

EDUCATIONAL
MOVEMENTS
AND METHODS



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AND METHODS**

Educational Movements and Methods

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

JOHN ADAMS

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INTRODUCTION

HERE is something remarkable in the popularity of such composite books as this. The old-fashioned school-management manuals filled an obvious niche. They could take all school knowledge as their province, so far as the elementary schools were concerned, without fear of being challenged for attempting too much. But things have changed since books have begun to be written at the address of the secondary-school teacher. It is generally admitted that no one person can by any possibility deal satisfactorily with all the subjects in the higher school curriculum. Nobody with any sufficient equipment in modesty could glance over the Contents of the present volume and claim to be at home with all the matters he finds there noted. Yet, when the articles were published serially, they attracted a great deal of interest among all sorts of teachers, and now that they appear in book form they take their place in a regular library of similar books which, each in its turn, commanded the interest of the whole profession. That such books are read is beyond question; for there are more than half a dozen of them on the market, some of them of considerable

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age, and all of them showing symptoms of a healthy circulation.

One would have thought that each secondary teacher would have sought out some authoritative works on the subject in which he specializes, and have contented himself with these. In point of fact he does this. No self-respecting specialist can look his subject in the face unless he has mastered its academic details as well as its professional aspects. He must not only know his subject as a subject; he must also be familiar with the best methods of teaching it. To keep abreast of his subject he cannot rest content with even the latest text-books. Huxley used to say that the usefulness of a text-book in physiology did not last beyond a period of three years. Specialists in other branches lay down similar limitations, so that the conscientious teacher must stretch beyond the text-book to the *fliegende Blätter* in which the latest discoveries and inventions in his specialty are recorded. Practically every subject in the school curriculum has now a society made up of those who teach it, and a great many of these societies have a magazine or some printed record of their proceedings.

Yet between the recondite details of learned professional societies and the broad generalization of the standard text-books, kept up to date though they be, there appears to be room for books, such as this, that take a wide sweep of the whole field from

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time to time, and focus the attention of the reader on the significant changes that are taking place. It may be objected that such a wide range as is sometimes presented must tend to repel experts who cannot possibly get up an interest in things entirely foreign to their field. Some of the matters dealt with in the following pages, for example, are so specialized as to appear to have a very limited appeal; as, for instance, commercial and domestic subjects, and perhaps eurhythmics. Yet even these branches are not without interest to the teacher who takes a broad view of his work. We must not lose sight of the text, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." The teacher who is not a day-labourer has to take account of the whole curriculum and the inter-relation of the various subjects.

The mere specialist is sorely tempted to over-estimate the importance of the subject that he has made his own, and, in the case of some of the more powerful subjects, to become a little tyrannical in his relations to his fellows who happen to have given themselves to less influential branches. The nobler sort of specialist, on the other hand, is willing to co-operate with his colleagues, and to recognize in the school the equivalent of a rotation of crops on the farm. Men and women of this type find a great many points of interest in matters dealt with in other classes. Accordingly, the special subjects

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that appear in the text of this book find readers among experts in other subjects. Certain of the matters that appear on the Contents list, however, do not depend on this generous overflow of interest. They have an attraction of their own for teachers as such, apart from connexion with any particular branch of the curriculum. No member of our craft can afford to be ignorant of such matters as co-education, the Dalton Plan, intelligence tests, the heuristic method, and school-government. But even the remaining rather technical chapters must have a certain general appeal, otherwise books of this kind could not turn out the success that they do. Indeed, this success is one of the most comforting symptoms of a broadening professional interest at the present time.

A book like this certainly makes a heavy demand upon its readers, since it throws upon them the responsibility of extracting the full meaning from the matter supplied, and the fact that so many people are willing to undertake this task is an indication that a certain view of the nature of education may be more near the region of practical politics than even the optimists among us are inclined to believe. What is called 'integral education' is not generally regarded as fit for general discussion, if we have in view any notion of immediate application. At any rate, it has not been thought desirable to include it in the list of subjects overtly treated in

