

**THE GREAT EDUCATORS.  
COMENIUS, AND  
THE BEGINNINGS OF  
EDUCATIONAL REFORM**

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The Great Educators. Comenius, and the Beginnings of Educational Reform by Will S. Monroe  
& Nicholas Murray Butler

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**WILL S. MONROE & NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER**

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**The Great Educators**

EDITED BY NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER

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**COMENIUS**

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**THE BEGINNINGS OF EDUCATIONAL  
REFORM**

BY

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## PREFACE

THE present volume is an effort to trace the reform movement in education from Vives, Bacon, and Ratke to Comenius, who gave the movement its most significant force and direction; and from him to the later reformers, — Francke, Rousseau, Basedow, Pestalozzi, Fröbel, and Herbart. A variety of ideas, interests, and adaptations, all distinctly modern, are represented in the life-creeds of these reformers; and, in the absence of a more satisfactory term, the progressive movement which they represent has been styled realism, — sometimes called the “new education.”

It has been well said that “the dead hand of spiritual ancestry lays no more sacred duty on posterity than that of realizing under happier circumstances ideas which the stress of age or the shortness of life has deprived of their accomplishment.” Many of the reforms represented by the realists occupy no inconsiderable place in the platforms of modern practitioners of education; and in the belief that a history of the movement might contribute toward the ultimate reforms which realism represents, it has seemed expedient to focus such a survey on the life and teachings of the strongest personality and chief exponent of the movement.

The condition of education in Europe during the sixteenth century is briefly told in the opening chap-

ter; following are given the traces of the educational development of Comenius in the writings of Vives, Bacon, and Ratke; three chapters are devoted to the life of Comenius and the reforms in which he actively participated; an exposition of his educational writings has three chapters; a chapter is given to the influence of Comenius on Francke, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and other modern reformers; and the closing chapter sums up his permanent influence. The volume has two appendices,—one giving tables of dates relating to the life and writings of Comenius, and the other a select annotated bibliography.

In the exposition of the writings of Comenius, the author has made liberal use of English and German translations from Latin and Czech originals. In the case of the *Great didactic*, the scholarly translation by Mr. Keatinge has, in the main, been followed. Free translations of portions of this work had been made by the author before the appearance of Mr. Keatinge's book; and in some instances these have been retained. As regards the account of Comenius' views on the earliest education of the child, the author's edition of the *School of infancy* has been followed; and in the discussion of reforms in language teaching, he is indebted to Mr. Bardeen's edition of the *Orbis pictus*, and to Dr. William T. Harris for the use of the handsome Elzevir edition of the *Janua*, which is the property of the Bureau of Education.

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