

A BRIEF COURSE  
IN THE  
HISTORY OF EDUCATION

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## PREFACE

THIS condensation of *A Text-Book in the History of Education*, issued in 1905, has been prepared to meet the demands of Normal and Training schools and of those colleges that have not sufficient time at their disposal for this subject to master the contents of a larger text. The great need in the study of the history of education has been the incorporation of enough historical material to give body to the subject, and to indicate the relationship between history or social life and education. This *Brief Course* aims to avoid the tendency towards too great generalization characteristic of most texts on the subject, and to preserve much of the concreteness of the larger text by omitting many topics, especially those that demand a philosophical treatment such as most non-collegiate students are unprepared to give. Even in the abbreviated form, the volume contains more material than other texts on the subject; but it is hoped that the use of this or any briefer text is but preliminary to the use of some larger one commensurate with the importance of the subject.

So far as compatible with this condensation, the text aims to retain the merits sought for in the larger one, namely: to suggest, chiefly by classification of this material, interpretations such as will not consist merely in unsupported generalizations; to give, to some degree, a flavor of the original sources of information; to make evident the relation between educational development and other aspects of the history of education; to deal with educational tendencies rather than with men; to show the connection between educational theory and actual school work in its historical development; to suggest relations with present educational work.

The methods of presentation of the subject are the same as in the larger work. Marginal notes and chapter summaries have been added for the convenience of the student. All bibliographical material, together with suggestions concerning topics for further study, have been omitted, as they are accessible in the larger text. Should further material or further references be desired, recourse can be had to the *Text-Book* or to the Syllabus prepared to accompany the text.

P. M.

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# BRIEF COURSE IN THE HISTORY OF EDUCATION

## CHAPTER I

### PRIMITIVE PEOPLES. EDUCATION IN ITS SIMPLEST FORM

**SIGNIFICANCE OF PRIMITIVE EDUCATION.** — Education in its simplest form is found among the primitive societies of savage and barbarian peoples. Here one finds no school, no method of education consciously recognized as such, and only the slightest differentiation of a teaching class. And yet there is evident the essential characteristic of the educational process — the fitting of the child to his physical and social environment through the appropriation of the experience of previous generations.

Education in  
its simplest  
form

In our own time society is so complex that one can with difficulty get a grasp of the true nature of the entire educational process and of its relation to social life as a whole. In the primitive stage, where society is so simple, the general nature, purpose, method, organization, and result of education are more readily discovered. By such a study one may arrive at a better comprehension of later more complex stages of educational activity.

Character-  
istics of  
education  
readily seen

**PRACTICAL EDUCATION.** — The training in the processes of obtaining food, clothing, and shelter — which are obligations possessing a very direct and insistent character for every individual in primitive society — constitutes their practical education. Yet there is seldom, if ever, a direct, conscious process of training on the part of society. The necessary knowledge



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Education of  
the primitive  
child  
through play

is obtained by the child through imitation. In the earlier years this imitation is unconscious. The child in savage and barbarous tribes plays with miniature imitations of the implements used by adults. His amusements and games are, similarly, but imitations of the activities of adult life. Indian children play with a log in the water and learn to balance and to paddle as the use of the canoe will later demand. The boys shoot at a mark with the bow and arrow; the girls make utensils of clay and play at the preparation of food. There are few games aside from such imitations. These few, such as a simple ball game, are merely imitations of the sports of adults.

His  
education  
through  
work

The second stage of this training through imitation is a conscious one. Then both boy and girl assist in the activities of the adults, and must learn by imitation because the work is demanded of them. This demand on the part of the adult, however, is not for the sake of training the child, but for the result of the work. In the art representations of their social activities left by primitive people, there are to be found no evidences of any conscious training of the young by the adult. And in the study of those forms of primitive life that have survived, few practical educational activities, save the two forms of imitation mentioned above, have been found by scientific observers.

Education  
through  
religious and  
social  
ceremonies

**THEORETICAL EDUCATION.** — Another phase of primitive life which occupies much of the time of the adults and possesses educational value for the young, is that connected with ceremonies, dances, and incantations. Such ceremonial performances constitute the religious worship of primitive peoples and are necessary before a hunt, a military expedition, a harvest, the planting of grain, the storing of food, and, in fact, before any important social activity. Inasmuch as they contain explanations of the myths, legends, religious dogmas, scientific or intellectual beliefs, or historical traditions of the respective tribes, all such ceremonials have an educational function. Thus the younger generations are being continually instructed in the lore