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any of the composite texts to which reference has been made. But the idea of integral education runs through this book, and comes nearer the surface than it usually does. It has, indeed, always been hovering round the skirts of orthodox educational theory, but has hitherto been regarded as too vague to take its place in the regular ranks. It is no doubt immanent in the Platonic doctrine of education, but is too elusive there to be analysed out into clear consciousness. The Pansophy of Bacon and Comenius was big with the idea of Integralism, but it had to be worked out in much more full detail on the side of knowledge before the educational aspects could be considered. With Positivism and the Comtists it took a more definite shape, and just before the Great War it was showing signs of coming of age in the theory, and to some small extent in the practice, of the French educationists. On the side of mere knowledge, Integralism now comes within the range of the possible in education, for, after all, it resolves itself into such an organization of the curriculum that the pupil may not perhaps take all knowledge to his province, but may at least so organize his knowledge as to make it represent in a balanced way all the different realms of human attainment.

On the side of the process of education as such, however, there arises a much more difficult problem. We can save knowledge from becoming a mere thing

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of shreds and patches ; but how are we to prevent the school staff from remaining, as it is, a mere group of individuals each reacting in his own way upon separate pupils ? The ideal of the Integralists is to get the whole school staff that has anything to do with a given pupil to act upon that individual as a collective unit—*i.e.*, as an organized group that will act as a whole. The conception is a fatiguing one, and tries the patience of the practical teacher to its utmost limits. But underlying it there are certainly great possibilities. With some diffidence we may say that Integralism is on the way, since it is justifying itself at least on the side of knowledge. In reading the following pages, teachers may find it worth while to keep before their minds the possibility of such an organization of school-teaching power as shall remove for ever the possibility of the reproach implied in the remark of Lavissee that our present teaching in secondary schools provides the shameful case of the fragment of an educator addressing itself to the fragment of a pupil—and, he might have added, “about a fragment of a subject.”

From this reading into the articles a meaning that does not appear on the surface, those who use the volume will be made to realize with some vividness that they are not dealing with a symposium. Some of them may wish they were : but as it stands the book has the merit of its qualities. It has the

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clear-cutness of individual opinions. A symposium has usually the advantage of a leading spirit that controls the discussion and leads it past dangerous places. In a genuine symposium, where personalities come face to face with one another, there is real give and take, the result being a more or less finished product. No doubt the recorded summing up of a meeting-symposium owes its unity to the influence of one or more of the dominant spirits, sometimes officially appointed as scribes, and sometimes merely asserting their leadership by the sheer force of personality. A symposium consisting of the opinions of a group of people sent in to an editor is quite a different affair. He can turn the contributions into a whole by the simple process of selecting his material from what is supplied, and presenting it in such a way as to support whichever position he himself may adopt. Further, in a symposium the persons concerned should be regarded as equal from the standpoint of the matter discussed. Now it is obvious that in such a book as this the contributors cannot be held to be equal in respect of the subjects they treat. With regard to general educational problems, there is no doubt something like equality among them. But since each of them deals with an aspect to which he has given special attention, and for the treatment of which he has shown special capacity, their opinions must be valued in direct relation to the special subject for

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which they have made themselves responsible. It has accordingly been thought desirable that there should be no editing in the sense of exercising a general control over the mode of presentation of the different contributors.

A certain penalty has perhaps to be paid for this freedom. One of the most insidious dangers accompanying the production of a book of this kind may be said to be the inherent tendency of education to fall into contradictions. On many occasions I have set as a first exercise to students taking an advanced course in education the simple task of gathering from anywhere in the field of educational literature ten broad generalizations, no author to be represented more than once on the list. The second exercise was to find for each of these generalizations a contradiction from the works of some other writer on the subject. No great difficulty seemed to be experienced by the students in getting the necessary contradictions. So far as I know, the contributors to this volume have had no chance of comparing notes regarding the views they express, and yet there is a lack of anything like a violent clash of opinions. No doubt something might be made out of the opposing attitudes of Dalcroze and Montessori in respect of *teaching* certain matters, but the two views are presented with moderation, and very little skill would be required by a well-disposed editor to reconcile the

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two in a higher unity. The inherent clash between the Direct Method and the teaching of Phonetics is not shirked, and in the text a working arrangement between the two is reached.

