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Fundamentals of Psychology
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Fundamentals of Psychology *in* Secondary Education

by

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Preface

THE character of a science is determined largely by the demands of civilization. The biological and physical sciences have each encountered the need for greater precision in human judgments and for gathering accurate data based upon carefully controlled experiments. The social sciences have also recognized a similar need. With the advancement of our civilization and the corresponding advancement of our institutions, new demands have evolved. The demands made on our schools at the present time have turned the main course of psychological interest away from the philosophical aspects to a distinctly experimental approach to the problems of education. The writers claim for the study presented in this volume a scientific approach to the special period of education with which it is concerned, the secondary-school period.

This volume is an outgrowth of several years of classroom experience, on the part of both authors, with high-school boys and girls, followed by years of study of the characteristics of learning and growth during this period. One of the authors has offered courses in the psychology of secondary education for the past thirteen years, while the other author has offered such courses for the past eight years. During these years, the authors have attempted to examine a major portion of the large number of studies that have appeared in this and related fields. The varied emphases and interests of the authors have been co-ordinated into a more balanced study through

their close contacts and constant conferences. Thus, the volume is divided into three major divisions. These are: Part I, "Progress Toward Maturity," Part II, "The High-School Subjects," and Part III, "Personality Development."

Concerning the function of educational psychology, the authors pointed out in the "Preface" of an earlier volume, *The Psychology of Elementary School Subjects*, that the aims of education must be left largely to philosophy and the social sciences, but that educational psychology is concerned with the processes by means of which these aims are to be attained. The writers believe that psychology can give support to this function through the more specific application of the facts and principles that have been formulated in the psychological laboratory to the problems of educating youths for adjustment in life's activities. *Fundamentals of Psychology in Secondary Education* is an effort in this direction, but is focused on the secondary-school period. The purpose of the book is not to inform the reader about psychology or psychological facts and theories as such, but rather to present a more definite and clearer application of the principles of psychology to the problems of learning and personality growth in high school. The adolescent pupil is conceived of as an individual who has developed out of a biological inheritance but has been modified in harmony with various environmental forces with which he has come into contact. His growth is thus seen as gradual and unitary in nature, rather than as a spasmodic growth of isolated characteristics and traits.

Quantitative materials have been presented so as to give the reader more specific and accurate notions about the different problems studied. The writers have tried, how-

ever, not to burden the student with an abundance of well-nigh meaningless data. Those data presented have been carefully selected and are designed to make the various discussions more meaningful and significant to the reader.

Acknowledgments for all data quoted and all materials used are presented in the form of footnote references. The authors also wish to express their gratitude to the numerous publishers, authors, and students of education and psychology who have contributed either directly or indirectly to the production of the materials germane to this study.

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