

The Educational Systems of The
United States and Germany—
A Comparison.

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I. Means of furnishing education aside from schools.

II Schools.

1. Administration.
2. Attendance.
3. Classification.
4. Means of support.
5. Teachers.

I. Means of furnishing education aside from schools — United States.

The national government has a large share in the control and direction of educational thought and institutions. It has under its care, officially, the education of the Indians and Alaskans, and provides generously for naval and military education in two institutions expressly for the purpose, as well as in departments of colleges and universities for this kind of training.

The government also provides millions for the impoverished South.

The means, aside from schools, by which the government furnishes opportunity for the education of its people may be discussed under three heads:

1. The Bureau of Education.
2. The Smithsonian Institute.
3. Special Scientific Work.

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The Bureau of Education.

In 1790 in Washington's message to the two houses of Congress he said, "Knowledge is in every country the surest basis of public happiness. In one in which the measures of government receive their impressions so immediately as in ours from the sense of the community it is proportionally essential. Whether this will be best promoted by affording aid to seminaries of learning already established, by the institution of a national university, or by any other expedients, will be well worthy of a place in the

deliberation of the Legislature."

At the sixth meeting of the National Educational Association, a paper was read and discussed on the subject of a "National Bureau of Education." This was in 1864 and in 1867 the Bureau was established by Congress. It is the work of the Bureau "to collect statistics and facts showing the condition and progress of education in the several states and territories and diffuse such information respecting the organization and management of schools and school systems and methods of teaching as shall aid the people of the United States in the establishment and maintenance of efficient school systems and otherwise promote the cause of education throughout the country."

The office issues an annual report and publishes circulars of information, also carries on an extensive correspondence in both hemispheres. Its works are valuable for reference and extend over the quarter of the century since the war. The circulars issued include a variety of educational subjects and there are special reports on such subjects as "Medical Education," "Public Libraries," "Education and Labor," "Theory of American Education," and "City School Systems of the United States." The statistics of these reports are carefully collected but are of necessity made by so many different persons that their judgment is apt to be varied. However, they are, in general, correct and are of

great value.

In connection with the official duties of the Bureau there has been collected a pedagogical library, in size and richness unsurpassed in this country. It includes state and city reports, American and foreign educational journals, catalogues and special publications of colleges and other educational bodies, scientific periodicals and papers, besides a large collection of American text books and foreign school documents.

The Smithsonian Institute.

An investigation of the work of the Smithsonian Institute shows it to be of much interest and of most profitable results. The Institute was established by the provisional bequest of an Englishman - James Smithson. The amount named was five hundred and eight thousand but small

sums were added until it amounted to five hundred and fifty thousand dollars. The matter of the disposition of this money was before Congress nine years, for the condition upon which the money had been given was "for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men."

In 1847 the formal act establishing the Institute was passed. The corporation was made to consist of the President, Vice-President, members of the Cabinet, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the Commissioner of Patents, the Mayor of Washington and such other persons as there may elect to honorary membership.

The immediate supervision rests with a Board of Regents composed of the Vice-President and Chief Justice, the Mayor of Washington, three senators,

three representatives and six other persons, two of whom shall be residents of Washington, D. C., and four from the States, no two being residents of any one.

The plan of internal organization was submitted by Professor Joseph Henry, the first secretary. For the increase of knowledge (1) rewards for scientific memoirs should be given and (2) there should be an annual appropriation which should be used to compensate physical research. For the diffusion of knowledge there should be published reports on the progress of knowledge and treatises of general interest. Besides this there was included a museum, a chemical laboratory, a library, a gallery of art and lecture rooms. No institution in this country has

more perfectly accomplished its object and contributed more generously to the "increase and diffusion of knowledge" than the Smithsonian Institute. It has given added stimulus to scientific research and investigation and its usefulness will increase with the years.

Special Scientific Work.

This work consists of several different kinds. (a) The Coast Survey was designed to furnish accurate maps and to determine and mark the course and conditions of shore currents, tides and prevailing winds, thus to add to the safety of the vessels. (b). Geographical Surveys first furnished accurate information in regard to the unoccupied territory of the Great West. (c) Geological Surveys made possible a systematic

matic study of both the Appalachian and the Rocky Mountains. (d) The Signal Service means an organized system of transmitting reports and messages between officers and the army or between posts of an army. The Service now includes a system of communicating intelligence of storms or other approaching weather changes by flags or other devices.