Naturally the text is concerned mainly with the newer aspects of educational theory and practice: what may be called the growing point of the subject. Now there are two opposing tendencies in the treatment of such developments in any department of life. On the one hand we have the enthusiast of the Athenian type, who is always willing to accept any new thing at its face value. On the other, there is the grim critic with a lust for historical research who spends himself in demonstrating that whatever is suggested as new can be readily traced back to a more or less remote source. The second tendency gets more popular encouragement than the first, and in the following pages many movements are traced back to their sources, as illustrated notably by the contributions of Sir Benjamin Gott, Professor Findlay, and Dr William Boyd. But these forces rooted in the past are none the less vital in the present day, and none the less worthy of careful critical treatment. The fact that the venerable critic in Mr Fawdry's article on mathematics could trace a certain method back to the dim and distant past in no way militates against the need for the lecture at which the criticism was made. The very surprise caused by this claim for the antiquity

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of the method proves the need to take nothing for granted in our efforts to keep ourselves up to date.

It may well be that there is a certain periodicity in educational methodology, and that from time to time we may revive obsolete ways of doing some kinds of school work. But a full and fair inquiry into educational progress does seem to justify the contention that to-day there are in operation principles that were formerly recognized, no doubt, but never so clearly as they are now, and never so generally applied. No doubt we can read into the great writers of the past a good many of the newer theories of to-day, but in most cases these old writers only imperfectly understood the principle in question, and even when they had a full grasp of it they were unable to impress it upon the consciousness of their period. The ethics of re-discovery has not yet been sufficiently worked up. It is now beginning to be realized that an investigator may discover for himself something that is for him, *and for his time*, entirely fresh, even though some ingenious person comes along and proves learnedly and conclusively that the discovery had been already made. The rediscoverer is entitled to the full glory of his accomplishment, and if he can make a practical application of it where his predecessor failed he has justified a claim to be regarded as on at least as high a plane as his

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anticipator. An admirable illustration of the point is to be found in Dr Boyd's placing of Dr Montessori.

The question naturally arises at this point whether it is reasonable to speak of a *New Education*. It has become fashionable of late to talk of all manner of important but old-fashioned matters, as if they had been in some way rejuvenated. We have the New Theology, the New Psychology, the New Politics, the New Poetry, and of course we have always with us the New Art, not to speak of the New Dullness. The picturesque presentation of an old subject from a new angle is all to the good so long as we do not demand something entirely new—that is, revolutionary. It is far too simple a prescription to suggest that all we have to do with the educational coach is to turn it about and make it travel in the direction opposite to that it was following before. The problem of education is to-day infinitely more complicated than in the days of Father Pestalozzi. No doubt the fundamental principles are the same to-day as they were in the time of Plato, but the application of these principles must be mightily different from that of his period. The fundamentals remaining the same, there remains the eternal and ever-changing problem of adapting methods to meet the needs of new and complicated situations. The matter of emphasis counts for a great deal. No doubt the student of Plato would have no difficulty in finding in the

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dialogues a complete vindication of the principle that the interest of the educator should centre rather in the pupil than in the subject to be taught. Yet the modern reversion to that doctrine is none the less fresh, striking, and important. In the nature of things there was inevitably at all times a certain amount of attention paid to the pupil as such, but there is no doubt that from the time that the school subjects were worked up into a regular curriculum there has been a strong tendency to pay more attention to the subject than to the pupil, at any rate in the matter of what is technically called teaching. As I have indicated elsewhere, I was first directed to a consideration of this matter by a rule of syntax that occurs in the *Edinburgh Academy Latin Rudiments*. It runs: "Verbs of teaching govern two accusatives, one of the person, the other of the thing; as, *Magister Latinam Johannem docuit*, The master taught John Latin." The old-fashioned schoolmaster certainly yielded to the temptation of overvaluing Latin at the expense of John. Gallantly they drove their two accusatives tandem, Latin well in the front, while John lagged behind within easy reach of the whip. Things cannot be put right by the simple process of reversing the order and promoting John to the place of honour in the forefront. The tandem method must be abandoned altogether, and the team driven abreast. The process of teaching is

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organic, and its objects cannot be taken apart and dealt with separately, though for purposes of study they may be considered in isolation, just as the medical student may study, apart from one another, food-stuffs and the stomach, though in actual physiological process they are inseparable.

