

**A STUDY OF THE MORAL AND
RELIGIOUS ELEMENTS IN
AMERICAN SECONDARY
EDUCATION UP TO 1800. A
DISSERTATION**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649407804

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Dissertation by Adrian Augustus Holtz

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ADRIAN AUGUSTUS HOLTZ

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The University of Chicago

A Study of the Moral and Religious
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A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND
LITERATURE IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

(DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION)

BY

ADRIAN AUGUSTUS HOLTZ

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

A Private Edition

Distributed by

The University of Chicago Libraries

A Trade Edition is Published by

~~The College Press~~

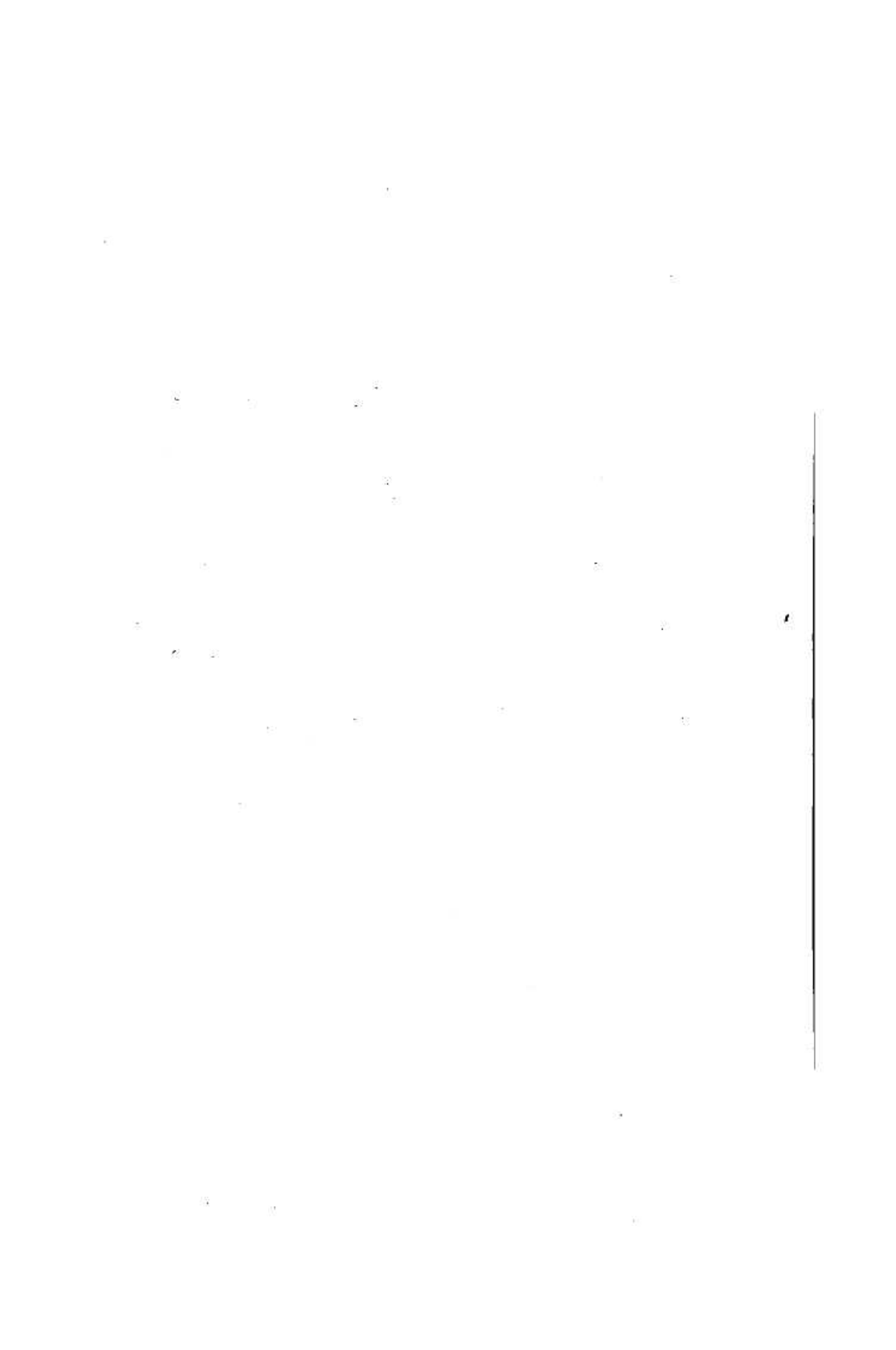
GEORGE BANTA PUBLISHING COMPANY
MENASHA, WISCONSIN

1917

PREFACE

Many assumptions have been made of the religious motives back of American educational activities, but no historical study has been made to determine the actual participation of religious bodies and of the presence of religious incentives as a dynamic of our educational advancement. The purpose of this thesis has been to find out to what extent religious motive was present in the founding of the American educational system. The field opened up so large that it was found advisable to limit the scope of the investigation to the elementary and secondary schools. The study of the universities would be a work for a separate investigation.