(e) Naval expeditions made by a naval agent add to the scientific knowledge of the navy. (f) The National Observatory at Washington concerns itself with the improvement of navigation, and with the aid of the Coast Survey it determines the latitude and longitude of cities. (g) The Bureau of Agriculture aids in distributing useful information among the people of the United States on the subjects connected with agriculture.

Germany.— In point of intellectual culture Germany ranks high. There are no exact statistics of the educational establishments or of the expenditure incurred in connection with them. Mental culture and a general diffusion of knowledge are extensively promoted by means of numerous public libraries established in the capitals. The most celebrated of these libraries are those of Berlin and Munich.

There are numerous societies and unions some being of an exclusively scientific character and others being designed for the popular diffusion of useful knowledge. Ample provision is made for scientific collections of all kinds, either at the public expense or

Through private individuals.

There are twenty-two observatories which aid in scientific research.

Every German capable of bearing arms has to serve in the standing army for a term of seven years.

As a rule this extends from the end of the twentieth till the twenty-eighth year of his age. Three of these seven years he must spend in active service and the remainder in the reserve. Upon graduation from certain schools the term is shortened and as these schools are of an advanced order in point of the studies pursued, it encourages graduation from them and promotes higher learning.

The Schools.

1. Administration of schools - United States.

Each state has its own independent system of schools. At the head of each state system there is the Superintendent of Public Instruction. His term of office and method of election vary in the different states. His duties also vary but in general are the distribution of school moneys, inspection of schools, examination of teachers and general oversight of the educational interests of the state.

In each county there is a superintendent and here again his term of office, method of election and duties vary in the different states. The next division is that of the township or of the district according to the state. This consists of a board which appoints

teachers, purchase supplies and has general supervision of the schools under their control. In the township system the board usually has charge of several schools, while in the district system there is usually but one school under the charge of the board.

Germany.

The educational development in Prussia is typical of that in Germany. There is a minister of education whose jurisdiction extends over the whole kingdom. He is the general educational school officer and distributes all school moneys. There are thirteen royal provinces each of which has a school board. The presiding officer is ex officio the royal president of the province. The thirteen provinces are subdivided into so-called governments, of which Prussia contains

thirty six. The governments have an administrative school board similar to that of the province and whose duties correspond with it, except that they are more closely related to the elementary schools and have a voice in the appointment of teachers, and in the choice of text books. The work of the provincial school board deals more with the higher schools.

The governments are sub-divided into districts, the chief officer of which is the school inspector. He is a man of pedagogical training and experience. He is appointed for life and devotes his whole time to the inspection of the schools. Finally, there is a local board for each school. In the administration of the schools men of the highest character are chosen

without reference to their political leanings.

2. School attendance.—United States.

The school age, is according to the United States Commissioners Report, from five to eighteen. On this basis the report shows that about sixty nine percent of the children of school age are enrolled in the schools and the average attendance is about sixty eight percent of the enrollment. This is a very low percentage as compared with Germany, France and England. Compulsory education laws have been passed in many states to overcome the irregularity of attendance. But these laws are of little importance, partly because of their own weakness and partly

because of the indifference of the people.

Germany.

For every day that the school is in session, every child in normal health is required to attend - the age limit over which this extends is six to fourteen. Parents are held responsible and may be imprisoned or fined for the non-fulfillment of the requirement of the law. This law is carried out with great exactness statistics showing that there are two unexcused absences in every ten thousand children of school age. In cases where the parents are unable to secure the attendance of their children, the latter are placed in reform schools. The parents fully expect their children to be regular in attendance. The children are thus brought up and impressed with this idea

that they must attend school regularly. This fact is very beneficial in securing the regularity of attendance.

3. Classification. United States.

The schools of the United States may be classified as follows:

(a) The elementary school, which if entered at six should be completed at the age of fourteen. (b) The secondary school consists of a four year course and fits one for college work. (c) The college with a four year course and (d) The university. The colleges and universities differ in the scope of their work and in the courses of instruction. In all states the elementary and high schools are free.

