

THE
ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC
EDUCATION
IN
THE UNITED STATES

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PREFACE

SINCE this book was first published, many states have enacted new laws, and the rapid growth in population and educational progress has called for changes in procedure. A careful revision has therefore been made, with the especial purpose of bringing all statements as to statutes and statistics into conformity with present conditions.

It is hoped that the new chapter on Moral Education may be found helpful as indicating the trend of the best thought in the United States on that subject.

THE AUTHORS.

INTRODUCTION

THE careful and scholarly study of the administration of education in the United States by my colleagues, Professors Dutton and Snedden, is a valuable and timely contribution to the literature of education. In a democratic State, it is of first importance that the relation of the State to the organs and agencies of culture and enlightenment be clearly defined and well understood. The wise and truly representative organization and administration of education is only a little less important than the organization and conduct of the educational process itself.

To understand fully the position and progress of education in the United States, a clear distinction must be drawn between the activities of the State, the American people viewed as an organized unit, and those of the Government, the specific agencies and powers created by the State, through the Constitution, to accomplish certain definite purposes, which, taken together, are the ends or aims of government. Whatever is done by the State or in the State's interest, whether it be carried out by a governmental agency or not, is public; whatever is done by the Government is presumably public, and certainly tax-supported. Much of the educational activity of the United States is truly public but in no wise governmental. For example, the United States possesses no university maintained by the National Government, but it possesses a half-dozen national universities. Important educational undertakings of various kinds are carried on in the sphere or domain of liberty side by side with those which are carried on in the sphere or domain of government. The true test, in the American system, of a public institution or activity is the purpose which it serves, and not the form of its control or the source of its financial support. That is public which springs from the public and serves the pub-

lic; that is governmental which springs from the Government and is administered by the Government. In other words, the sphere of public activity is larger than that of governmental activity.

By far the largest part, and an increasingly large part, of the educational activity of the United States is governmental. It is this governmental educational activity with which the present volume deals. It brings together, in considerable part for the first time, a large mass of carefully ordered material bearing upon the evolution and present condition of educational administration, and it presents, in a form valuable either for study or for reference, the present state of educational administration in the United States, so far as that administration is governmental in form.

Few things in American history are more impressive than the devotion of the American people to education, and their sincere belief in its efficacy as an agency of moral and intellectual regeneration. This devotion and this belief are at times almost heroic and at times almost pathetic. The sacrifices made both by communities and by individuals on behalf of education in the United States are literally incalculable. To enter the teaching profession as a life career is, in a vast majority of cases, consciously to devote one's self to a missionary undertaking without hope of adequate material reward. This spirit of sacrifice, public and private, gives to American education much of its finest quality, and has thus far kept it elevated above and out of the mire of a blind materialism.

The idealism of the American people is reflected in their educational systems and institutions. To study those systems and institutions in detail is to come to a closer and fuller knowledge of the life and deeper characteristics of the American people.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTORY	I
II. FACTORS FAVORING THE ADVANCE OF EDUCATION	12
III. THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AND EDUCATION	25
IV. THE STATE AND EDUCATION	41
V. AMERICAN STATES AND EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION	54
VI. LOCAL UNITS OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION	73
VII. PROBLEMS GROWING OUT OF STATE AND LOCAL ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION	96
VIII. CITY SCHOOL SYSTEMS	120
IX. THE ADMINISTRATION OF CITY SCHOOL SYSTEMS	137
X. THE FINANCING OF PUBLIC EDUCATION	144
XI. THE SCHOOLHOUSE: ITS CONSTRUCTION AND ADAPTATION	172
XII. THE SCHOOLHOUSE (<i>Continued</i>)	187
XIII. TEXT-BOOKS AND SUPPLIES	208
XIV. THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION	230
XV. THE TEACHING STAFF	241
XVI. THE IMPROVEMENT OF TEACHERS IN SERVICE	276
XVII. THE SUPERVISION OF KINDERGARTENS AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	300
XVIII. THE ELEMENTARY COURSE OF STUDY	314
XIX. GRADING AND PROMOTION	341
XX. THE ADMINISTRATION OF HIGH SCHOOLS	356
XXI. THE ADMINISTRATION OF NORMAL SCHOOLS	386
XXII. THE ADMINISTRATION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION	404
XXIII. THE ADMINISTRATION OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION	426
XXIV. THE ADMINISTRATION OF CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION	445
XXV. ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION FOR DEFECTIVE AND SUBNORMAL CHILDREN	468

