virility which other subjects, such as languages, sciences, etc., give. But the normal school should exemplify the best of teaching. The normal-school student should become habituated to the best kind of work in academic and pedagogic subjects. Hence, the best RESULTS in the preparation of teachers are produced by having pedagogical and academic subjects taught side by side interacting upon one another.

It must be evident that a normal school without facilities for preparing high-school teachers cannot by any possibility prepare good elementary teachers. The products of such a normal school are handicapped in the outset. They lack knowledge. They lack experience in handling the keys to knowledge. They lack skill in using the instrumentalities of instruction. They are likely to lack constructive ingenuity.

The philosophy is unsound which would allow half-educated or poorly educated teachers in schools up to and including the last day in the elementary school, while demanding fully educated persons the next day the children are in school, i. e., the first day in the high school.

The elementary school needs scholarly teachers; indeed, it seems self-evident now that if any teacher in the world needs a college education, it is the grammar-school teacher, and I think no one in the world should be marked or honored with the stamp of professional teacher who has not the equivalent of a college education along with adequate professional preparation.

Ideal teachers cannot be produced or grow up in a restricted atmosphere. The university and the college and the normal school should each prepare teachers of all kinds. It is only in the atmosphere of freedom that a really good teacher can be produced. Several normal schools in the middle west conduct pedagogical courses and college courses side by side. Their graduates by natural processes differentiate into teachers of various kinds. Much human energy is economized and incomparably better results are secured.