Germany.

The common schools (Volksschule)

of Germany reaches every child. This is a strong point in the German system. In the cities the boys and girls are taught separately but in the villages this is not the case. The school hours are different from those in the United States. In the morning the hours are from eight to eleven for six days in the week. In the afternoon from two to four for four days in the week with Wednesday and Saturday afternoon holiday. Every year the schools are in session forty two weeks. The teachers are required to give twenty eight hours of service a week. All the schools are not free but the tendency is to make them so. Even now in some localities they are free.

One thing in connection with this phase of the subject that is a

great weakness of the German system is this. While the common school reaches every child it does not provide for anything more advanced than itself. No higher or secondary school is provided for among the common people and this perpetuates the class system and effectually prevents the child from rising above his station. However there is one opportunity for the child of the lower classes to gain a higher education and this is through the normal school. This privilege is limited to a small number who show special ability.

In general it may be said there are two classes of secondary schools. These may be divided in the following way - the Gymnasium and The Realschule. The former prepares for any of the

four faculties of the university - theology, medicine, law and philosophy. It is very conservative and lays particular stress on the classics. The Realschule prepares only for philosophy and is more progressive than the Gymnasium. It pays greater attention to the sciences and the modern languages. Anyone who expects to pursue either of these courses must begin at nine or ten years of age.

4. Means of support. United States. The annual cost of the schools of this country is about two hundred million dollars. About two thirds of this is raised by local tax and about one fifth by state tax and the rest is derived from permanent funds. The government has created and repeatedly enlarged the

school funds, first and directly by appropriations of land to the common schools, academies and universities, and second and indirectly through the surplus revenue deposit and the three percent sale of public lands.

Germany.

There is a general state fund from which is paid about one half of the expense of the schools. There is a system of local taxation which adds to the payment of the expense. The remainder is drawn from tuition, church funds etc.

5. Teachers. United States.

There are over four hundred thousand teachers in the United States, of whom two thirds are women. Only ten percent of these have had a professional training. There are about eighty thousand new teachers

needed every year and the normal schools and other institutions for training teachers cannot possibly supply this number. There are in the United States about ninety state normal schools and about fifty private schools. The average salary per month was in 1896 for men \$47.37 and for women \$40.24.

Germany.

All the teachers of the Prussian common schools are normal graduates with the following exceptions, which occurred under these conditions. In 1893 there were only two hundred forty one teachers out of seventy one thousand seven hundred thirty one in Prussia who were not normal graduates. These two hundred forty one were old teachers who began teaching before the law required that they be normal graduates.

Because of their efficiency they were retained.

The common school teachers generally come from the common schools. If a child shows a special aptitude for teaching he is sent to the preparatory school for three years. The work done here is of academic character. When the pupil finishes here he enters a normal school and after another year of academic work he enters upon work of a technical nature. The next year is given almost entirely to professional work. After this normal course the graduate is provisionally appointed to a position for three years. If he is successful he is required to pass an examination on pedagogical questions. If he succeeds in passing this final examination he may teach as long as he wishes.

without further examination and this privilege may be removed upon the ground of inefficiency or immorality.

As regards the salaries of the professors of German universities statistics gathered from 1872 to 1892 show that a full professor from his thirtieth year receives a salary of five thousand one hundred marks or one thousand two hundred seventy five dollars and this is increased as his experience increases with a limit of seven thousand eighty marks or one thousand seven hundred seventy dollars. In Prussia the salary has been regulated by law. The average salary for a full professor in Berlin is six thousand five hundred marks.

In general the Prussian government in deciding the salary of a teacher, makes the sum depend to

a great extent on the personality and reputation of the individual. In the Württemberg University of Tübingen, a three class system of normal salaries is in vogue for the full professor, based on the years of service.

The German University takes great pride in its liberty of teaching which forms so distinctive a feature of that institution. The head of the University is not appointed by the State but is elected by the professors for a term of one year. This is true also of the deans and heads of the various faculties. There is a body, composed of the regular professors which has privileges as regards self government and discipline.

A lofty estimation of science has greatly enhanced the position of the German universities, and

since this was first combined with independent investigation, freedom of teaching has been accepted as a matter of course by every educated German.