CHAPTER	PAGE
XXVI. ADMINISTRATION OF EVENING AND CONTINUATION SCHOOLS	480
XXVII. COMPULSORY EDUCATION AND CHILD LABOR LEGIS- LATION	492
XXVIII. SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND GOVERNMENT	511
XXIX. EDUCATIONAL STATISTICS: FINANCE	521
XXX. EDUCATIONAL STATISTICS: SCHOOL RECORDS AND RE- PORTS	535
XXXI. THE WIDENING SPHERE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION	559
XXXII. THE SCHOOL AND SOCIETY	582
XXXIII. THE ADMINISTRATION OF MORAL EDUCATION	596
INDEX	609

THE ADMINISTRATION OF AMERICAN SCHOOLS

CHAPTER I

PUBLIC education has played so vital a part in the advancement of the people in the United States that its history cannot be segregated from the story of our national progress. While a wilderness was being conquered and hostile forces were being overcome, while a greater and freer nation than the world has ever seen was being established, while the people were keeping pace with the most rapid industrial and commercial development which history has yet recorded, the ideal of free education has been a beacon light to all who desired that the nation be high minded and true hearted as well as rich and powerful. As sunshine and shower enrich and gladden everything which the soil produces, so the moral and intellectual life of the people of this new empire has been refined, quickened, and uplifted by universal education. The past century has seen the people's schools relating themselves to every movement for human betterment and happiness. Never losing sight of the beautiful, the good, and the true, the schools have sought to give to human life health, joy, efficiency, and social completeness.

Educational Inheritances. — To state what school administration is, what it has done, and what it ought to accomplish in the future, is by no means an easy task, and whoever attempts it deserves a considerable degree of consideration and indulgence. There is required a fair amount of perspective and proportion. As every new achievement in education is written upon the background of the past, so the historical

element cannot be omitted in estimating and weighing the most practical phases of modern educational work. The new education is not new except as it summons to its aid those theories and beliefs which, many times expressed, have never been given an opportunity to prove their validity. The only conceit in which educational leaders of to-day may safely indulge is that of studious endeavor to use the great opportunities which they have inherited. The ground has been cleared by those who have gone before, the hardest battles have been fought, and days of prosperity and peace permit the freest possible use of money and talent. Thought and opinion flash across the continent, producing the same social mind and giving increasing unity of purpose in the whole field of education and philanthropy. If in the chapters to follow much importance is given to types of administrative effort and achievement, it is because it is only in this way that the materials can be brought within the compass of a single volume.

The Prominence of Education in American Life.—The American people have ever looked upon education as something very necessary to their prosperity and welfare. The English colonists brought with them the idea that education and religion are two inseparable factors. They left the Mother-land at a time when grammar schools and Latin schools were being rapidly multiplied, so that increasing numbers of youth were given the advantage of that training which led to the university. Under the impulse of this movement for higher education, and feeling the necessity of educating ministers in order that the religious welfare of the colonies might be guarded, our fathers at once proceeded to establish similar schools. The Dutch settlers of New York also entertained like views, and we find them making early and definite efforts to provide proper instruction for their children.

Beginnings.—To the modern student of education these early provisions for schools seem narrow and insufficient. Not only was the curriculum mediæval in character, but the whole conception was undemocratic. The Latin and gram-

mar schools were for the wealthy and higher class of citizens, and the dame schools were for the poorer or working class. But the former, however narrow and illiberal they were, became the forerunners of the academies and high schools of the nation, while the latter were the germ of the common or elementary free schools which are now so important a part of our educational system. In certain sections of the United States the caste spirit has persisted, and private schools have always held a place of considerable importance.

