

**THE ORGANIZATION OF THE DEPARTMENT  
OF EDUCATION IN RELATION TO THE  
OTHER DEPARTMENTS IN COLLEGES  
AND UNIVERSITIES, REPRINTED FROM  
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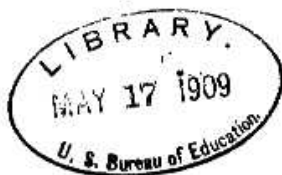
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**W. S. SUTTON**

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## The Organization of the Department of Education in Relation to the Other Departments in Colleges and Universities.

IT is the purpose of this paper to set forth the relations which the department of education should bear to other departments in colleges and universities, and to determine, if possible, a scheme of organization by which those relations may be justly maintained. After a brief historical survey of the professional education of teachers, the situation as it is to-day will be presented in detail, and then will follow a discussion of the question at issue.

### I. HISTORICAL SURVEY.<sup>1</sup>

In the University of ancient Athens questions pertaining to the department of education were neither important nor troublesome. Notwithstanding the fact that the Greeks seriously undertook the reflective study of human nature, and founded schools of philosophy whose influences have survived to this day, problems belonging to the theory and practice of teaching were not scientifically considered; hence there arose among the Athenians no professor of education to disturb his colleagues, or to be disturbed himself, because of efforts to make satisfactory adjustment of the study of education to academic environment.

<sup>1</sup>This survey is taken, largely, from a paper read by W. S. Sutton in 1904 before the Association of Southern Colleges and Preparatory Schools.

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In ancient Rome, also, the education department was unknown; not even a course in education was offered. So, too, the universities in the Middle Ages got on very comfortably for centuries without the assistance of education professors. The fact is that the study of education was born in modern times, the Jesuits being first to give the subject serious consideration.

Along with other new subjects the study of education has had a long and an arduous struggle to secure recognition. In prolonging the contest two causes have been especially aggressive and efficient. The first of these causes may be stated thus: The Renaissance established classical learning as the ideal of education, and faith in the efficiency and all-sufficiency of the culture-material embodied in the languages and literatures of ancient Greece and Rome became as unyielding as that of Jonathan Edwards in the five points of Calvinism. Education, therefore, as well as every other aspiring new subject, experienced the greatest difficulty in entering the charmed circle of the liberal arts, for, in the field of learning, as in that of politics, the way of the "trust-buster" is hard.

The second of the causes is the opinion, long entertained by people generally, including even teachers themselves, that there is no science of teaching. Somewhat more than twenty years ago the Hon. Robert Lowe, a leading educational officer in England, declared that there could be "no such thing as the science of education."<sup>1</sup> Englishmen accepted this declaration without question, and not a few American educators heard it with manifestations of delight. But it is unnecessary to go even twenty years into the past for proof that the study of education is not universally regarded with favor. In 1904 Prof. Barrett Wendell, of Harvard University, contributed to a popular magazine an article from which these sentences are taken: "Of all our educational superstitions, we may freely admit, none is more instantly apparent than that which wor-

<sup>1</sup> Quick's *Educational Reformers*, p. 379.



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ships the classics and mathematics as idols. And yet the newer educational superstition, which bows the knee to pedagogics, is beginning to seem more mischievously idolatrous still."<sup>1</sup> Even to-day are to be found members of the Harvard faculty and of the faculties in other colleges and universities who, if possible, surpass Professor Wendell in expressions of contempt for education as a university study.

In spite of the hindering causes above detailed, in spite of the fact that some of the leaders in the study of education have been blessed with more zeal than either scholarship or sense, in spite of the ravages wrought by fakirs and camp-followers swift to take advantage of opportunities afforded by the exploiting of a new idea, the history of the university movement to dignify the office of the teacher, to establish education upon the basis of reason rather than that of tradition and caprice and empiricism, to elevate education to the plane of other worthy subjects, stands in need of no apology, for it contains a record of the deeds of many faithful, intelligent, courageous souls, who, enduring crosses and despising shame for a half a century or longer, have been actively engaged on the firing line of educational reform. That record cannot here be given in detail; but attention is invited to a review of some of its more important features.

Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, so Dr. Will S. Monroe has recently discovered in his study of the life of Henry Barnard, was the first American professor to conduct education courses in a university. For at least two years, beginning in 1832, Gallaudet gave instruction in the philosophy of education at The University of the City of New York, now called New York University. This information, revealed by the Barnard correspondence, Professor Monroe says, is confirmed by Hough's *Historical and Statistical Record of The University of New York*.

<sup>1</sup>"Our National Superstition," *The North American Review*, Sept., 1904, p. 401.

In 1849 President Wayland, of Brown University, offered his resignation of the presidency of that institution because he was unable to inaugurate educational reforms he considered necessary. His resignation, however, was not accepted, the corporation appointing a committee, with Dr. Wayland himself as chairman, to prepare a report concerning the new policies which he believed should be inaugurated. The report of the committee was submitted in 1850. Among the new courses which were recommended, and which the corporation afterward adopted, was "a course of instruction in the science of teaching."<sup>1</sup> This, commonly regarded as the first course in education ever given in an American university, was announced under the name of "Didactics," and was described in the Brown catalog as follows:

*Didactics.*—This department is open for all those who wish to become professional teachers. A course of lectures will be given on the habits of mind necessary to eminent success in teaching; the relation of the teacher to the pupil; the principles which should guide in the organization of the school; the arrangement and adaptation of studies to the capacity of the learner; the influences to be employed in controlling the passions, forming the habits, and elevating the tastes of the young; and on the elements of the art of teaching, or the best methods of imparting instruction in reading, grammar, geography, history, mathematics, language, and the various other branches taught in our higher seminaries. All these lectures are accompanied with practical exercises, in which each member is to participate.

