

**THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL:
ITS FEASIBILITY IN THE
CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL
SYSTEM. DISSERTATION**

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The Junior High School: Its Feasibility in the Catholic Educational System. Dissertation by
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JOSEPH E. HAMILL

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The Junior High School
Its Feasibility in the
Catholic Educational System

Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of Philosophy of
the Catholic University of America
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the

DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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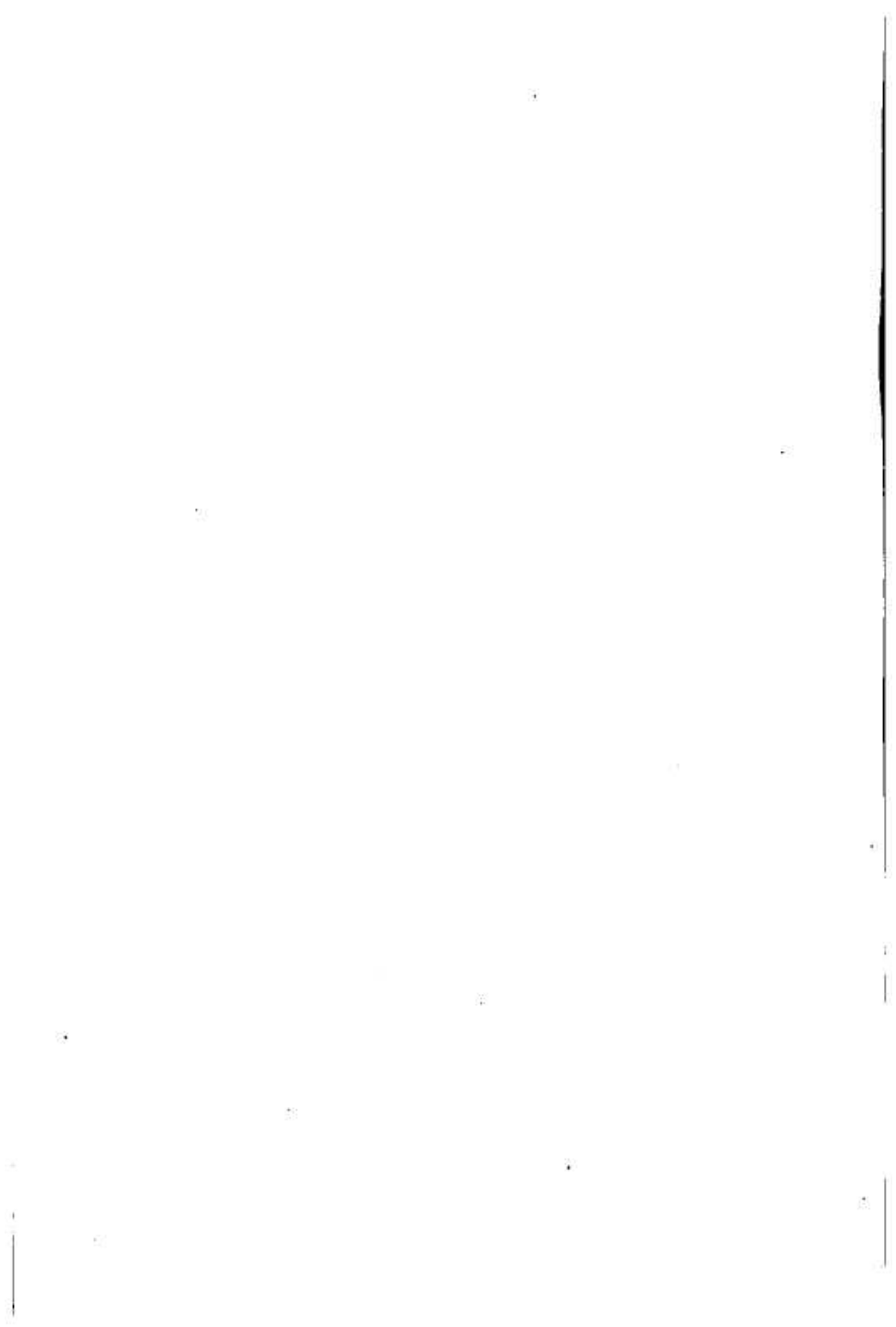
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PREFACE