The author wishes to express his appreciation to Dr. Marcus W. Jernegan of the University of Chicago, under whose supervision this thesis has been made possible. Dr. Theodore Soares of the University of Chicago has been ready at all times to give advice and has reviewed the manuscript with care. At this time the author desires to thank both Dr. W. H. Kilpatrick, Teachers' College, Columbia University, and Dr. Frank P. Graves, University of Pennsylvania, for helpful counsel and advice. Many avenues of fruitful research were pointed out by these men.



PART I

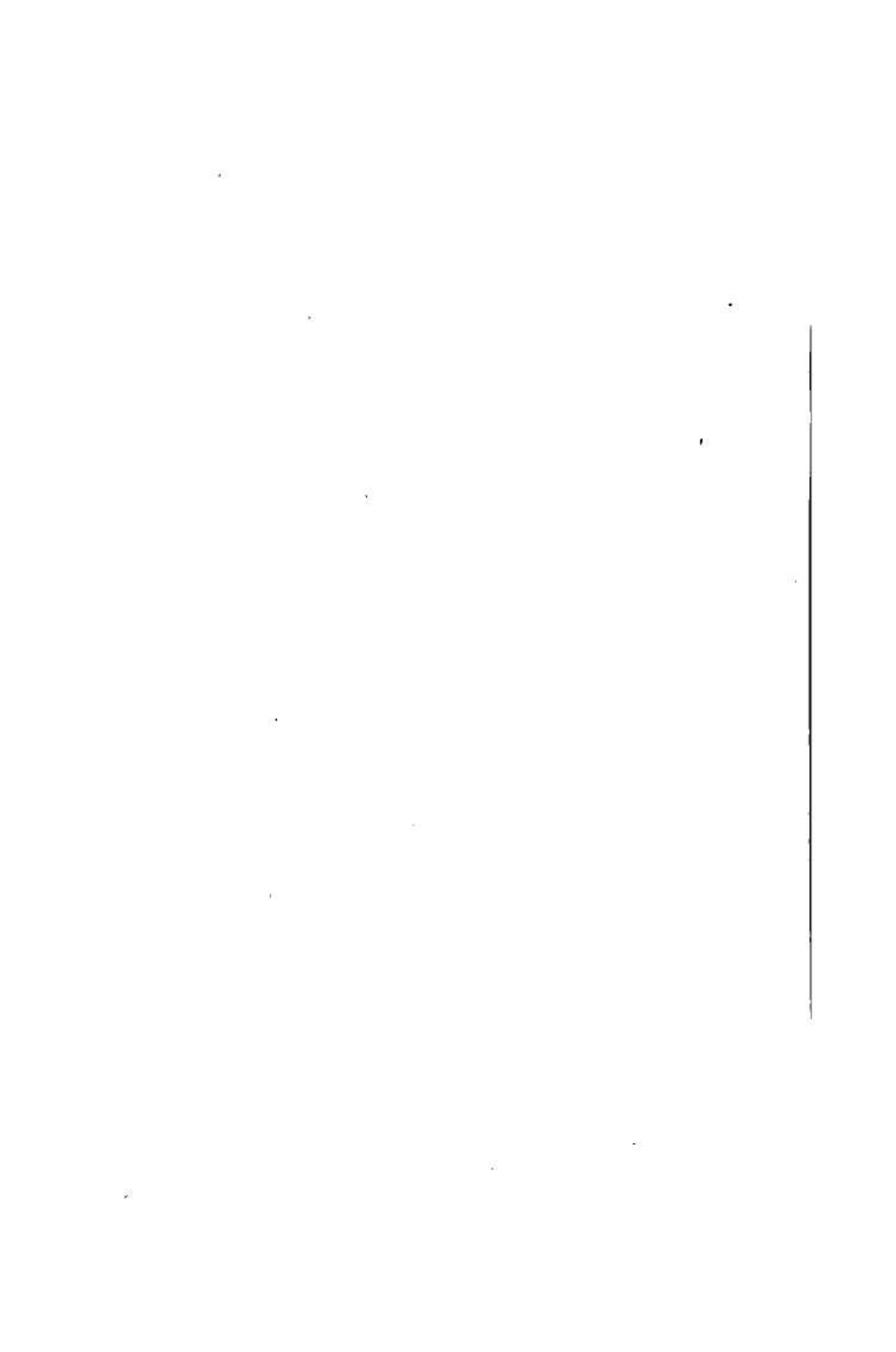
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PART I

