

**THE CONCEPT STANDARD;  
TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA  
UNIVERSITY CONTRIBUTIONS TO  
EDUCATION NO. 29**

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The Concept Standard; Teachers College, Columbia University Contributions to Education No. 29 by Anne M. Nicholson

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**ANNE M. NICHOLSON**

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# THE CONCEPT STANDARD

A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF WHAT MEN HAVE CONCEIVED  
AS CONSTITUTING OR DETERMINING LIFE VALUES.  
CRITICISM AND INTERPRETATION OF THE  
DIFFERENT THEORIES TOGETHER  
WITH GENERAL EDUCATIONAL  
IMPLICATIONS

BY

ANNE M. NICHOLSON, Ph.D.

TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
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## FOREWORD

The present study is one that attempts to investigate what has constituted in certain eras of the world's history the standard by which all values were conceived or measured. That consciously or unconsciously such an ultimate point of reference or guiding principle has determined values in the past seems the only interpretation possible of our social inheritance to-day. It is wholly in accord with the main thesis of this study, to realize that the significance of the control was not always grasped by those whose destinies were being determined by it. It is also in accord to suggest that progress was surer, more direct, when there was a consciousness of the presence and nature of the control. The standard ethically conceived and realized as functioning in the life of a people has proved its worth by its greater power and by its tendency toward survival. It is in this last thought that there may be a warrant for this present essay. A social consciousness awakened as at present to the necessity of reflection may find help in any survey of its past experience.

Contrary to ordinary procedure, greater time has been given to those periods that have been lightly passed over by current thought as having nothing worth while for modern needs. The survey of the past has shown that it seems impossible for an age to entertain more than one dominant idea at a given time. All delays in the progress of thought have seemed to result from the isolation of some one phase of a more inclusive whole. Necessary consideration of means to an end has frequently resulted in regarding the means as an end. While the attention is focused on the part rather than on the *part as related to the whole*, things are viewed out of proportion. It is some of these parts of the history of philosophy that are out of focus in the present direction of attention, that have received more attention in the present study than may seem justified. Toleration is asked for what may appear as digressions, and also some consideration of their import.

Part of the work has been done while attending lectures on philosophy under Dr. John Angus MacVannel and Dr. John Dewey of Columbia University. The thesis was suggested and continued for several months under the guidance of Dr. MacVannel. There may be found traces in this essay of the influence of the theories of both these scholars.

ANNE M. NICHOLSON.

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