"For the benefit of teachers generally a class has already been formed consisting of persons not connected with the university. \* \* Lectures are given at the lecture room of the high school, on Benefit Street, twice a week on the various topics embraced in the course of elementary teaching."<sup>2</sup>

The first professor of Didactics in Brown University was S. S. Greene, one of the thirty-one Boston schoolmasters who had helped to make Horace Mann famous by attacking, in 1844, his celebrated Seventh Annual Report, a document devoted especially to advocacy of the study of education. In

<sup>1</sup>Barnard's *Journal of Education*, Vol. 13, p. 778-78a.

<sup>2</sup>*Educational Review*, Vol. 19, p. 112.



1854, for want of funds, the Chair of Didactics was abolished at Brown University, her students being thereafter permitted to study education courses in the Rhode Island Normal School, which had been established in Providence. Education did not again find its way into the Brown University curriculum until almost fifty years had passed.

The next effort to establish education as a college course was made in Antioch College by Horace Mann, who, after serving twelve years as Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education and a term or two in Congress, became, in 1853, the president of the institution just now named. It is believed that the instruction given was that of the normal school rather than of the university grade. How long even this kind of instruction was given at Antioch is not surely known; but it certainly ceased with the downfall of the College in the early days of the Civil War.

A feeble legislative attempt to provide instruction in education at the Missouri State University was made in 1867; but the effort resulted in failure, there being at that time no one in that state to "show" the Missourians how the thing could be done. That was before the days, we remember, of the vigorous and progressive administration of President R. H. Jesse.

In The State University of Iowa, from 1856 to 1873 there were efforts to insure instruction to teachers, finally culminating in the establishment of the Chair of Mental Philosophy, Moral Philosophy and Didactics. The Didactics being only a tail, and a very small one at that, attached to those two big mental and moral philosophy canines, it is no wonder that they found it both easy and amusing to wag in any way they pleased the caudal appendage they held in common.

To Michigan University belongs the honor of establishing in this country the first professorship to be devoted exclusively to the professional side of the equipment of teachers. This chair was established in June, 1879, when there were in the English-speaking world only two college chairs of education—

the Bell chairs in Edinburgh and St. Andrews. The Michigan chair was founded as the result of the persistent efforts of President Angell, who, both as a student and as a professor in Brown University, had profited by his acquaintance with President Wayland. In the circular describing the proposed work of the new chair these purposes were enumerated:

"1. To fit university students for the higher positions in the public-school service.

"2. To promote the study of educational science.

"3. To teach the history of education and of educational systems and doctrines.

"4. To secure to teachers the rights, prerogatives and advantages of the profession.

"5. To give a more perfect unity to the state educational system by bringing the secondary schools into closer relations with the University."<sup>1</sup>

In 1882 that great college president, F. A. P. Barnard, of Columbia, in his annual report made a strong and a comprehensive plea for giving the study of education standing-room in the university. I would that there were time to quote his entire discussion of the value of the study of education, for the argument is so clearly, fully, and convincingly made that to-day it stands in need of no revision. Space enough is taken to give here only the last sentence, which reads:

"In no other way which it is possible \* \* \* to imagine, could the power of this institution for good be made more widely, effectively felt, than in this [professional education of teachers]; in no other way than in this could it do so much to vivify and elevate the educational system of this great community, through all its grades, from the highest to the lowest."

It was largely because of President Barnard's insight and executive power that the great State of New York and the country at large have enjoyed the benefits of the pedagogical instruction once offered in Columbia's School of Philosophy and Education, and now given in Teachers College, into which the education portion of that school has been merged and from

<sup>1</sup>Hinsdale in *Educational Review*, Vol. 19, p. 118.

which lovers of sound learning and sane teaching in all parts of the Union are receiving both inspiration and practical guidance.

Following the example of Michigan and Columbia, Cornell, Wisconsin, Kansas, Indiana, Leland Stanford, Harvard, Texas, Missouri, Colorado, Nebraska, Minnesota, California, and the great majority of other reputable American colleges and universities, have established education chairs, or even departments of education, coördinate with the departments of law, medicine, and theology.

From 1860 to 1907 many other things, truly, happened—things which have not been set down above, but which are not devoid of interest. For example, in 1860, Dr. John M. Gregory, then State Superintendent of Public Instruction, first gave to the senior class and some other students in Michigan University, a short course of lectures, his services being considered as a kind of pedagogic *lagniappe*. Many have been the changes wrought in order to develop the embryo professional lectureship of the early days into a teachers' college, such as may be found in Columbia, in which to-day are found a greater number of professors and instructors and more courses of instruction than obtained in all of the departments of an average university a generation ago. It would be sad, and it may be unprofitable, to relate how the pioneer professor of education received such treatment as would lead one to suspect that he was in the habit of sitting on the back steps of the institution he served and of receiving such occasional crumbs of comfort as the more charitably inclined of his colleagues and the student-body were constrained to give him. It would be a painful task, though it might point a moral, to recount the perilous situations which educational courses occupied during the storm-and-stress period—counting at times nothing at all toward an academic degree, at other times receiving only partial credit, under the ban here, hiding out there, and all the time searching for some *modus vivendi* that