Dr G. Stanley Hall has invented a formidable adjective to indicate the change in point of view set forth in the preceding paragraph. It is a hybrid word, and may be described without rancour as pedantic: but it has the signal merit of meeting exactly the needs of the situation. Nearly every point in which the new education differs from the old may be fitly described as *paidocentric*. The new educator centres his interest in the pupil. To be sure he does not neglect the subject to be taught. None but the wildest crank will propose to teach a subject that he does not know. Without doubt Jacotot threw himself into this breach, and gallantly proclaimed that he could teach what he himself did not know. But practical people cannot take him seriously. Whatever other differences there are among teachers, they are agreed on this one point. Indeed, there is a sort of shorthand formula into which practical schoolmasters are inclined to throw their opinions when speaking of the essentials of successful teaching. It may be called the one-thing-neededful formula. The first part, common to all, runs: "All that the master requires is a

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knowledge of his subject, and——” At this point there is left room for the one thing needful to complete the qualification of the successful school-master: each reader is expected to finish according to his fancy. Following are four different ways in which the formula has been completed by typical men: (*a*) a sense of humour, (*b*) a knowledge of boys, (*c*) a firm upper lip, (*d*) a facility in getting rapidly bored. All this is bright and encouraging; if not very convincing it is certainly good enough in the way of epigram. The solid lesson to be learnt from it is the universality of the professional demand for a knowledge of the subject, and the vagueness of schoolmasters about the rest. Few indeed of the epigrammatists will take the trouble to read these pages. They belong to the group that has been described by a rival epigrammatist as “Teachers by the Grace of God.”

It is the second part of the formula that specially interests us here. The whole book, in fact, is a reservoir of the sort of knowledge and skill that are required to supply the one thing needful after a knowledge of the subject is secured. Not having the divine sanction granted to the epigrammatists, the plain straightforward teacher is willing to examine his domain in all its parts, and to give himself the trouble to make himself familiar with all its details. The professional spirit urges him on to acquire such a mastery of his realm that his authority

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will be recognized by sheer force of conquest. Day by day the men and women who are responsible for the education of the country are getting more firmly consolidated into a genuine profession. The time is past when the man in the street could join in at an educational conference on equal terms with trained and experienced teachers. Our craft is no longer to be entered lightly or criticized with flippancy. We are beginning to have *arcana* just as our fellows have in the other professions. Our work is being more and more elaborately organized, and has to be taken more and more seriously. All this is entirely to the good, but it brings with it new responsibilities for those within the profession. Not only must the general public give more attention to the study of education if they wish to dabble in its politics, but the professional teacher himself must expend some effort if he is going to maintain his place in a rapidly developing craft. We rejoice that even a Minister of Education is now expected to know something about the subject he administers. But the development of the national conscience involves demands upon teachers as well as upon Cabinet Ministers, to say nothing of the men in the street who love to proclaim themselves 'plain men.'

Without doubt it is this growing sense of solidarity in the profession, this quickening of the craft conscience among teachers, that is sending so many

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readers to books like this. The following pages make a double appeal, as suggested by the title with its two elements: *Movements and Methods*. This is the natural order in which they should be presented. A movement naturally produces methods to secure its ends. In a way, the methods are more particularly the teacher's business, but he is inextricably mixed up in the movements as well. Parents and administrators will always have a greater interest in movements than in methods, but parents can no more neglect methods than teachers can neglect movements. Education is after all one and indivisible, and cannot be dealt with in watertight compartments. The Dalton Plan, for example, has a vital connexion with the home organization of the pupils' studies. It is no mere matter of classroom reconstruction and internal school discipline. It enters into the very heart of the child's social, as well as his educational, life. So with the administrators. The Montessori and the Dalton Plans alike involve certain economic considerations that have a vital bearing on the cost of educating the individual school-child. Some optimistic administrators, for instance, have caught at the idea that if the new plans involve a smaller number of hours of class-teaching there ought to be an excellent opportunity of securing a substantial reduction in the cost. It is to the advantage of such optimists to get into touch with the new methods and thus find out what

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they really mean, and to act wisely in the light of what they learn. The matter needs no further elaboration. The pages lie open to teachers, parents, and administrators alike. Let them all set to, and each will find himself the better for what he reads.

JOHN ADAMS

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