

THE FUNCTION OF EDUCATION IN DEMOCRACY

Educating for Democracy

Planned and edited by J. I. Cohen and R. M. W. Travers. Pp. xxx+458. (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1939.) 10s. 6d. net.

THE challenge to democracy at the present time derives part of its strength from the way in which education has been made to serve the purposes of the Fascist State. Those who believe in democracy have, however, been slow to realize that education for democracy is something quite different from education for Fascism, though an admirable pamphlet on "Bias in Education" issued last year by the Association for Education in Citizenship indicates that the danger of the tendency for education to become little more than a means of adjusting the individual to certain restraints on his or her liberty is already realized in some quarters. The present book is an admirable attempt to state the function of education in English democracy, and the participation of twenty-three authors has in no way prevented the presentation of a consistent and convincing exposition of the possibilities of deliberately planning our educational system to serve the purposes of democracy on a factual rather than a political basis.

The several essays vary considerably in scale and scope. Together they give a very comprehensive picture of the possibilities and they are characterized by a remarkable unity of thought. Scientific workers will welcome the expression given to the importance of bringing our education into vital relations with the deeper and more significant movements in our national life, of which probably the most significant is the modern

transformation of industry under the influence of science. Sir Percy Nunn emphasizes the importance of the general outlook of the school and the spirit which dominates its activities, and of laying greater stress to-day on the intrinsic value of man's creative powers. It should be an essential function of the school to awaken and develop the special gifts and talents which in time will enrich the community with their fruits.

A dominant theme in this symposium is the necessity of considering the school as an organ of the community and not a self-contained world. Scientific workers will find in the volume not only a lucid statement of the functions and contribution of education from the nursery school to the university, but also stimulating and suggestive comments on important problems such as the functions of the universities and of the technical colleges, freedom of teaching and limitation of entry to the universities, recruitment for the professions, the elimination of bias in adult education, the place of science in modern education, the significance of the social sciences, the opportunities in industrial psychology and vocational guidance and selection. Sir Philip Hartog contributes a discussion of the place of examinations in the social system and Prof. K. Mannheim an analysis of the sociological approach to education and the function of group analysis in helping the individual to make his adjustments.

Few will put down this book without being convinced that democracy can only fail to meet the challenge of Fascism to-day not by inherent weakness but by sheer neglect of the possibilities that lie in its hand. R. B.

BEDFORD COLLEGE, LONDON

A History of Bedford College for Women, 1849-1937

By Dr. Margaret J. Tuke. Pp. xvi+364+12 plates. (London, New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1939.) 10s. 6d. net.

THERE were several reasons why the history of Bedford College should be written, and every reason why Dame Margaret Tuke, who took the chief responsibility for guiding its destinies during a period of twenty-three years, should have written it. Her story necessarily includes a great deal of detail which is meant for the information

of past and present members of the College. But with an admirable sense of proportion, she tells the story so as to bring out, not only the part which the College has played in the advancement of the higher education of women, but also the striking and often amusing changes in the social background and setting of the College, during the long stretch of years since 1849, the date of its foundation.

Opened in that year at a house in Bedford Square, London, the College was at first really little other than a school for young ladies of the place and period. Gradually it began to assume something