

**SKETCHES FROM
THE HISTORY OF
EDUCATION**

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Sketches from the History of Education by W. N. Hailmann

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SKETCHES FROM THE
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— BY —

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Pedagogy," "Object Teaching," and "Kindergarten Culture," Etc.

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INTRODUCTORY.

The primary function of history is to record events. Subsequently, it learns to recognize their persistence; to study them in the relation of cause and effect; to view them in various directions in their continuity, reducing many events to one event: and, at last, it formulates these continuities in general statements or laws. Thus it preserves the life of the past, thereby enriching and strengthening the life of the present; maintains the static achievements of mankind for the sake of dynamic advance; substitutes scientific experience for blind empiricism; assures conscious progress.

What is true of history in general, is equally true of the history of education. It studies the life and achievements of workers in the field of education, the drift and tendency of educational life at different times and among different peoples; analyzes whatever successes or failures it may find; organizes the experience of time and formulates the results of its labors in precepts and maxims for the guidance of whatever educational work we may find to do.

For the practical purposes of his work, the educator need not, however, study indiscriminately, but may confine himself to the consideration of the nations that have contributed to the development of cur-

rent civilization and whose ideals lie in the direction of the current ideals of his time. Thus comparatively little good could come to us from the study of Chinese education. We might find there a few hints concerning certain details or devices which it may be well to follow; but the attainable ideal of China, culminating in mere outward good behavior with barely a tinge of morality, laying stress exclusively on mediate virtues of industry and obedience, lies in a wholly different direction from the True, the Beautiful, the Good and other infinitudes that inspire the life of occidental nations. The study of an education towards such an ideal may be entertaining, but the practical educator will derive from it no direct benefit for the work in hand.

Similar remarks apply to India and Persia. In all of these—China, India and Persia—educational efforts end in perishable universals. China finds her all-absorbing universal in the family; India, in the caste; Persia, in the nation. Not one lifts the eyes to the humanity and divinity of man, the ever-expanding, imperishable universals of occidental life. In none of these shall we, therefore, find much to help us understand our own civilization and to aid us directly in our own educational work.

On the other hand, Egypt pre-

INTRODUCTORY—Continued.

sents points of real interest. This land of mysteries occupies a peculiar place in the development of occidental civilization. It is the birth-place of the sphynx, which "symbolizes the triumph of spirituality over sensuous naturalism." Here were formulated the questions that have shaken the soul of man to its innermost. On the nether, earthward, human side of life these questions were solved by Greece and Rome; on the upper, heavenward, divine side they were solved by Israel, the wonder of the world, which gave us, too, Jesus of Nazareth, the God-Man, through whom and in whom the two solutions were rescued from a fatal one-sidedness and united in the living bonds of a law of love that knows not the limits of kinship and the ravages of time.

It is in the history of these nations that the educator will find his first rich harvest of facts and principles, of tendencies and achievements, which will give him light and help in his arduous work: In Greece, which answered the sphynx by pointing to man to whom it assigned as ideal the "gentleman," *Kalokagathos*, good and beautiful; in Rome, *utile et honestum*, subduing nature and conquering the world, bringing it under one law; in Israel, taught of God, founding a true morality based on duty and preparing the way for love.

Here we see the Aryan man of Europe led from Greek individualism or self-law to Roman universalism or Social law. In Israel, he discovers a nation founded on the will of God, but on the verge of

being lost in a degenerate Roman nationalism to which he himself is about to fall a prey. From this he is delivered by Jesus of Nazareth, the solidarity of the race is felt and seen, and he reaches at last a lofty humanism whose destiny is the realization of divine love, whose earthly ideal is humanity,—man in the image of God.

For direct practical bearing on his immediate work, however, the richest yield will come to the teacher from a study of the life of post-Christian Western nations. More particularly is this true of the period that was inaugurated by the Reformation. In proof of this I offer to the reader two sketches, each illustrating one of those leading facts or principles which only a thoughtful study of history reveals to us in their full import.

In the first of these are collated a number of facts showing that in all effective work, "Theory leads Practice;" in the second, "The Value of Feeling," as a maker of history in the direction of progress is portrayed. From their very nature these sketches take little note of chronological considerations, except in so far as the relation of cause and effect are concerned; nor do they deal with facts that have no bearing on the central principle they indicate. In a subsequent number of the Library of Education, further illustrations of the value of historical studies to the teacher will be offered in a presentation of the life and work of "The Great Educational Methodists,"—Jacotot, Diesterweg and Froebel.