The widespread and thorough consideration given to every phase of the junior high school during the past thirty years is evidence of its importance. The most eminent educators of the country have studied the movement and written on it. Practically every educational association in the country has devoted much time to it in its annual meeting. Boards of Education, superintendents of school systems, the members of various teacher organizations have become interested in it. A rather extensive junior high school literature has developed and attempts have been made by a large number of school systems to reorganize in conformity with the theory.

There are many different viewpoints from which this institution can be treated. The psychological aspect presents many unsolved problems. Many philosophical questions in respect to the junior high school remain to be settled. The advantages and disadvantages have not been fully measured. Numerous administrative problems, such as securing or preparing qualified teachers, determining methods of teaching, reorganizing the curriculum, deciding the length of the recitation period, of the school day and of the school year, etc., etc., must be further studied and much experimentation done before a solution of the difficulties involved can be reached.

The discussions of Catholic educators have been confined for the most part to a general examination of the theory, to some particular defects of the traditional system, e. g., retardation, elimination and reorganization of the elementary curriculum. No attempt has been made to introduce the junior high school into the Catholic system. The purpose of this dissertation is to offer a general plan whereby this institution might be made a

part of the Catholic system. With this end in view an outline of the history of the movement is presented in the first chapter. Its aims are discussed in the second. In the third various views concerning the meaning of the term, junior high school, are considered. Some of the results obtained in junior high schools in the State system are presented in the fourth. In the fifth and last chapter the purposes of the junior high school are briefly discussed in relation to the aims of Catholic education and a plan suggested for its establishment in the Catholic system.

The plan suggested is not expected to settle finally this immensely important and intricate question, but is offered with the hope that it may serve as a practical basis for working out the details of a Catholic junior high school.

The writer is pleased to acknowledge his indebtedness to all the professors of the University whose courses he followed during his three years residence; in particular he feels indebted to Very Reverend Doctor McCormick under whose direction his major work was pursued. Acknowledgment is made to the writers whose works were used, especially to Doctors Thomas H. Briggs, Calvin O. Davis and Aubrey Augustus Douglass. To the Right Reverend Joseph Chartrand, D.D., Bishop of Indianapolis, the writer is particularly grateful for the permission accorded him to spend three years in graduate study at the Catholic University of America.

CHAPTER I

ORIGIN OF THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL MOVEMENT

The three decades between 1830 and 1860 approximately represent the period of struggle for recognition on the part of the graded system of elementary schools. During this period, through the efforts of Horace Mann in Massachusetts, Henry Barnard in Connecticut, John D. Pierce in Michigan, and Calvin E. Stowe in Ohio, the educational forces of the country were gradually concerted into a movement to organize the elementary schools on a graded basis. During the early part of this period the progress was slow, but by 1860 "nearly every city and town of any consequence in the country, as well as many populous rural communities, had its own system of elementary schools organized on a graded basis with a definite course of study, embracing definite time limits, the whole sanctioned and protected by legislative enactment."¹

In less than ten years after the advocates of the graded system of elementary schools had won recognition for their views, a discussion was started by Harris, superintendent of the St. Louis public schools, on its disadvantages as it was then established. In his annual reports issued between 1868 and 1875, Harris endeavored to show that annual promotions with a common standard for all children failed to provide for their different capacities, temperaments, tastes and mental and physical endowments. The responsibility for this failure, according to Harris, rests upon the supporters of the graded school who attempted to provide a system of education for the average child, which child does not exist. He contended that the system must be so modified that it would deal justly, both with the child above the

1. Bunker, Frank Forest, *Reorganization of the Public School System*. Bulletin, 1916, No. 8, U. S. Bureau of Education, page 34.