THE HIGH SCHOOL

A STUDY OF ORIGINS AND TENDENCIES

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

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INTRODUCTION

The high school is coming into its own. Secondary education has begun lately to assume a prominence and to have a recognized importance such as would be suggested by the priority of its development.

As the painstaking historical survey in the following chapters makes clear, formal secondary education was developed ages before any need for organized elementary education arose. The latter came later as a necessity following the development of written language. Such a historical study of secondary education is of value because it is a study of a great development, an examination of secondary education as an important and interesting sociological phenomenon. It is, besides, a practical investigation of the varied applications of means to ends that have been developed in each of the epochs of secondary education. It presents a study of a pivotal institution and of its relations to different times and conditions.

The aim toward which the present movement in education is tending is universal complete education within the limits of the public school period. This of course means that the number of high schools must be increased many times, and these high schools, in order to meet present and future social conditions, must evolve out of historic education.

The present book may well serve as an aid in studying this great movement and in guiding it with historic judgment. To study a problem we must know its roots. The study thus becomes of immediate practical value to every teacher and parent of adolescents. Through its suggestiveness we may be guided in recognizing the right aims of high school training, in harmonizing practice with sound theory, and in adapting curriculum making, method, and teacher-

training to the actual purposes of the school that the community establishes and maintains for its youth.

It seems a work of supererogation to insist upon this clearness of view and this honesty and intelligence of effort, but any examination of the high schools of the country in their actual work will reveal in many places a woeful lack of clear vision and of honest, intelligent effort.

There are two great changes that have come about in the social life of the United States within the last fifty years — one in our population, the other in our education. At first these two changes may seem to be wholly unrelated, and when one attempts to account for them historically he finds himself wandering far a-field and traveling apparently now in one direction, then in another.

These are the two changes: — In 1867 the United States Commissioner of Education made the statement, in answer to an inquiry, that there were then about forty public high schools in this country. In 1915 there were eleven thousand five hundred public high schools. This is an increase of nearly thirty thousand per cent. The increase in population in that time was about one hundred and fifty per cent. In 1867, there was one public high school to every nine hundred and fifty thousand of the population, in 1915 one public high school to every eight thousand five hundred.

This means that within less than fifty years the public high school idea has become firmly established in this country. At the earlier date only a small proportion of the population believed that it was the duty of the State to furnish free secondary education to the boys and girls of the country. In the minds of most men at that time, public school education included only what we now call elementary education. An overwhelming majority of the voters of this country in 1867 therefore believed that the State had performed its full duty toward the rising generation when it furnished free schooling from the age of six to the age of fourteen. Eight years was the highest limit of the average American's conception of a public education.

At the present time, with an investment of not less than two hundred million dollars in public high school buildings,

with the constant employment of fifty-eight thousand high school teachers at regular salaries, and with a total annual outlay, on high school education, of over sixty million dollars raised by general taxation, we may fairly conclude that the average voter believes that it is the duty of the State to furnish to its boys and girls a public school education that includes four years in the high school,— that the public school should open its doors to the youth of the country from the age of six to the age of eighteen or twenty. Within fifty years therefore the conception held by the people of the United States as to what constitutes a public school education has increased till the standard length of a boy's or girl's schooling at the State's expense has risen to twelve years instead of eight,— a fifty per cent. expansion of public opinion on this vital matter. This is one change that has come, and it is a most significant and far-reaching one.

The other great change concerns the character of our population and is equally vital, far-reaching, and significant, though it does not primarily suggest congratulation, encouragement, and a feeling of optimism.

All of us Americans — excepting a few Indians — are immigrants or descendants of comparatively recent immigrants. No American family can trace an American abiding place farther back than a dozen generations or so. All of us have ancestors, within a few generations back, who were born " in the old country."

