
NOTES ON VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE.

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VOCATIONAL guidance is one of the newest branches of development in the public educational system of the United States. It had its origin in the attempts at placing boys and girls in suitable vocations upon leaving school. The pendulum, however, has swung from the extreme of concentrating activities solely at the close of school life to the mean of doing everything possible during school life toward leading the pupils intelligently to plan their future careers, and in so far as possible to better the conditions under which they must enter their life work.

The work in vocational guidance has probably reached its highest development in Boston through the efforts and leadership of Mr. Meyer Bloomfield, Director of the Vocation Bureau of Boston. This bureau was the pioneer in the field. Closely associated with it are three other organizations which carry on special lines of work in vocational guidance as a part of their various activities. These three organizations are the Boston Home and School Association, The Girls' Trade Educational League, and The Women's Municipal League. In addition to these three organizations, there is a committee on vocational direction of the Boston School Board which confines its work of guidance within the school before the pupils leave the grammar grades. These various bodies work in close coöperation and cover the field very thoroughly.

The Vocation Bureau is not conducted as an employment office. Its work consists in gathering information concerning the various occupations in which the school children of Boston are apt to enter. This information is put into such form that it may be of the greatest possible assistance in guiding pupils and their parents in the choice of their future careers.

In addition to the compilation and dissemination of such occupational information, the Bureau conducts a training school for teachers and school officials serving as vocational counsellors.

Two expert investigators are employed in studying the different occupations. They ascertain what educational attainments are required for entrance, and what physical and personal

requirements are necessary. They learn the opportunities for advancement in the occupation, its nature, the divisions of work involved in it, and the physical conditions of the same. They ascertain and put into accessible form the conditions upon which increase in pay depend, the opportunities for advancement, and the minimum, average, and maximum pay of those in the occupation. These facts are ascertained by visits to the firms, shops, and factories, by consultation with employers and employees, and also by the study of all literature bearing upon the subject. When the above information has been obtained for any one vocation, it is put into bulletin form for the use of pupils, parents, and vocational counsellors.

The second line of work consists in doing everything possible toward securing proper training and education for the pupils before they leave school. Efforts along this line result in the prolonging of the school life and also in the placing of pupils in such schools, or in such positions, as will best train them for the work which they plan to take up. These results are obtained by personal conferences with parents, teachers, advisers, and pupils, and by public lectures relating to the work.

The third line of activity consists in the systematic organization of all groups engaged in the work of vocational guidance and in the training of vocational counsellors for those who are preparing themselves for such work. One hundred seventeen teachers in the Boston schools have been appointed as counsellors. They meet twice a month and listen to the lectures given by the Director and to addresses upon various occupations by people actually engaged in the occupation upon which they lecture. The work of training vocational counsellors has developed to such a point that the Harvard Summer School, at the 1911 session, offered a course of ten lectures upon this subject.

The fourth line of activity is that of giving direct advice to all who have a vocational problem or difficulty. This is carried on informally in consultation, and every effort is made to secure the active coöperation of all who can render service which this work of vocational guidance requires.

The Committee on Vocational Direction of the Boston School Board was organized in June, 1909, and consists of six members of the teaching force. This Committee at first held mass meetings to interest the teachers and appointed a vocational counsellor or committee for each school. Lectures and addresses were then arranged for the purpose of interesting parents as well as children. The appointment of a vocational

counsellor for each school has been of real service. Grammar school graduates have been helped to secure admission into the specialized high schools, selected with reference to the graduate's plans for his life work. Vocational records were made of all graduates of the grammar school and these records were kept on cards throughout the balance of the school course. The keeping of these cards was of considerable value in the registering of certain data, and of still greater value in the effect which the process of their compilation had upon the mental attitude of pupil, teacher, and parent.

The Boston Home and School Association is a private organization. It aims to secure close coöperation between parent and teacher in everything pertaining to the child's welfare.

