

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM OF NORWAY

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649111930

The school system of Norway by David Allen Anderson

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Cover @ 2017

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DAVID ALLEN ANDERSON

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OF NORWAY**

Hist.
A.

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM OF NORWAY

DAVID ALLEN ANDERSON, Ph. D.



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RICHARD G. BADGER
THE GORHAM PRESS
BOSTON

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THIS account is a descriptive statement of the organization, management, operation, and efficiency of the public school system of Norway. The intent has been to consider only the more vital features, those essentials which definitely shape the products of educational endeavor. Many topics of interest have been touched but briefly while others have been omitted altogether. Some attention has been given to pointing out good qualities of the Norwegian schools and to indicating wherein we might improve our own.

The materials entering into the make-up of this dissertation were gathered during a summer and autumn devoted to travel and study in Norway. Much time was spent in study at the University Library in Christiania and still more in the visitation of schools. It was with pleasure that I availed myself of the opportunity to see the schools in operation. I observed recitations throughout the entire program of study in every grade from the kindergarten to the University. I also visited many special schools and other educational institutions both public and private. Further than this, I was benefited by frequent conferences with the leading educators of the country and by almost constant associations with schoolmen, patrons, and stu-

dents. These personal investigations enabled me to become familiar with the spirit and work of the schools, and they furnish background for a large part of the content of this treatise. Since no adequate account of the schools of Norway is in print, the authority for this work has been gained chiefly from school laws, annual reports from the Department of Ecclesiastical and Educational Affairs (chiefly statistical), and the individual research referred to above.

It was my good fortune to be provided with official credentials as holder of a Traveling Fellowship for study in Norway from the State University of Iowa; a commission to study the school system of Norway from His Excellency, B. F. Carroll, the Governor of the State of Iowa; and a letter of introduction to Norway's educational executives from Hon. Elmer Ellsworth Brown, at that time Commissioner of Education for the United States. These credentials had the effect of intensifying the already superior courtesy and obliging disposition of the Norwegian officials and schoolmen, who gave me free access to every facility for the pursuance of my work within the state and voluntarily offered their co-operation whenever I might desire it. Their gracious exemplification of the spirit of brotherly kindness made my work among them a constant delight. I desire to express my gratitude to the Norwegians wherever I traveled for the rare cordiality characterizing my reception among them and to acknowledge my obligations to J. K. Qvigstad, *chef for Kirk-og Undervisningsdepartmentet*; Knut Johannes Hougen, *byraachef for Undervisningsvaesen*; A. H. Rae-

der, *Undervisningsraadets* formand; Johan Andreas Johnsen, *Skoledirektoren i Kristiania stift*; Otto Andreas Anderssen, *Bestyrer og forstelaerer i det Paedagogiske Seminar for Laerere ved hoiere Almenskoler*, for valuable suggestions and careful reading and criticism of the entire work in manuscript; further to Iowa's Board of Education and the Graduate Faculty of the State University of Iowa for the appointment which made possible the investigation; to Professor F. E. Bolton, who first suggested that I make the study and who has constantly been to me a wise counsellor and a willing co-operator; and finally to my wife who, through all, has been both critic and companion.

DAVID ALLEN ANDERSON.

*The State University of Iowa,
Iowa City,
May, 1912.*



REVIEWER'S PREFACE.

Kristiania den 16 februar 1912.

Jeg har med stor fornøielse gjennemlaest Mr. David A. Andersons fremstilling av Norges Undervisningsvaesen og fundet den i all vaesentlige ting korrekt, fuldstaendig og oplysende. Gjennem personlig iagttagelse, samtale med kompetente maend og studium av den vigtigste litteratur er det lykkes forfatteren at danne sig en klar og noiaglig forestilling om de norske skolars ordning og saerregne arbeidsformer i deres historiske tilblivelse og nuvaerende vilkaar. Hans refleksjoner og domme vedner om pædagogiske indsigt og uavhaengig opfatning. Det er mulig at han nu og da er noget tilboichig til at domme vel gunstig om vore skoleinstitutioners effektivitet og vort folks interesse og offervillighed for at gjøre denne saa stor som mulig, men dette for haenge sammæn med at han ser tingene mot en bakgrund av amerikanske forhold, som han onsker reformeret.

Jeg har ikke havt anledning til at kontrollere i det enkelte de statistiske opgaver forfatteren meddeler, men da disse er hentet ut fra officielle kilder tviler jeg ikke paa at de er rigtige.

PROFESSOR DR OTTO ANDERSEN,
*Principal of the Pedagogical Seminary annexed to the
University of Christiania.*

REVIEWER'S PREFACE

(Translation)

Christiania, February 16, 1912.

I have, with great pleasure, read through Mr. David A. Anderson's presentation of Norway's school system and found it in all essentials correct, complete and illuminating. Through personal observation, conversation with competent men and study of the most important literature, the author has succeeded in getting a clear and exact view of the Norwegian school methods and characteristic forms of work in their historical development and present condition. His reflections and judgments testify to pedagogical insight and independence of views. It may be that now and then he is somewhat inclined to judge too favorably as to the efficiency of our institutions and the interest of our people and their readiness to sacrifice in order to make this efficiency as high as possible, but this may be due to the fact that he views it against a background of American conditions, which he desires to improve.

I have not taken occasion to verify in detail the statistical tables the author includes, but since they have been gathered from official sources I do not doubt that they are correct.

PROFESSOR DR. OTTO ANDERSSON,
*Principal of the Pedagogical Seminary, affiliated with
the University of Christiania.*