And the particular old country from which those ancestors came we can usually name for ourselves, even though, as is frequently the case, we cannot give the Christian name of the original immigrant. In the average American audience of fifty years ago,— and in many rural districts this is still the case,— a speaker could look his audience over and, though all were personally strangers to him, he could name the list of countries and stocks from which their ancestors came, and this would be the list: England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Germany, Holland, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Those twelve countries included the old homes of nine-tenths of the families of America in 1867. Countries and peoples differed

in detail, and each contributed its element of value to the "melting pot" in which the American stock was being fused. But in all these elements of population there was vastly more of similarity than of difference in the essential things. There was in all of them the possibility of Americanism; there was good, sound, healthy race stock on which could be grafted the ideas and the ideals that together make "America." There was, moreover, in all of them a development due to hundreds of years of race training through the great struggle in those lands toward freedom and the ideals which go to make up Americanism, and consequently the material for self-government was ready for the great experiment in the new land. The remarkable studies by Professor Edward A. Ross of the University of Wisconsin, published in the *Century Magazine* under the title, "The Effect of Immigration upon Race" (and since printed in book form), deal with this matter as the limits set by this chapter will not allow, and far more brilliantly and convincingly than can be done by the present writer.

Immigration has increased amazingly since that period and has gone on with little interruption until temporarily stopped by the present war. A million immigrants a year have been pouring into the country to become American citizens,— an addition of from one to two per cent. of foreigners to the total population every year, and a much larger percentage when calculated upon the basis of adult male population.

While all the countries named above are represented every year in the tide of immigration, their actual contributions, in most instances, and their proportion of the total in nearly every instance, have decreased. As we all know, this is largely owing to the fact that streams of immigrants have been coming in larger and progressively increasing numbers from countries and stocks very slightly represented in our earlier immigration. Italians, Austrians, Magyars, Bulgarians, Roumanians, Russians, Servians, Slovaks, Slovenians, Ruthenians, Croatians, Bohemians, Poles, Lithuanians, Finns, Greeks, Armenians, Syrians, Turks, even Arabs and Hindoos,— these are races represented increas-

ingly, and some of them in very large numbers, in the immigration of the last half century.

This change in immigration is bound to have a tremendous effect upon the character of the American race. The serious question arises what the effect will be upon American ideals, institutions, and customs.

This is a fair question and one that is not to be construed as a reflection upon any of these newer Americans or the lands from which they come. Just as there are manifest differences between the stocks that came from the twelve countries in the first list named above, so there are differences between the peoples of the second list; and an honest and impartial examination will convince the student that there are even more manifest and striking differences between the immigrants who come to our shores from these latter eighteen or twenty race stocks and those who came from the others. This certainty is true when one considers their preparation, historically and sociologically, for American citizenship and the likelihood that they will assist in preserving and developing the ideals whose working out has produced what we call "America." The writer believes that such a judgment will receive the support of any educated and fair-minded Italian or Russian or Pole or Greek or Magyar or representative of any other people who has studied American institutions. At the same time each new-comer may point out and emphasize, as he should, the strong points of character in the people of his own race and may declare his optimistic belief in a glorious and manifest destiny for the new American that shall come out of this "melting pot," and with this optimism and this faith and this prophecy we have no quarrel. No man knoweth; the future is on the knees of the gods. We are learning more and more to make ourselves the intelligent and loyal instruments in the hands of Providence to fulfill the best of prophecy. "Kismet" is comfortable as a solace in the face of trouble, but it belongs not to the Occidental mind. Rather do we, with reverence, say: "Our Father worketh hitherto, and we work."

In view of the immense mass of unprepared material that

is coming into the digestive system of America, in view of a thousand changes in immigration, in transportation, and in political, sociological and economic conditions, in view of the great unrest of the last decade, we may, without deserving the charge of "little Americanism," inquire whether the tremendous change in the character, the preparedness, and the moving impulse of this later immigration is not coming about so fast as to warn us of a real danger to free institutions. These institutions are still to undergo their greatest test, and to rouse us to do all that may be done to meet the situation and to solve the problem.

