

**FUNDAMENTAL
FACTS FOR
THE TEACHER**

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Fundamental Facts for the Teacher by Elmer Burritt Bryan

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BY

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PREFACE

SINCE the publication of "The Basis of Practical Teaching," there has been a wide-spread demand for a second book which should follow the lines of character building or moral training. "Fundamental Facts for the Teacher" has been written with the view of meeting this demand. Very briefly I have tried to develop the thought that the end of all human activities is life, and that this end can be attained through no hook or crook or by-process, but only in the processes of real living. We are made or unmade in the activities of life. I have the hope that this book will appeal not only to teachers and students, but to the general public as well.

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CHAPTER I

THE DISTINCTIVE WORK OF THE SCHOOL

THERE is no other institution in which the American people are so universally and keenly interested as they are in the school, and there is no subject so widely and intelligently discussed by the masses as is the subject of education. This is not surprising for in addition to the benefits which are derived directly from the schools by all classes of people who attend or patronize them, and indirectly even by those who do neither, there are many things which contribute to this general interest.

From the homes of the rich and the poor, the native born and the foreign born, the professional classes and the tradesmen, go the children into the schools, and there they have their victories and their defeats, their glad hours and their sad hours. They mingle with the bright and the dull. They come under the discipline and instruction of strangers whom they often come to revere, sometimes to dislike. It is a new world to the young child, and remains a distinctive world throughout his student years. The school is the topic of conversation in the home; and parents, older brothers and sisters, and even brothers and sisters too young to be in school, have an interest in it. Furthermore,

all our people support the school regardless of personal benefits directly derived therefrom. There is perhaps no interest so vital as a vested interest. Even if people are not directly participating in an enterprise or an institution, if their money is used in its support they are apt to have an interest in it. The special days in our schools — flag day, arbor day, anniversary days, commencement — all offer the public opportunities for recreation, entertainment and instruction which the mass of the people are not slow to accept. As a result of all this there is very wide and deep interest in the schools notwithstanding the apparent apathy and unconcern.

So much is the school a part of our lives and our daily living that we take it for granted; we accept the school, as we do the mountains and the valleys about us. Before we were, it was; and as with all social inheritances we look upon it almost as a law of nature. But in this unquestioning acceptance of the school, which is at once the great force for higher levels in life and the great leveler, too many of our people forget that it is but one of five great organized social agencies whose function is to help the people, each of course in its own distinctive way. In practically every community, while perhaps not too much is demanded of the school, wrong things are demanded, and the school is not free to do its own work well. It is always a mistake to ask the school to assume the responsibilities and bear the burdens of other institutions, and not infrequently is this done. The home, the church, business and even the state