In order to obtain information as to the vocational aspirations of parents for their children, and also to start many parents along a line of intelligent planning for the future of their children, the following questions have been sent out to the parents of children in various schools:

Questionnaire for parents of high school pupils:

1. Are you going to send your boy (or girl) to college?
2. If so, what college, and why?
3. Have you in view any occupation for which you wish to train your boy (or girl)?
4. What occupation do you think your boy (or girl) is most adapted to? Has your boy (or girl) received any training in preparation for this occupation?

Questionnaire for parents of children in the eighth grade:

1. Are you intending to send your boy (or girl) to high school?
2. If so, what high school, and why?
3. Have you in view any occupation for which you wish to train your boy (or girl)?
4. What occupation do you think your boy (or girl) is best adapted to? Has your boy (or girl) received any training in preparation for this occupation?

When the above information has been obtained, lectures and conferences will be organized so as to be of the greatest possible assistance to the parents.

The Girls' Trade Educational League of Boston secures and disseminates information similar to that compiled by the Vocation Bureau. It also conducts an office not only to find work for girls, but more especially to advise them as to what particular work they are best fitted for. After placing a girl, the League does not feel that its work is ended, but endeavors to keep in touch

with her for some time in order to make sure that she is finally placed in an employment to which she is adapted. By these means of activity the league hopes to lessen the number of present misfits and to improve the conditions of girl wage-earners.

The Women's Municipal League of Boston is following a different outline of work from any of the organizations previously mentioned. In 1909 its Department of Education appointed a committee to study the opportunities presented for vocational training in and around Boston and to make the results of this study easily accessible to all interested in giving vocational counsel. Paid investigators and students from various colleges have studied the educational agencies of Boston. So far four charts have been prepared and distributed widely in Boston and its vicinity. They have been placed in schools and in factories and serve the double purpose of showing those who wish special training where it may be obtained, and of suggesting to those who never considered the subject the desirability of seeking such a training.

Chart No. 1 includes schools which give elementary industrial training. It contains information relative to the ages of students, the industry taught, supplementary work given, special features, requirements for admission, the proportion of time given to industrial work, academic subjects and drawing, and the length of the session.

Chart No. 2 contains similar information concerning schools that offer advanced industrial training.

Chart No. 3 pertains to public and philanthropic schools which offer commercial training.

Chart No. 4 sets forth organized opportunities for the physically handicapped. It is intended to show where the blind, the crippled, and the deaf may secure training that will take away their handicaps and give them chances to become efficient citizens.

Charts are also being prepared covering vocational training in settlements, memorials and guilds, in professional schools, in schools of fine arts, and in apprenticeship schools.

Although Boston has probably done more extensive and intensive work along the lines of vocational guidance than any other city in the United States, yet the interest in this matter is not confined to that city. In New York, the High School Teachers' Association has taken the lead in this work. By 1908 there was a vocational adviser in each high school, whose work was purely voluntary and was carried on in addition to his

regular duties. Pamphlets similar to those prepared in Boston are used throughout the high school course in arousing the students' interest in this matter. In some of the high schools pupils are required to prepare regular plans for their future careers. One of the plans outlined for such work is as follows:

SUGGESTIONS.

1. Let the student select an occupation, find some acquaintance engaged in that work, secure an interview, and write out the results of the interview as if for a newspaper. It will add to the interest if several members of the class have the same topic.

2. Let the student select an occupation for himself and plan for himself a career.

3. Let suitable questions for the debating society be so framed that pupils will discuss the opportunities in one line of work as against the opportunities in another; the requirements for success in one line, as against the requirements in another; the rewards of a profession as against the possible returns from a trade or a business.

4. Let the pupils select a line of work in which they are interested and write a review of one of the books of reference dealing with that occupation.

5. Let the student select some particular line in which he may be interested, and write an answer to some newspaper advertisement for help in that line.

A PLAN FOR A CAREER.

In writing a plan for a career a student should set forth:

I. (a) His preferences; (b) the expressed wishes of his parents and friends in regard to his future.

II. (a) His own reasons for his choice; (b) reasons in favor of or against his choice which were gleaned from books and magazine articles; (c) arguments in favor of or against his choice which were advanced by parents and friends who were consulted.