In those last three words is the real challenge. We may talk of restricting immigration, but it is not likely to be done, — at least not as long as we are governed by political parties — unless, indeed, the great war stirs our lawmakers more than seems likely. No political party would seriously advocate any such restriction and attempt to make good such a plank in its platform, for the reason, narrow but potent, that the leaders of that party would be sure to lose the next election. The difficulty lies in the great American complacency, the feeling that Uncle Sam can not only "whip all creation," but can, on short notice, receive all comers and transform them without delay into intelligent, loyal American citizens. The problem, therefore, is to do this very thing. And there is and must remain one chief factor in bringing about that longed for result, the making of the "oppressed of all the earth" into good American stock fit for self-government. It is the public school, which, in order to do its work with any hope of achievement, must have all the wealth that can be spared to it, all the wisdom of all the wise men, and all the devotion of all of us, more or less wise and all loyal.

And here appears the connection between these two great changes in American life that have been coming about simultaneously within the last half century,— simultaneously, but seemingly with no possible relation to one other,— on the one hand the development of the public high school idea, the increase of fifty per cent. in the conception of the average American citizen as to what he owes in the way of

public free education to the boys and girls of the country; on the other hand, the great change in the character of the prevalent immigration, with the possible and even probable change in the character of the race itself.

If it be noble in man to rethink the thoughts of God, it may be right to conceive Him as viewing the great, new chosen land of opportunity and experiment, a land abounding in resource and energy and sifted stock, and deciding in His wisdom to give to that land *two gifts*. One gift is in the form of a burden, responsibility, millions of peasants from untrained races, from unfamiliar nooks and corners of the earth, from lands, some of them, with little of achievement in the world's history, all to be made over into a united people fit for self-government. The other gift is a change in American hearts, a broadening of vision, an increase in the conception of what an education means. Let us say that the Almighty has given us the raw immigrant with one hand, and, with the other, the American public school system, of which the most vital part is the American High School, a creation unique in all educational history, and that now He demands of us the wise and loyal use of one gift for the development of the other.

With such a view, we cannot study with too great care, too great open-mindedness, or too great devotion the development and character of the American Public High School.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

One of the most significant phenomena in secondary education of the present decade is the increase in literature on the High School. This is an indication that the most characteristic school in our system is beginning to receive the attention it merits as the determining factor in American education. All the current books however approach the matter principally from the hither side. Even the historical books, most of them devoted to noted individual schools, have described or discussed only the more modern phases of secondary education. These books however have rendered a distinct service on the historical side and make it unnecessary to take up the more recent epochs of the secondary school with the same fulness required by earlier epochs.

We need to approach the subject from both the near and the far side. The present book attempts to study the high school as an evolution. The author has placed himself inside the facts and conditions of each epoch and has tried to interpret its spirit. This aids us materially in interpreting the present. We are impressed in a new way with the principles of education, and, as we study the growth of means and ends and the modifications that have been made to meet religious, social, political, and industrial conditions as they have changed at different periods for more than thirty centuries, we gain new view-points for studying present problems and for adapting secondary education to new times.

The author hopes he has written a book that cannot be characterized as doctrinaire, that he has succeeded in getting into the life of the secondary school and thus in adding to various chapters qualities of concreteness and reality. In the superintendence of public schools, in teaching and super-

vision in high school and academy, in the training of high school teachers in normal school and university department of education, and in supervision of and participation in the training of high school graduates for teaching in elementary schools, he has had opportunity to observe the work of the high school from various angles. His study has brought him into close sympathy with the education of the adolescent and has given him larger faith in its possibilities and a broad interest enhanced by the fact that his own boys are just entering or approaching the high school period.

The author has also had special opportunities to make long and careful investigation of historic secondary education from many and varied sources, ancient and modern, primary and secondary.

In gathering material he is under obligations for generous responses by educators in all parts of the country who have furnished him with their latest high school programs of studies. He is under special obligations to Mr. John Calvin Hanna, Supervisor of High Schools of the State of Illinois, who has written the illuminating introduction, to Professor William Estabrook Chancellor, of the College of Wooster, who has read the manuscript and made valuable suggestions, and to Dr. Charles Hughes Johnston, of the University of Illinois, who has supplied an advance copy of the new terminology. For all who have thus assisted and encouraged him the author here records his warm appreciation and thanks.