Back of all these early educational endeavors were the faith and heroism of people who had sacrificed much and were fully committed to the great task of establishing a commonwealth on this continent. This faith and this heroism have never failed. Through many years of stress and struggle, while war had to be waged with hostile Indians, and when the resources of the people were nearly exhausted in the battle for independence, the torch of education was not suffered to go out or to become greatly dimmed. The schoolhouse and the church stood together. The clergyman and the schoolmaster labored side by side, the one usually the intellectual leader in the community and recognized as the official guide and defender of the schools, and the other the true exponent of the spirit and intelligence of the times. In the schoolhouses of New England was born the democracy which at length became invincible, and education was ever regarded as its chief corner-stone.

Expansion. — As new states were formed, they promptly took up the work of supporting and controlling the schools. When by a union of the states the nation came into being, the policy of state control was not seriously questioned. The national government, being founded and guided by statesmen who regarded education as of supreme importance, has always maintained a paternal attitude. Grants of money and land, and numerous other provisions of the national Congress have aided the states and have favored the rapid growth of educational agencies. The acquisition of our vast national domain, and the onward march of the conquering forces of civilization have been attended by a rapid and wonderful

development of educational plant and equipment. There has been also a remarkable growth of new and pressing demands on behalf of industry, politics, science, art, domestic improvement, health, and human culture in its several forms. The promptitude and efficiency with which these various and extended demands have been met have excited the admiration of other nations. As we attempt to indicate the larger phases of this progress and show how great are the material, social, and political interests involved, no one will question that the administration of schools is a subject worthy a place in the university curriculum and deserving the attention of practical men and women who are called to serve the public in the educational field, either in a legislative or executive capacity.

Variety of Form and Complexity of Function. — There is an unusual variety of form and complexity of function in American education, which makes its organization interesting if not simple. Many unsolved or half-solved problems call for continued, patient, and studious treatment. The fact that few things are absolutely settled compels open-mindedness and high professional enterprise. In the first place, there is a variety of control proceeding from the several political units which make up our system of government. The foreign observer finds it difficult to see an orderly plan when the district, the town, the city, the county, the state, and the nation all have a part, and an important part, to play in school support and oversight. Some of these units are of varying importance in different parts of the country. The method of administration is frequently subjected to change as new statutes and new charter provisions are enacted.

There is also diversity of type caused by difference in people, physical conditions, productiveness, and industrial success. The schools of a prosperous city are bound to be different from those in a sparsely settled and unproductive section. They have generally been much superior. The modern problem is not how to make them alike, but how to render them equally good. Notwithstanding the disparity in condition, in resource, and environment, there has been a

growing uniformity in motive and spirit, so that one visiting schools successively, in widely separated sections of the country, is surprised to find marked similarity in the school work.

Rapid Progress in Recent Years. — The unprogressive nature of early ideals and the fact that schools continued for nearly one hundred and fifty years pursuing the same narrow curriculum call for no extended explanation here. Everything during that period was slow and backward, and a stream cannot rise higher than its source. It is only during the last century that the field of education has been broadened and enriched, and it may be truly said that the really notable reforms have been gained during the last half century.

The reasons for the retarded movement at the beginning and the accelerated progress made in the last decades should always be kept in mind. Where the church has dominated the schools, there has been no quick and adequate response to the world's demands, political, industrial, social. Moreover, the fact that the colonists were poor and were widely scattered over wild, undeveloped country did not favor rapid advancement.

The growth of towns and cities under the industrial revolution of the last century, with the attendant manifold applications of science and invention to labor-saving machinery, called for a more extensive provision for education, and at the same time increased the resources which contributed to its support. The conservatism and the *vis inertiae* which had restrained progress could not stand before the onward trend of modern scientific ideas. Local pride, with the ability to gratify its desires, is a potent element in educational progress.

