

DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN KANSAS .

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Outline of Thesis written

by

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Development of Education in Kansas

1. Act Admitting Kansas as a State.
2. Inclination of the Early Settlers to Education.
3. State's System of Common Schools and High Schools.
4. Higher Institutions of Learning,
 1. State University
 2. State Agricultural College
 3. State Normal
 4. Other Educational Institutions
5. Results of this Effort to Educate.

Preparatory to bringing the western land into market, sections numbered 16 and 36 in each township were to be reserved for the benefit of the schools of the country.

The act of 1861 admitting Kansas as a state, in addition to the above, set apart 72 sections of land in the state for the support of a state university. Educational advantages were thus early to be provided. It was the intention that all children, male and female shall have equal educational opportunities. Before schools could be provided for, however, the settlers at once began the instruction of their children at home.

Out of this land appropriated to the state by the General Government has grown what is called the State Permanent School Fund which now amounts to about eight million dollars (8,000,000). This is invested in bonds of the state or counties or in those of the United States. The income from these bonds is distributed semi-annually to the proper counties of the state in proportion to the school population. This fund now amounts to about \$650,000. annually. This amount divided by 650,000, an estimate of the school population of the state, gives the amount received for each pupil. Thus we see that when Kansas was admitted as a state, the Common Schools and the State University were provided for. Out of the university provision has grown the State Agricultural College and the State Normal School. These will each be taken up later in their turn.

As soon as any small portion of a country becomes sufficiently settled, the attention is always turned to the establishment of a Common Public School. To meet this natural inclination the state constitution has provided for the organization of such a settlement, by the County Superintendent, into a School District.

A district school is managed entirely by the direct vote of its district electors. It is the intention that the people shall provide for their own education by electing all school officers and voting their own school tax. There have been organized about 9500 school districts having an average daily attendance of about 250,000. The teachers required for these schools number about 11000. The salary for males averaging about \$45.00 per month, for females about \$35.00 per month. There are now about 9000 school buildings with a valuation of \$11,000,000. The average tax voted for the support of schools is about 10.7 mills. While our people may not incline toward education as much as some of the older countries, yet school attendance for twelve weeks in each year is compulsory to all - - with exceptions to a few - - between the ages of 8 and 14 years. This law however, is not rigidly enforced. A common school must be held in each district for a term not less than four months in each year. In such a district orthography, reading, writing, English grammar, geography, arithmetic, physiology and hygiene (with special reference to alcoholic stimulants and narcotics), and such other branches as the district board choose, shall be taught in the English language.

In case the common school education is not high enough to meet local demands, Union or Graded School Districts are provided for in which other than the common branches are taught. This provision, however, is not utilized since pupils so easily step into the County High School, City High School or even the Preparatory Department of the higher institutions of learning of the state. This is a splendid provision and doubtless will be taken advantage of as soon as the people are educated to see its value. It is important since by it the youth of our state would be kept

under the influence of home through the period of life when the standard of character is being formed and established.

The Union or Consolidation of school districts is one worthy of notice, for by this provision several sparsely settled districts can unite and have one school of a high grade, whereas, the several districts separately could not maintain a school taught by a competent teacher. Suppose four school districts should unite. Where four unexperienced teachers were employed at \$25.00 each, two professionally educated teachers could be employed, one receiving \$60.00 and the other \$40.00 and the expense not increased. But one teacher could usually do the work for \$75.00 and the expense be reduced. If the new building be placed at the center, one-third of the pupils are still in walking distance and one-third just over the line and could probably walk most of the time. One-third would have to be conveyed. This the law provides for. In carrying out this last provision a large per cent of the remainder of the pupils would probably find a means of conveyance. In the formation of either Union or Graded Schools or Consolidated Schools it is not a question of dollars and cents, it is a question of providing for the better education of our youth. Thousands of our boys and girls drop out of school before completing the common branches, because the schools are not and cannot be graded. These pupils after becoming fairly well familiar with a subject, are forced to go over the same work year after year because of the teachers inability properly to classify the pupils. So the bright and regular pupil must be classed with the dull pupil who is irregular in attendance. On this point a revolution must begin in this state. The common class, the masses, must be shown the folly of the present common school.

When the voters of a county so desire, a County High School may be established for those of the county who wish to enter the Freshman class of either the State University, State Agricultural College, or the State Normal. Several of these schools have been established in the state. Perhaps the most prominent are found in Labette and Dickinson counties. These schools are managed by a board elected by the county, and is supported by a tax voted by the people. These schools have many advantages and are rapidly coming into prominence. They have the advantage of educating the youth near home at a minimum cost.

For those who cannot, or those who do not become professionally educated to teach, each county shall hold a Normal Institute annually for a term of not less than four weeks. Instruction in the Theory and Practice of teaching and other branches is given by prominent educators. To defray the expense of the Normal Institute, funds are raised in three ways; tuition from the teachers, appropriation from the state, and an appropriation by the County Commissioners.

