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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PSYCHOLOGY OF EDUCATION.

The book naturally divides into four parts. The first three chapters are preliminary and designed to establish the method and presuppositions of the author. The second portion—chapters 4, 5, 6, 7—deals with what the author calls “tendencies” as distinguished from “capacities.” “In the past the emphasis has nearly always been laid on the capacities rather than the tendencies, so that in popular speech ‘natural endowment’ means simply natural capacities, and more especially those of an intellectual order. From the point of view of education this emphasis is undoubtedly wrongly placed.” (p. 41.) “The fact must be emphasized once more that an individual’s tendencies are educationally and socially more important than his capacities.” (p. 44.) The third portion deals with the “capacities.” The fourth portion deals with the social group, and consists of a single chapter.

Unlike many of its contemporaries this book employs a well considered theory of psychology and education and the relation of the two. The author takes the trouble to reveal the philosophical implications of the methods and results of an educational psychology. This is a very important virtue in a text book for students many of whom have never considered the first elements of the logical structure of knowledge. If we are to judge by results it would even appear that many authors of text books are almost equally innocent of general principles of interpretation. No multiplication of the abstract results of a science can compensate for the lack of understanding the importance of those results. In the first three chapters of the book the author takes particular pains to show the significance of the subject. The reader is not bound to agree with the author but he is likely to understand him. In the four chapters immediately following an attempt is made to examine some of the basic concepts used in the organization and interpretation of human experience—the original nature of the person, growth, general tendencies or interests, and the driving force of an integrated personality. In all of this discussion the reader is held to a close and intricate argument in which the synthetic motive is stronger than the analytic. This is not an easy experience for the reader, but it is decidedly refreshing to one accustomed to the baldly analytic method of the majority of writers on this subject. As one reads forward he is more and more impressed by the depth and scope of the subject matter and the philosophical penetration of the author. An American college student could hardly follow the argument without extensive side excursions into the literature of both normal and abnormal psychology. The book ought to furnish an excellent guide for advanced study. The indebtedness of the author is in the main to Continental and British psychologists rather than to the American brand. His treatment of memory, attention, association, instinct, emotion, and the self reflects the motive of interpretation which we associate with Herbart, the British associationists, Freud and McDougall rather than with the biologico-mechanistic work of Thorndyke, Watson and Terman. Readers who know their James, however, will feel at home with the present book.

The remaining chapters, save one, review the experimental data of “tests,” “transfer” and the higher processes. The same attitude of intelligent selection and criticism continues in this part of the book. The chapter on tests is unusually discriminating showing independence without pugnacity. The last chapter is perhaps the most interesting one in the book but at the same time seems very inadequate as a treatment of the social group. The reader feels that the ripe fruit of the earlier discussion could be found here if more time were given to search. None of the concepts of psychology are quite concrete until they are set in the specific and living form of society. The student must turn to other works for a fuller treatment of the social group. This is doubtless as it should be as all books must have an end. However much one may regret the fact at times it is not to be expected that a writer should be equally explicit in all phases of his subject. The book deserves and will repay a careful study.

H. G. TOWNSEND.

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This book is a report of an ambitious attempt to compare the achievement of Boston school children in 1845 with that of American school children in 1919. The famous Horace Mann in-
The investigation of 1845 is taken as the basis of the comparison. After revising the tests given in Boston in accordance with the educational outlook of the authors they applied them to some 40,000 eighth grade public school children in 1919. The book presents ideal documentary evidence of the insurmountable difficulties in reducing education to a science. The conditions of this comparison are utterly unscientific because the factors which enter into the result are beyond control and even beyond definition. The conclusions drawn from an inexact experiment are further compromised by the introduction of subjective interpretation. For instance, the authors find equal satisfaction in the evidence that modern children excelled in history and did not excel in arithmetic on the ground that the history test was important and the other was not. The total result is to give the authors confidence that the modern school is much more effective than formerly although they take no account of the multiplication of educational agents in modern times and their possible contribution to the evidence. One chapter is devoted to a comparison of the physical and methodological school equipment of the two periods. This may be taken at its face value. Considering the enormous differences in such matters the wonder grows that the difference in achievement of the two periods is so slight as to be negligible. We may be convinced that more children are in school; that schools are better equipped; better supported; even that they are better schools with or without whatever evidence the authors of this book have found that children of today know more than they did in Boston in the year 1845. The whole supposition that a school can be measured in terms of instruction is open to challenge. The book makes a real contribution to the tools of the teacher and student, however, in publishing in the appendix several important documents having to do with the history of the American school. About half of the book is made up of this valuable material reprinted from sources beyond the reach of many college and training-school students. This material includes extracts from the Boston School Reports, the Common School Journal, and the Tests of 1845.

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