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THE HIGH SCHOOL

As adolescence is the central and determining period in human development, so the High School is the central and determining school in our system of education. It is the key to the future development of the nation.

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THE HIGH SCHOOL

I

SECONDARY EDUCATION IN PRIMITIVE TIMES

The point of view.— If we are to have a comprehensive view of the evolution of educational forms, we must take as our starting point the ideas of tribes that flourished beyond the confines of recorded history. It is therefore the object of this first chapter to discover and examine the acquisitions of these primitive times and discover the means of transmitting and perpetuating them, i. e., the provisions for education.

It is difficult to gain even a faint conception of prehistoric life and thought. If we can forget our modern modes of thought and shut our eyes to our surroundings, we may hope in some degree to realize the position of primitive peoples. We must get rid of our complexities, of our tendency to pass over steps in processes,— to eliminate in thought parts of a series and bring remote and near together. We must as far as possible place ourselves at the point of view of these ancient tribes, bearing in mind that life, thought, and expression were very simple and moved by short stages; for industrial life, social organization, religious conceptions and feelings, and mental and physical life generally were just beginning, as far as their evolution in the human family is concerned. We must think even more simply and directly than do the plainest of modern men.

Means of studying primitive times.— There is no highway for reaching prehistoric times, but there are several pathways. Again there is no body of definite information ready made, on which we may lay our hands after indefinite journeyings. Yet the people of these primitive times have left embedded in the strata of civilization, and sometimes in the soil they occupied, various evidences that, through inference and analogy, may be

used to make out a fragmentary story of their lives. Often some piece of their handiwork comes to view to give something more tangible as to their thought and action. In addition to this, habits of thought, customs, ideals, and forms and formulæ in which their wisdom was condensed to make its transmission more secure, were handed on indefinitely. Some of them appear in faded outline, and sometimes in bold relief, in early historic peoples and serve, now as focusing points for investigation, and again as guides along the paths to prehistoric times. Slowly, with unstinted effort, students have forced their way back and have been able to picture in general outline the movements and life of the earliest peoples, to tell their story, and to make plain their ideas and modes of doing things.[1]

Organization of primitive society.— The organization of primitive society was based on the family. The family grown large — the ancient clan and tribe — simply continued the characteristic family organization, modifying it enough to adapt it to a larger and more complex unit. Each family, clan, or tribe was an end in itself, an exclusive unit, looking on all outside as strangers, and virtually as enemies. The "barbarian" of the Greeks and the "gentile" of the Hebrews are relics of this old organization and its attendant thought. The struggle of patricians and plebeians at Rome grew out of the same tribal solidarity.

The bonds of union of this primitive society were blood and religion.[2] But these two bonds were really one, as they were different sides of the same central force. The primitive family unit and the series of subordinate units bound to it, as sons gained families of their own,[3] were indissolubly bound together and were subject to the many-sided power of the father of the central family. The father was legislator, magistrate, priest,— the all-pervasive governing force of all.[4] They looked up to him when alive; they worshipped him when dead. He controlled their lives in life. In death he still pre-

[1] See Appendix I for a more specific description of sources.

[2] De Coulanges, Ancient City, 15, 16, 49–52, 174. See generally Book I and Book III: 1.

[3] Do., 149, 153; Von Ihering, Evolution of the Aryan, 32 ff. See Appendix II, 11.

