

**GRADED SCHOOLS  
IN THE UNITED  
STATES OF AMERICA**

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Graded Schools in the United States of America by Mary H. Page

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**MARY H. PAGE**

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

BY

MARY H. PAGE

*Head Mistress of the Skinners' School, Stamford Hill*



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## P R E F A C E

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IN view of the growing interest in Secondary Education in the United Kingdom and the important problems awaiting solution, the Gilchrist Trustees decided in the early part of 1893 to send five women teachers to America, for the purpose of studying and reporting upon Secondary Schools for Girls and Institutions for the Training of Women in different parts of the States. The Trustees made their intention widely known, and invited the governing bodies of the various women's colleges and associations of teachers to submit to them names of persons specially qualified. The Trustees received in this way a list of some of the ablest and most experienced women teachers in the country. After careful consideration of the qualifications of the numerous candidates, the Trustees selected the following five, and awarded to each of them a travelling scholarship of £100 to enable them to spend two months in the United States in prosecuting their investigations:—Miss A. Bramwell, B.Sc. (Lecturer at the Cambridge Training College), Miss

S. A. Burstall, B.A. (Mistress at the North London Collegiate School for Girls), Miss H. M. Hughes (Principal of the Women's Training Department, University College, Cardiff), Miss M. H. Page (Head Mistress of the Skinners' Company's School for Girls, Stamford Hill), and Miss A. Zimmern (Mistress at the High School for Girls, Tunbridge Wells). The five scholars visited America during last summer, and presented to the Trustees carefully prepared Reports, of which one—viz., that by Miss Page—is presented to the public in this volume. The Trustees have aided in the publication of these Reports, because they believe that a knowledge of the educational systems and experiments which have been tried by the English-speaking people over the Atlantic cannot fail to be of interest and value to those engaged in attempting to solve the educational problems of the United Kingdom.

R. D. ROBERTS,  
*Secretary to the Gilchrist  
Trustees.*

17, VICTORIA STREET,  
WESTMINSTER.



## INTRODUCTION

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THE following brief Report of the work undertaken by me through the help of the Trustees of the Gilchrist Educational Trust has of necessity been written hurriedly, in the midst of the daily pressure of heavy work; and is, I feel, totally inadequate either to show the benefit I have personally received or to give anything like a systematic account of Education in America.

Travelling from the Atlantic to the Pacific, as far north as Montreal and as far south as St. Louis, I felt again and again that to know American Education would need more years of study than I had months in which to see and to hear. A Western State I found to be a different country from an Eastern State; the former seemed bound by no traditions, governed by no conventionalities, narrowed or hampered by no class feeling, whether as regards people or work; and as "necessity is the mother of invention," so a new State evidently must be the parent of fresh experiment in every profession, business, or trade.

The whole country is so huge, the possibilities so enormous, and the resulting conditions so diverse, that beyond the broad principles of government which underlie the organizations of education, I have found it impossible to give generalizations.

I felt, both before starting and increasingly during my tour, that statistics were cold and hard, and although very necessary in their place, were not the main points for me to seek out in a visit. I therefore endeavoured to enter into the life which is being lived in the Schools, to realize where possible the actual difficulties to be contended with, and the aims kept in view by superintendents and teachers; and while I visited schools so far as time and strength would allow, I attached more importance to interviews with superintendents, teachers, and secretaries, than to cursory inspection of schools.

At the close of my Report, I append a list, but by no means an exhaustive list, of the schools and institutions I visited, and of those friends who so kindly gave me their time and much valuable information; and if ever this Report should reach their eyes, I should be glad for them to know how much I appreciated the generous way in which they so liberally placed their time at my disposal. Especially have I cause to thank Dr. Harris, the United States Commissioner of Education, Professor Spice, of

Brooklyn, and Miss Cropsey, of Indianapolis, for the courteous and untiring aid they rendered me, and Professor Fitzpatrick, Superintendent of Omaha City Schools (Nebraska), for the exceedingly kind way in which he helped me, not only in educational matters with advice and introductions both in the Eastern and Western States of America, but also as regards routes of travelling, and many other details which are so frequently causes of hindrance to a traveller in a strange land.

As regards the introductions kindly given by Dr. Fitch, I much regret that I was personally unfortunate. With but a few exceptions, the friends were away from their homes at the times of my visits.

I propose in the following Report merely to state, in as concise and connected a form as I can, those facts which came directly under my own cognizance, particularly as Dr. Fitch has so admirably stated the general laws of government in his "Notes on American Schools and Colleges," of which book one School Superintendent remarked to me, "It is the best and most correct account of our American education given by an outsider." But, although I feel I cannot attempt any general account of the system of education in America, I also feel that a few words in reference to it are necessary, in order to make intelligible the School expressions which I shall be obliged to use.