

**JOHN AMOS COMENIUS,
BISHOP OF THE
MORAVIANS, HIS LIFE AND
EDUCATIONAL WORKS**

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John Amos Comenius, Bishop of the Moravians, his life and educational works by S. S. Laurie

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JOHN AMOS COMENIUS

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JOHN AMOS COMENIUS

BISHOP OF THE MORAVIANS

HIS LIFE AND EDUCATIONAL WORKS

BY

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PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

IN issuing the second edition of this book it occurs to me to say that it is possible that a critical mind examining *any one* of Comenius's writings might here and there take exception to my statement of his opinions. It is therefore necessary to explain that wherever the opinions expressed by Comenius in any of his Treatises was subsequently modified, I have given his final views.

For the rest, I can only repeat what I stated in the preface to the first edition, that this book is the most complete—so far as I know the only complete—account of Comenius and his works that exists in any language. I have gone carefully through the four volumes of his didactic writings, containing 2271 pages of Latin, good, bad, and indifferent. The German translation of one of the treatises has also been before me. The life is written, like the rest of the book, entirely from a collation of original sources; but I do not endeavour to give an account of Comenius's *ecclesiastical* relations.

It is not always easy to determine how much of a voluminous and prolix writer should be

given. My object has been to omit nothing essential. There is much in Comenius that is fanciful, and even fantastic, and of this I have endeavoured, in suitable places, to give enough to exhibit the author's manner of thought. There is much, again, that is now universally accepted in education, which I have yet preserved, because the statement of it is essential to a proper exposition of Comenius's system. My aim has been to omit nothing that is characteristic or useful, or historically important.

The scholastic habit of division and subdivision was inherited by Comenius, and along with this he had in great force the systematising impulse of the German mind, though not himself a German. He can leave nothing to be understood, but will sometimes imperil his whole theory by insisting on the small as well as the great. While following closely the argument of Comenius I have dropped superfluous divisions and distinctions, but wholly to avoid repetition was impracticable.¹

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March, 1884.

¹ A pleasing and lucid sketch of Comenius and his work will be found in Quick's *Educational Biographies*.

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