THE EDUCATORS OF ENGLAND

In no period of history has there been a time when the educational system was equal to the idealism of the educators, but the fact that the educators were recognized as such and in many cases were the masters of one or more large schools gave opportunity for their ideas to find expression in the methods employed. In studying the writings of some of the leading educators of the Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth Centuries in England, and the principles of educational practice given by eminent schoolmasters we find that they built their educational structure on a religious basis. The branches were to be so taught as to be instrumental in instilling knowledge which directly or indirectly had a religious value. The religious element of instruction was the hub, and all the other branches were those which aided in strengthening the hub. In studying Latin, or Greek, for instance, the text used was often the Bible, or portions of it. Exercises in Latin were often the translation of the English catechism into Latin and then back into the English again. In taking up a lesson in Greek, the master at first had a portion of the Bible translated each morning before going on with one of the Greek authors. It was thought that by translating a section of the Bible or catechism into Latin or Greek or from the Latin and Greek back into the English, a keener insight into the religious implication of the words would be obtained.

Definite periods each day were set apart for religious practices such as praise and prayer. Definite periods were set apart for the direct religious instruction. This instruction was at first memory work such as memorizing the catechism, the Ten Commandments, the creed, the Lord's Prayer, and certain portions of Scripture. Expositions of the catechism were given by the schoolmaster. Histories of the biblical books and helps of a kindred nature were used. Having made several generalizations we will now give references to substantiate them.

Richard Mulcaster was the Head Schoolmaster of the Merchant Taylor's School from 1561-1586. This leading educator writes:

" . . . to see youth well brought up that waye, to learne to discern that which is well from ill, good from bad, religious from profane, honest from dishonest, . . . that they may honour God, serve their countryman, comfort their friends, . . . The ende of our being here is to serve God and our country, in obedience to persons, and performance of duties. . . ."¹

¹ Mulcaster, *Positions*, pp. 28, 29, 127.

We find that the educational theories and practices advised by Brinsley cover even more completely the generalizations made at the beginning of this section. Brinsley was one of the recognized educators of his period. In his book, "Ludus Literarius," or the Grammar School, he devotes a chapter to a discussion, "Of Knowledge of the grounds of Religion and Training up of Schollers therein." It is given in the form of a dialogue, a method commonly used at the time it was written.

" . . . for there should be suffered no day to pass over wherein there should not be some short exercise or lesson of religion; which is both the chiefe end of all our other studies; and also, that whereby all the rest are sanctioned. . . ."²

They often attempted to unite with the teaching of a subject, Latin principally, a lesson in religion. The custom was followed of translating portions of the Bible or catechism into Latin and from Latin into English. This is borne out in the Dialogue.

Spond. But I could thus teach them Religion; and Latin all under one; it were a most happy thing . . . Phil. (responds) I will show you how you may doe it. Cause your schollers to reade you a Chapter of New Testament, or a piece of a Chapter, as time will permit, . . . One might reade it out of the Latine into English; . . . and next night to reade the same over againe forth of an English Testament, into the same Latine book againe.³

Charles Hoole, a prominent educator of the seventeenth century outlined an educational scheme from the Petty School through the Grammar School, religion being the center. He would use the religious elements from the beginning, starting as soon as the children have been taught their letters. He marks out a course in reading for the Petty School which is of special value for our problem.

"But to hold still to the sure foundation, I have caused the Lord's Prayer, (section 20), the creed (section 21), and the ten commandments (section 23) to be printed in the Roman character, that a child having learned already to know his letters and how to spell may also be initiated to read by them. . . ."

And when he can read any whit readily let him begin the Bible and read over the Book of Genesis.

And instead of the Accidents, which they do neither understand nor profit by, they may be benefited in reading orthodoxal Catechism and other books that may instruct them in the Duties of a Christian such as, The Practice of Piety . . ."⁴

² Brinsley, *Ludus Literarius*, pp. 258, 59.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 261.

⁴ The Petty School. *Am. Jor. Ed.* XVII, 194.