

An Educational History of the American People. By Adolphe E. Meyer. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1957. Pp. xx, 444. Illustrations, bibliographic note, index. \$6.00.)

Colleges for Our Land and Time. By Edward Danforth Eddy, Jr. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957. Pp. xiv, 328. Appendices, index. \$4.50.)

In his preface Professor Meyer asserts: "There was a time when educational history was a highly regarded subject—when, in fact, it was almost mandatory for every student teacher to study it. That heyday has long since gone by." Though this quotation suggests a very desirable emphasis for teachers generally, it unfortunately indicates a Golden Age of educational history which had about as much literal existence as Noah's Ark or the Garden of Eden.

Doubtless, however, most historians will readily concur in Meyer's further observation: "Open almost any teachers' college catalogue, and you will find at once lists of courses in administrative supervision, in methods of teaching this or that, in guidance and personnel, in the lower, secondary, and higher learning, and so on to Catering I, Church Work II, and Body Building VI (with laboratory, 3 pts.). By the same token you will find educational history in a state of comparative desuetude, and commonly as an elective." Professor Meyer, himself a professor of Education, also criticizes "the historical brethren" as bearing much responsibility for the existing low status of educational history.

Meyer examines "the great landmarks of American educational history" (p. ix) from the colonial era to the 1950's. He makes clear the European impact on, the privileged nature of, and religious domination over education in colonial times. The nineteenth century modified or departed from various colonial patterns and practices in education, but the secularization of education for youth generally developed slowly and unevenly. Since the late nineteenth century, however, the expansion and secularization of education have made substantial strides. Meanwhile, in this period professional schools and graduate study, as well as extension and adult education movements, have grown rapidly.

Mr. Eddy, vice-president and provost of the University of New Hampshire, the land-grant institution for that state, has produced a semi-official and sympathetic centennial his-

tory of the land-grant college movement. Though seemingly not as well informed about the main threads and principal currents of American history as Meyer, Eddy is keenly aware that the land-grant colleges are deeply rooted in American experience. He is, however, fuzzy and inconsistent about the European impact on them.

According to Eddy the land-grant colleges represented a revolt against the traditional liberal arts colleges. In fact, they began principally as trade schools for farmers and artisans. Moreover, in the early days most students gave some time to farming or a trade while in attendance at the infant colleges. Federal aid, though of less relative importance in recent than in former decades, has been a basic factor in the growth of these colleges, a number of which are now aggressive rivals with state universities for support and leadership in higher education. The actual differences between them and the state universities are less than formerly, though Eddy probably exaggerates the attachment of the land-grant institutions to liberal education.

Teaching, research, and extension have been the three arms of the educational programs of the land-grant colleges. Their success in agricultural extension has been especially notable. More than half of them serve as a part of state universities, but approximately twenty operate as separate institutions. In addition, about seventeen states, all located in the South or on its perimeter, have land-grant colleges attended exclusively or largely by Negroes. Thus several southern states have a state university and two land-grant colleges. Thus, in various states, especially in the South and West, separate land-grant colleges have resulted in an unwise decentralization of state support of higher education.

Although both authors err now and then regarding particular facts or conclusions, these volumes are comprehensive, readable, and worthwhile accounts. They are written in a broad context for a broad audience. Fortunately their authors eschew the jargon and nomenclature, so common in educational circles, and both normally summarize or interpret educational theories and practices into familiar ideas and concepts. Meyer and Eddy are generous concerning the scope of education, but both are fearful and wary about the dangers of perverting educational programs to achieve "desirable" political or social changes.