

THE HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN THE KINDERGARTEN TRAINING SCHOOL.

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The training of kindergarten directors, like the training of all other teachers, is becoming more and more extensive and complex. Froebel's own training school, founded in 1847, offered a course which could be completed in twenty-six weeks. The best training schools of to-day require two, or even three, years of study. The academic conditions for admission in Froebel's day were very modest: "The knowledge and dexterity which a good public school and girls' school give are also needed . . . by those who wish to cultivate themselves for child-directors and kindergartners." The candidates who would be admitted to the best schools to-day must have had a high school training or its equivalent, and the college-bred woman begins to appear among them. Moreover, in twenty-six weeks only the most essential parts of kindergarten theory and practice could be attempted, while in two or three years it is possible to make not only a fuller study of this system, but also to introduce other subjects of study. In many important directions, therefore, the training school is genuinely developing.

Among the new subjects thus introduced are elementary psychology, child-study in its modern form, and the history of education. The first two have received fair consideration at the hands of several recent writers on the kindergarten, and, I doubt not, at the hands of many training teachers. There has been a serious attempt to assimilate to Froebel's

system whatever recent psychology and child-study have had to contribute toward its improvement. But there has been less disposition, I think, to utilize, as well, the experiences and ideals of Froebel's predecessors. Among the studies of such training schools the history of education has been given a satisfactory place, but it appears to have been neglected by kindergartners in general.

An evidence of this neglect is the attitude of many followers of Froebel toward other teachers and writers on education before—and shall I say also, after?—the founding of the kindergarten. Their devotion to Froebel is justifiable and admirable in many ways; but it has, perhaps, blinded them to the merits of his predecessors. One sees and hears, it is true, occasional references to other great teachers and writers, but the tone of these references not infrequently leads even a sympathetic critic, like the present writer, to feel that to some kindergartners all educators before Froebel are, like all political economists before Adam Smith, little better than pre-Adamites.

In urging upon training teachers the value to the kindergarten of the study of the history of education, I shall point out first, what she may gain from the subject; and, second, what are some of the ways and means to its profitable study.

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In the first place, then, it should make her familiar with the whole body of literature on the education