

important duty the present generation owes to the next; although it is acknowledged that education underlies all the activities of the race, all the arts both of peace and war, yet the study of this important activity itself is still regarded by the non-professional student with indifference and neglect. What Herbert Spencer wrote more than thirty years ago deserves to be urged with added emphasis to-day:

Strangely enough, the most glaring defect in our programme of education is entirely overlooked. While much is being done in the detailed improvement of our systems in respect both of matter and manner, the most pressing desideratum has not yet been recognized as a desideratum. . . . The subject which involves all other subjects, and is therefore the subject in which the education of every one should culminate, is the theory and practice of education.

Contrary to what would naturally be expected, this apathy regarding the study of education has been most characteristic of those who were most liberally educated. Until recently the attitude of many college-bred teachers in secondary schools, and of many college professors toward courses in education and teaching was, in general, one of indifference; sometimes of aggressive opposition. Naturally the students shared the indifference of the professors. Even for future teachers, for men who should be thoroughly equipped at all points for the exigencies of their future profession, it was at one time doubted that instruction in education and teaching could be of real value. Indeed, such value was positively denied. The experience of the past, it was held, in formulating and testing educational theories and practices, unlike the past experience of the race in all other respects, had no value in helping the parent and teacher of to-day to avoid useless experiments and false theories. In other words: in educa-

tion there is no lesson in the accumulation of past experience, everything must be done over again from the beginning; Plato, Quintilian, Bacon, Comenius, Locke, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Herbart, and a host of others had no message to humanity, as regards education, worth attending to.

The special study of children, questions of school hygiene, school architecture, a careful comparative study of city, state and foreign school systems—all these things could have no value to an ambitious and earnest man who looked forward to teaching as his lifework. Further, it was held that the political history of nations, but not the history of education; philosophy and ethics, psychology, but not the application of them to the development of a complete manhood and womanhood; natural science, but not the natural history of children; the study of existing political institutions, and a formative social science, but not of existing educational institutions, and of a formative educational science. To-day no subject occupies a more important place in the minds of the educated public than the aims and the practices involved in education. The discussion of educational questions is no longer confined to professional books and journals, but forms a part of the matter offered to the general public in the current magazines, and even in the daily papers. Such questions have a universal interest, for educational problems have to be solved in every home as well as in every school and school system. Finally in the colleges and universities the old indifference has given place to active interest, and the establishment of departments or of courses for the study of education and teaching has naturally followed.—*Prof. Paul H. Hanus, in the Educational Review for March.*