

HERBART AND THE HERBARTIANS

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Herbart and the Herbartians by Charles De Garmo

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CHARLES DE GARMO

**HERBART AND
THE HERBARTIANS**

The Great Educators

EDITED BY NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER

HERBART

AND THE HERBARTIANS

BY

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PRESIDENT OF SWARTHMORE COLLEGE, PENNSYLVANIA

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1895

PREFACE

THE purpose of this volume is to give a bird's-eye view of Herbart and his doctrines of education, both as presented by himself, and as developed by his successors. In English-speaking countries his system of educational thought is for most teachers still in the stage of exposition; furthermore, the beginner in every well-organized, far-reaching system is always in need of an introduction. To the teacher, therefore, who inquires for the leading purposes of this school, and the methods whereby it is sought to realize them, this book attempts an intelligible answer. It concerns itself but little with Herbart's metaphysics, and rigorously refrains from introducing confusing refinements of doctrine. It confines its attention strictly to essentials. Only epoch-making men and their chief contributions are considered at all. If, therefore, among so many men worthy of mention, so few are treated, and even with these the discussion confined to essentials, the reason must be sought in the purpose to make clear to the inquiring teacher what the Herbartians are trying to do and how they are trying to do it.

The ultimate purpose of the Herbartians may be said to be the development of character, not in a nar-

row subjective sense, but in a broad social one. They seek to fit the child for every important phase of family, social, civil, religious, and economic life, — to develop, in short, the whole boy or girl. In this broad aim they are, perhaps, not peculiar; but they have certainly made some contributions as to the means for accomplishing this end, so devoutly to be desired for public education. The strength of their position is, that they show how under favorable circumstances this result can be achieved with the agencies already at the command of the school; namely, the common-school studies as they may be taught, together with the ordinary discipline of the school. They believe that, properly selected, articulated, and taught, the common branches of an elementary education are potent influences in training the child's moral insight and disposition.

But this training must be in full harmony with the nature of the child's mind, and especially with his moral and intellectual apperception, or assimilative power. We find, consequently, that the burning questions with this body of teachers pertain, first, to the selection and sifting of suitable subject-matter in the various studies; then to its rational articulation or coördination; and finally, to the truest and best methods of teaching it to the child. Every teacher will recognize that this purpose and these means are the important things in education.

CHARLES DE GARMO.

SWARTHMORE COLLEGE,
October, 1894.

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