



Report on the Schools of Akron, Made for the Educational Committee of the Akron Chamber of Commerce, 1917 (Classic Reprint)

Horace L. Brittain

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Excerpt from Report on the Schools of Akron, Made for the Educational Committee of the Akron Chamber of Commerce, 1917

The Educational Committee of the Chamber of Commerce was organized in December, 1916, after its appointment by the President of the Chamber, Mr. Crannell Morgan. In view of the interest taken by a large number of (be members of the community in the public school affairs, we agreed that the committee should make so complete a study of the school system as to make possible a community program of education. This study and program was undertaken from one fundamental point of view, namely, the welfare of the children of this city. Both the study and the program, we agreed, ought to be made from a thoroughly impersonal standpoint so far as the administrators of the school system were concerned; but from a very human standpoint so far as the children were concerned. We had therefore in mind, what is best for the young people of Akron at the present time, and what the line of growth of the educational system should be, in order that each succeeding group of children be properly educated to fit into its life in this city.

This conception proved to be so large an undertaking that we prevailed upon the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce to permit us to employ expert trained assistants, for we felt that no program could be developed that was not based upon a complete study of the present organization, and also upon a study of other cities, and it was evident that the members of the Committee could not devote the amount of time to this work that would produce a satisfactory report. We therefore employed Dr. Horace L. Brittain who is now Director of the Bureau of Municipal Research, Toronto, Canada. Dr. Brittain is an experienced educator. He is a graduate in Educational Administration of Clark University, Worcester, Massachusetts. In 1913 and 1914 he was Director of the Ohio School Survey and therefore is well known to Ohio people. Dr. Brittain was assisted by his Toronto Chief of Staff, Mr. Thomas L. Hinckley. He is a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is a sanitary engineer, and is a skilled and experienced student of public schools, particularly from the standpoint of buildings and sanitation. He was formerly Director of the Milwaukee Bureau of Municipal Research and made an exhaustive study of the school buildings of that city.

The Committee believes that the education of the children is one of the three fundamental functions delegated by the family to the community. Each family in our early history performed this function for itself, but today that is impossible. And since it has been delegated to the community, it certainly is a poor spirited community that fails to provide adequate facilities for education. Therefore the investigators were instructed to spare no pains in arriving at the best possible program for the children of this community.

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