

LITERATURE

Books on Education: A Brief Survey

We cannot better open this survey of a small number of the school books published during the past year than by calling attention to a sound and genial work on *THE EDUCATION OF TEACHERS*, by W. H. Payne. (Richmond: B. F. Johnson Publishing Co.). There is not in general a more dispiriting study than books on pedagogics, for the very simple reason that they attempt to reduce to system an art which depends largely for its effect on spontaneity. The universal requisite for all teachers is that they shall know the subject they mean to teach; the requisite for all *good* teachers is that their personality shall exert a kindling and elevating influence on the personality of the pupil, and this influence must flow primarily from the spontaneous enthusiasm and balanced sanity of the teacher. The error of most pedagogical text-books lies herein—that they emphasize too much the method of imparting knowledge and regard too exclusively the art of teaching as a faculty to be acquired in addition to and apart from the general intelligence and imagination of the man who teaches. We remember to have heard in a certain woman's college of the East, where the faculty is almost entirely masculine, that the students divide the men they meet into *gentlemen* and *professors*. The lesson is obvious: The *professors* have thought too much of a specialized department of knowledge and have studied too intently the method of imparting such specialized knowledge. Pedagogics has a tendency to increase this unfortunate division between pedagogues and men of culture. It is because Chancellor Payne's book is quite free of this error, and, in fact, is directed primarily to remove such an error, that we commend its reading.

