

HISTORY OF EDUCATION

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History of Education by Levi Seeley

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LEVI SEELEY

**HISTORY OF
EDUCATION**

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BY

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PREFACE

THE importance of a knowledge of the history of education was never so fully recognized as at the present time. Normal schools and teachers' colleges give this subject a prominent place in their professional courses, superintendents require candidates for certificates to pass examination in it, and familiarity with it is an essential part of the equipment of every well-informed teacher. The history of education portrays the theories and methods of the past, warns of error and indicates established truth, shows difficulties surmounted, and encourages the teacher of to-day by examples of heroism and consecration on the part of educators whose labors for their fellow-men we discuss. To the teacher this study is a constant help in the schoolroom, the trials of which are met with the added strength and inspiration from contact with great teachers of the past.

No text-book can be said to contain the last word upon any subject. Least of all can such a claim be made for a history of education, which aims to trace the intellectual development of the human race and to indicate the means and processes of that evolution. Any individuals or factors materially contributing thereto deserve a place in educational history. As to which of these factors is the most important, that is a question of choice, upon which, doubtless, many will differ with the author. Some educators, whose claims to consideration are unquestioned, have been

reluctantly omitted on account of the limitations of this work.

On the other hand, many teachers lack time for exhaustive study of such a subject. This book is designed to furnish all the material that can be reasonably demanded for any state, county, or city teacher's certificate. It also provides sufficient subject-matter for classes in normal schools and colleges and for reading circles. The material offered can be mastered in a half-year's class work, but, by using the references, a full year can be well employed. For those who desire to make a more extended study of particular topics, the author gives such authorities as years of careful research have shown to be most valuable. Every investigator knows the labor involved in finding suitable material. To spare the reader something of that labor, the literature is given at the beginning of each chapter. By following the collateral readings thus suggested, this book will be found suitable for the most advanced classes.

The plan of references embraces three features: (1) literature at the beginning of each chapter; (2) foot references to special citations; and (3) a general bibliography in the Appendix. In the first two, titles are sometimes abbreviated because of their frequent repetition. In case of doubt the reader should refer to the general bibliography, in which all the authorities cited are arranged alphabetically, with full titles.

It is generally conceded that the plan of an historical work should be based upon the evolution of civilization. In common with other recent writers on educational history, the author accepts the general plan of Karl Schmidt in his "*Geschichte der Pädagogik*," the most comprehensive work on this subject that has yet appeared. But the specific plan, which involves the most important and vital

characteristics of this book, is the author's own. The details of this specific plan embrace a study of the *history* and *environment*, of the *internal, social, political, and religious* conditions of the people, without which there can be no accurate conception of their education.

Our civilization had its inception in that of ancient Egypt, and thence its logical development must be traced. If desirable the teacher can omit the chapters on China, India, Persia, and Israel. It will be found, however, that the lessons taught by these countries, though negative in character, are intensely interesting to students, and most instructive and impressive. These countries are also admirably illustrative of the plan employed in the book, and thereby prepare the way for later work. That plan is more fully set forth in the Introduction, a careful study of which is recommended to both teacher and student.

The author wishes to acknowledge his appreciation of the valuable assistance in the preparation of this volume rendered by Dr. Elias F. Carr and Professor W. J. Morrison, both of the New Jersey Normal School.

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