[4] De Coulanges, *op. cit.*, 112 ff., 116, 149, 153, 301, 302.

sided over them; and it was one of their supreme objects to secure his favor.[5] The hearth worship, with its lares and penates, that figured so prominently in historical times, had its chief significance in this ancestor worship. The family in this broader sense also included various persons who were dependents in one degree or another. The family thus constituted what is called the clan. It had its own worship, its altar, its tomb, and its general organization, distinct from those of every other clan.[6] Altar and tomb were its centers. The clan was a compact and forceful group. The group prescribed and dominated; the individual was entirely subordinate; his life was the life of the group.[7]

Religious significance of acts.— From the very organization of early society it naturally resulted that every act and event had its religious significance, representing either the favor or the displeasure of the gods.[8]

Law an outgrowth of religion.— Even the ordinary relations of life, finally included in political and civil law, had their ground and origin in the universal blood relationships, which, we have seen, were really religious ones. The law was, in an important sense, an outgrowth of religion.[9]

[5] De Coulanges, Ancient City, 15, 16, 23, 24 ff., 44, 49.

[6] Do., *op. cit.*, 149–153.

[7] Do., 49–52, 293–98, 301–302; Appendix II: 8, 11.

[8] Thus a multitude of forms and rites and their accompanying formulæ arose to meet the varied acts of life, and to secure divine favor or ward off divine displeasure. Do., *op. cit.*, 21 ff., 23 ff., 49, 217 ff., 223 ff.; Appendix II: 8.

In the evolution of the state, religion became differentiated into different departments, just as the father's power separated into various functions of government, each presided over by a separate functionary. Religion still dominated the whole life, however, as either a serious or an oppressive influence binding closely to forms and ceremonies, or as a joyful bond of life.

In time religious influence became less dominant after the manner of primitive modes and types, and even became, at certain times and places, divorced from life to a greater or less extent. But the ideal still was that it should infuse life, giving it meaning and supplying and moulding ideals, though this infusion was entirely different in spirit, form, and attitudes from the earlier type.

To family religion in course of time was added a more external religion — worship of the powers of nature. The Roman came also to worship various deities representing abstract ideas that had special influence with men — Virtus, Fides, etc.

[9] Do., *op. cit.*, 248 ff.

What then were the acquisitions that primitive peoples, under this simple and impressive organization, accumulated and must hand on?

Acquisitions to be transmitted. 1. Social and political.— From their organization itself social and political facts, and correlatively social and political forms, suggested and impressed themselves. Thence came tribal rules and customs. Eventually laws developed. These things, with the more intimate tribal possessions,— its traditions, its rites, its relations and interrelations, its social feelings and bonds,— formed an important body of knowledge and sentiments to be transmitted.[10]

2. **Tribal history.**— Tribal and national history was forming[11] and was constantly outgrowing itself or modifying itself through race amalgamations and confederacies, and so was constantly becoming more intricate.

3. **Nature facts.**— Again primitive man was face to face with nature, which suggested operations necessary for his livelihood and guided him in them. As he cooperated with nature to supply the needs of existence, various industrial facts and processes drew his attention and were impressed on his mind.[12] As peoples and experience grew, the field of knowledge grew correspondingly. Discoveries multiplied, and crude inventions suggested themselves. To simple nature-knowledge was in time added more complex and scientific knowledge. These acquisitions were not understood, but were grasped in a merely external and practical way. They were however vital and were prized accordingly.

4. **Religious facts.**— These classes of facts and relations

[10] Hewitt, Ruling Races of Prehistoric Times, II: vii–xv, and preface generally, 1, 2, 87, 88, *et passim*. De Coulanges, *op. cit.*, 149–153, 154–158, 167–176, 248 ff., 301–2; Vedic Hymns, Mandalas I, 114; VII, 56; X, 78; Zend Avesta, Fargard 4; Seebohm, Tribal System of Wales, 64, 71, 87. The last author's English Village Community will also be interesting as indicating the strength of early customs and their relation to tribal integrity. Though referring to a much later time than the one we are considering they illustrate in a general way the points here made.

[11] Hewitt, *op. cit.*, I: xiv, 78–83; II: vii–xv, 306; Appendix II: 4.

[12] Hewitt, *op. cit.*, I: xi, 7, 64; II: vii–xv, 1, 2; Vedic Hymns, Man. I: 43, 165, 168; V: 54, 58, 61, etc.; Zend Avesta, Fargards III, VII; Appendix II: 3, 7.