

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

While education has at all times been considered an important factor in social life and in the growth of the nation, its extension has varied widely in accordance with national policy; at one period restricted in its field, as is seen in Egyptian and in Grecian history, where the former limited it to the priestly craft, the latter to the nobles of Athens and Sparta; at another period extended—however crudely—to all portions of civilized Europe through the agency of the Roman Church.

Through whatever channels it has flowed, education has been more or less controlled by some strong, and for the time, efficient force. In the palmy days of the Roman Empire under Hadrian and his successors professors were appointed in almost every important town throughout her wide dominions. (Seyffert, p. 207.) When the inroads of the barbarians came, and from these and other causes Rome's empire fell into decay, the Church took up the burden not only of spiritual administration, but of social and educational supervision as well. Long after the struggle between Church and State as rival institutions had resulted in the triumph of the latter, the Church retained her grasp upon education, especially so where the uplift of the masses was concerned. This was due partly to the fact that the Church was the only field for educational ability and partly because she alone cared for the masses, who were regarded by others as mere pawns in the great war game which went on in Europe during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

By the middle of the eighteenth century there came a change: forces long maturing united for action; the individual as a social unit became of worth to the nation; the growth of liberty in America, the writings of the philoso-