Ideals suffer Little Change. — Another fact to be remembered is that substantially the same ideals have influenced the minds of educational leaders during our entire history, but these ideals, by reason of changed conditions and enlarged vision, have grown and extended until they seem to be entirely new. For example, the religious motive still holds sway, but in a very different way from what it did a

century ago. No longer is the Bible a text-book nor is the catechism a required study. On the other hand, wherever the Bible is read in public schools, no comment is permitted, and the inculcation of special religious views is eschewed. Yet there never was a time when moral character was more earnestly sought, or when righteousness in a large sense was more distinctly made the end and aim of teaching. The emphasis is placed upon life and conduct, and it must be admitted that in our schools and colleges there is more of moral earnestness. The general attitude of educational leaders and ethical teachers toward religious training of the young is a significant instance of the change which has affected disciplinary measures in the home and school. The purpose is the same in kind as that held by our fathers, but in its application there has been constant adjustment to the newer and modern view of what real goodness is.

The civic ideal in education was not wanting in early days and it has never been overlooked. As the government, in adapting itself to new circumstances, has become more complex and paternal, so the duties and responsibilities of the citizen have been enjoined by all thoughtful teachers.

The practical and economic ideals have also persisted. That the education of boys and girls must give efficiency, and that instruction must be directed to increasing the economic welfare of the community, has always held some place in the educational scheme; but never has there been unanimity as to what extent practical demands should be heeded. The great diversity of plan and differentiation of educational means seen to-day represents one stage in the working out of this problem and the demand for vocational improvement is another.

The Work of Prophets, Leaders, and Philanthropists.—A constant factor in the development and growth of American education and the improvement of administration has been the active labors of men and women who were in a certain sense prophets and who were able to communicate their ideals and their aspirations to others. All the great movements recorded in history have been inspired by personality.

Nearly all that the world has accomplished could be written in the form of biography. The mere mention of such names as "Alexander the Great," "Martin Luther," "Napoleon Bonaparte," "The Earl of Shaftesbury," immediately bring to mind the many and great events with which their lives were associated and in which they had a commanding part. Going back to the early years of the nineteenth century, we begin to find the names of men who saw possibilities in public education which had not been apprehended before. One of these was Denison Olmstead, who, on taking his Master's degree at Yale College, urged that the state should establish a training seminary for young schoolmasters and developed his plan quite fully, although there was no immediate result. This man who afterward became Professor of Natural Philosophy and Astronomy in Yale College was a real prophet. The Rev. Samuel R. Hall in 1823, in connection with his work as a missionary in Concord, Vermont, put into practical operation the plan of normal instruction. He published a book which was widely circulated, and which must have been influential in awakening an interest in the professional side of education. Rev. Thomas H. Gallaudet in 1825 published a pamphlet urging that in every state schools for the training of teachers should be established.¹ His plan included an experimental school. Probably the name most worthy of credit for the educational revival in Massachusetts is that of James G. Carter.² He wrote with a trenchant pen upon the neglected condition of the common schools, due, as he thought, to the fact that the attractions of a business career prevented many young men from becoming teachers. Having taken up this work of arousing popular interest in education, he continued to write and work, making many suggestions for the broadening and deepening of the school curriculum and on methods of organization. He was interested in the reforms of Pestalozzi and certain English writers. His views attracted wide attention and called forth much discussion in the reviews and periodicals of the time.

¹ Barnard, *Normal Schools*, p. 9.

² Barnard, *American Journal of Education*, Vol. X, p. 212.

He continued his efforts until in 1837 the first State Board of Education was organized in Massachusetts, of which he was a member. So active had he been in all steps looking toward educational reform, that it was supposed that he would be the first secretary of the board. Horace Mann,¹ who was elected to this position, was undoubtedly better qualified to do the work required than any other man of his time. He had been successful as a lawyer, and in leaving his profession to enter the educational field he had to make considerable sacrifices. This is not the place to record his great labors for education which immediately affected Massachusetts and eventually the whole country. Indeed, his reports were widely read in other countries, and must have exerted considerable influence there. He is a most significant type of that class of persons who first in their own states and eventually in a wider area have given an impetus to free education by their zeal and prophetic vision.