In the fifties, the New England Emigrant Aid Co., sent many "free settlers" West, into Kansas. A number of these settled at Lawrence. Even at this early date of unbroken prairie and Border Warfare, the settlers found time to think of education. Mr. Lawrence, one of the members of the Aid Society in Boston, advanced a fund that made the beginning of a school possible. This fund was to be returned to Mr. Lawrence or his heirs if Kansas should be admitted other than a "Free State." The school thus started had a hard life until the state took it up in its attempt to establish a State University as provided for in the state constitution. Many eyes now looked to Lawrence as the place for the

University, besides the Lawrence people, but Manhattan made a liberal offer for the school and a bill passed both Houses for the location at Manhattan, at which place a Methodist College was being successfully run. This bill Governor Robinson vetoed. The State Agricultural College was a little later provided for and Manhattan received this without dispute. Now Emporia was in the race for the University. After a fierce struggle that lasted more than a year, Governor Carney declared the institution permanently located at Lawrence, November 2nd, 1863, on condition that the city should appropriate forty acres of land for a campus and a \$15,000 endowment. From this small beginning the University has grown rapidly, and at present ranks well with the leading Universities of the United States. The present enrollment is between 1000 and 1500 students. This institution is well equipped to fit a student for any of the leading professions of the day.

The Kansas State Agricultural College owes its origin and location largely to two coöperative pioneer colonies that settled near the present site of Manhattan in 1855. One of these colonies came from New England, the other from Ohio. While these colonies were still enroute to Kansas an educational institution was planned. From this school grew the Bluemont Central College, a Methodist institution, which opened for work in 1860. These were dreary days, indeed, for the young college because the war of the Rebellion was coming on, because students and money were scarce, and there were already two Methodist schools in the state. In 1862 July 2nd, the "Agricultural College Act" passed congress. The Bluemont Central College trustees again offered the beginning of this school to the Legislature. This offer consisting of 100 acres of land, a plain three story stone building, a library of several hundred volumes,

and some other fixtures, together valued at about \$25,000, was accepted by the Legislature. The legislation making the Agricultural College possible, is known as the "Morrill Act," which gave the state 30,000 acres of land for each Senator and Representative in Congress. The money derived from the sale of these lands was to constitute a permanent fund for the benefit of agriculture and mechanic arts. As a result of this Act Kansas received 82313.52 acres. The fund derived therefrom amounting to \$502927.35 was invested in state bonds at 6 %. In March, 1887 Congress passed the "Hatch Act," which provided for the establishment of an Agricultural Experiment Station in each state. It was at once decided that Manhattan was the place for this station. To support this, \$15,000 was appropriated the first year. To this amount \$1,000 was added each year till the amount reached \$25,000 per annum, at which sum it was to remain. Besides the National aid this institution receives, the state gives large appropriations bi-annually. The Agricultural College has five very practical four year courses for those who can not attend a regular course. A special opportunity is given to those who wish to take up apprentice work in the machine shops.

In March, 1863 the Governor approved the law establishing the State Normal School at Emporia. Over 30,000 acres of land was donated for its support. Professor L. B. Kellogg in 1865 opened this school with 18 students in a District school room that was very poorly furnished. In 1873 the present handsome building was dedicated. The attendance grew to 345 in 1874 but fell to 90 in 1879. The sole object of this school is to prepare professionally trained teachers for the state. The attendance now exceeds 2,000 students annually.

Besides these schools that are maintained by the state, there are a number of private, denominational, schools that are worthy of much credit.

First of this list should be mentioned Washburn College located at Topeka. After several years of hardship the institution was fairly established in 1868. Since then it has grown steadily, until at present there are several handsome and well equipped buildings. The total cost of the buildings is estimated at about \$150,000, with an endowment of \$100,000. Washburn is managed by the Congregational church.

In 1860 the Baptists in convention proposed the establishment of a university for the training of their young people. In conjunction with the Ottawa Indians a school was started about 1865. This scheme failed, partly because the Indians were moving to the Indian Territory and selling the 20,000 acres of land that constituted the endowment for the college. About 1875 the institution was re-established purely as a Baptist school. Since this the school has gradually grown. The present property value amounts to \$330,000 and the student enrollment about 600 annually.

Lane University located at LeCompton and built on the proposed State Capitol foundation is now in a prosperous condition. The endowment fund is \$20,000; the student enrollment 300. The course of study is abreast with those of the leading state institutions.

In 1885 the Southern Kansas College was founded at Winfield, under the auspices of the Southern Kansas Methodist Conference. Under the present management the institution is in a prosperous condition. The student enrollment is about 300. The magnificent building is well equipped and arranged for good work.

Besides the private schools named above, Baker University, Bethany College, Wichita University, The College of Emporia, Garfield University, Campbell University, Oswego College for Young Ladies, Cooper Memorial College, Midland College, and the Kansas Wesleyan are in very good financial condition and are growing slowly. In spite of competition they are receiving their portion of the students of the state. The instructors in the various departments are especially well qualified to teach the branches under their charge.

With our present class of ambitious young men and women, with the present high grade of instructors, with the present high grade of colleges, with the present enrollment in colleges of young people who mean genuine business, Kansas is destined to rank well with the leading educational states of the East.

As a result of this untiring effort, professions have reached a high state of excellence. We have more professionally trained men in all lines of business. Farming is conducted on a scientific basis, the result of which is seen in the increased prosperity in many parts of the state. What the result of the effort to educate the more common class of society of the state will be, only the future can reveal.