

THE HISTORY OF EDUCATION.

MUCH of the attractiveness which unquestionably attaches to the study of the history of education is, no doubt, due to the fact that it is, in England at all events, a comparatively new subject. In pursuing such a course we are journeying almost along untrodden ways. It would be too much, perhaps, to say that the soil is actually virgin, so far as our own country is concerned, for the works of several distinguished Englishmen prove the contrary. But this history of education is a subject which needs revival almost as much as education itself did at the period of the Revival of Learning in Europe, when the study of the special branch required must begin. The Germans and the French (especially the former) have outstripped us in this matter. The *Pädagogik* of the one and the *Pédagogie* of the other have been formulated and methodised when we are only just beginning to think of setting our materials in order. That is mainly what we have to do. There are ample materials to hand; what is required is to get them into shape. And the very first thing to be done, seeing that the ways are thus untrodden ways, is to draw up an itinerarium, just as we should do if we were about to venture forth into a new country. By this is meant something more than a mere syllabus, which is, of course, a rudimental necessity. A synopsis, as much in detail as possible, of the whole ground to be covered will certainly tend to clearness of conception and symmetry in arrangement. It will be the scaffolding for the future building, the outline to be by-and-by

filled in with lights and shadows, and tinted with the proper colours.

Such a synoptical view is presented in the admirable article on "Education," by Mr. Oscar Browning, in the ninth edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica;" and at much greater length—but still as a sketch in outline—in that admirable little French work, the "Histoire de la Pédagogie," by M. Jules Paroz. To a combination of these sketches, with side-references to the works mentioned therein, the present synopsis will be largely indebted for the facts it seeks to group together. We may pass over the ecclesiastical schools of the Jews and the Egyptians, not so much because they lie outside the geographical limits of our subject, or beyond its chronological boundaries, each of which considerations may be liberally dealt with in a comprehensive survey of the entire subject, but because the Jews* had little effect on the progress of science, and also because ample justice can be done to Egypt when one comes to consider the transplantation of Greek learning to Alexandria. The Greeks first developed a science of education distinct from theological training; and it is, of course, this secular phase of the subject with which the student of pedagogics is principally concerned. They divided their subjects of study into music and gymnastics, attaching special meanings to each of these terms. Plato is the author of the first systematic treatise on education. The sub-

* In Paroz's "Histoire de la Pédagogie" are given the chief texts from Proverbs and Ecclesiastes bearing on Hebrew education.