The work of Henry Barnard in Connecticut and Rhode Island and as the first United States Commissioner of Education should be mentioned in the same class with Horace Mann. We may name also John Swett, of California, John D. Philbrick, of Boston, William H. Ruffner, of Virginia, and William T. Harris, whose work as Superintendent of Schools in St. Louis set a remarkably high standard for city school administration and whose services as United States Commissioner of Education enlarged the usefulness of the Bureau of Education. As a type of those who, although not actively engaged in educational work, yet from time to time propose plans for radical reform, Charles Francis Adams may be mentioned. Of all those whose work and teachings have affected elementary schools in America, Francis W. Parker is easily at the head. The work of President Eliot in disclosing the weak points in every department of American teaching will long be held in the highest appreciation. The names of many women could be given to illustrate the value of personality in leadership. Mary Lyon and Mrs. Alice Freeman Palmer are good examples of this class.

Stephen Girard, George Peabody, Samuel Slater, and Peter

¹ Hinsdale, *Horace Mann and the Common School Revival*, Chaps. 4-9.

Cooper made their impress on American education by generous benefactions.

Andrew Carnegie, by his gift of \$15,000,000, providing retiring allowances for teachers in one hundred non-denominational institutions in the United States and Canada, has set in clear relief the principle that a system of education is not complete without some provision for the retirement of those teachers whose usefulness is largely diminished by sickness or old age. Gifts by the same gentleman for free public libraries bear an equally close relation to popular education. The Carnegie Institute, as a capstone of our university system, places at the service of the teachers of the country such means for study and research as have never been available before.

John D. Rockefeller, in addition to numerous other benefactions, has given \$35,000,000 to be expended by the general education board in aid of higher institutions in all parts of the United States. Whatever is done for the higher schools and colleges has a direct influence upon all lower schools, as it leads to the more complete and thorough training of teachers.

General S. C. Armstrong was a pioneer in what may justly be called "the higher education of the negro race." He and his able successor, Dr. H. B. Frissell, have evolved a type of industrial training which combines all the elements required in lifting backward peoples to a plane of intelligence, self-respect, and thrift. The Hampton School sends its graduates to all parts of the South, and is an object lesson to those seeking light upon the problem of how to educate *toward* vocational efficiency and not *away* from it.

Dr. Booker T. Washington is at once the product and the best exponent of this idea. The administration of both the Hampton and Tuskegee schools is replete with lessons for all practical educators.

The few names mentioned may be regarded as types of a large number of men and women, living and dead, who have enthusiastically devoted money and talent to the advancement of free education. A single page of this or any other

volume on the administration of schools cannot properly be written without acknowledging the debt which is due them. School administration is not merely a description of machinery, it is primarily a study of human evolution and the progress of communities toward a more highly civilized life. In its modern conception it knows no barriers and no restrictions. It invokes the aid of the past and the present; it draws upon the great treasure-houses of culture; it summons to its service men and women of generous hearts and consecrated faith; its emoluments are growing and its satisfactions are greater year by year. What its problems are and how they may best be solved, it is our purpose to point out in the following pages.

REFERENCES

NOTE. — The following abbreviations are used throughout the reference lists: Ed. Rev. (Educational Review); Sch. Rev. (School Review); Ed. (Education); N. E. A., or Proc. N. E. A. (Addresses and Proceedings of the National Education Association); C. R., or Rep. of Com. of Ed. (Annual Reports of the Department of the Interior, Commissioner of Education); An. Am. Acad. (Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science); etc.

These reference lists are never intended to be exhaustive, nor do they always include the best material in the field, if that be accessible with difficulty; they are designed for the aid of the student who has access to ordinary college and normal school libraries. Many of the articles included are semi-popular, but exhibit definite phases of opinion which it is believed the student should take into account.

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