III. His personal characteristics by the aid of which he hopes to win success in his chosen vocation.

IV. The legal requirements for admission to the practice of the chosen trade or profession.

V. The schools to be attended to meet these requirements and the estimated time and expense involved in preparation.

VI. The possible rewards as stated in the authorities which were consulted.

Information has been disseminated throughout the elementary schools in respect to the money value of education. Comparisons are made between the average earnings of unskilled labor with those of skilled workmen and of professional and business men. Considerable work is done in placing students who are obliged to leave school, although this feature is considered somewhat as a side issue. The larger number of pupils do not so much need help in securing appointments as advice in selecting

their work. Close touch is kept with students who have been placed so that they may be counselled and helped in case of difficulty and may be kept informed of opportunities for adding to their education or vocational equipment.

The work of educational guidance has spread all over the United States. In 1910 there was a national conference on this subject, which was attended by delegates from thirty-five cities. In the last meeting of the National Educational Association a generous proportion of the time was devoted to the discussion of this subject, and some of the most important resolutions passed by that body related to this work.

In an address on Vocational Guidance, given by Mr. Meyer Bloomfield before the National Society for the Study of Education, he stated that the Vocation Bureau in Boston, the first of the kind in the country, was organized "to lessen the social waste, to furnish necessary information about various occupations and their advantages and disadvantages and the training necessary for efficiency in them, to broaden the range of choice and to deepen the 'life career motive' in education and employment." This comprehensive summary of the aim of the Boston Vocation Bureau epitomizes to a considerable extent the aims of the Bureau of Education in the Philippines.

Owing to the present lack of funds and to the immediate necessity of furnishing primary education throughout the Philippines, it will be impossible for many years for the Bureau to take up the work of vocational guidance in a manner as thorough as that of either Boston or New York. The differences in local conditions between the large cities of the United States and those prevailing in this country also tend to render impossible the following out of all details of these plans. Personal and individual efforts have already been made here along these lines. Teachers in all branches of instruction have been of inestimable assistance in the giving of vocational advice to parents and pupils. Official action has been taken by the Bureau in disseminating pertinent information and in offering practical training in household industries, domestic science, agriculture, mechanical trades, and commercial pursuits. Exceptional opportunities have been given for the selection and training of teachers, nurses, and surveyors. The Bureau has also done valuable work in making public the opportunities offered for training in the Bureau of Printing and in the Telegraphic Department of the Bureau of Posts.

It is felt, however, that the time has now come when more

emphasis should be placed upon this line of work. The first step in the collecting of information relative to the various occupations open to the Filipino youth has been taken. Information such as that prepared by the Vocation Bureau of Boston and the High School Teachers' Association of New York is being collected with reference to teaching, seamanship, nursing, telegraph operating, surveying, machine shop practice, wood working, cigar making, and other occupations. The compiling and editing of this information so that it may be set forth in a convenient and accessible form, and may at the same time be reliable and accurate, is a work of considerable magnitude. As rapidly as these articles can be prepared they will be published in *THE PHILIPPINE CRAFTSMAN* and reprints will later be issued for use in all schools. These will provide a source of information which is open at present to but few teachers, fewer pupils, and still fewer parents. These pamphlets, when issued in a final form, will be used as supplementary reading and as material for work in English. They will be of inestimable value in leading parents intelligently to plan careers for their children.

It will necessarily be some time before these pamphlets can be issued. In the meanwhile valuable and helpful assistance may be given to pupils by insisting upon the development in the English classes of an outline the same as or similar to the one given in this article as used in the New York high schools.

The attention and interest of teachers will be directed to the subject of vocational guidance at the Teachers' Vacation Assembly in Baguio next season. An article on this matter will also be prepared for use in civico-educational lectures.

The field of vocational guidance is a large one and the opportunities for distinctive service are unlimited. It is not sufficient for a teacher to spend all of his energy in providing a child with an education. In order to assure that the education given to a child will result in the greatest possible benefit to him, it is essential that the minds of both parent and child be directed in an intelligent manner to the consideration of the child's future. Such work properly carried on will reduce in great measure the number of people engaged in work for which they have no liking and to which they are adapted neither by nature nor by training. In order to insure profitable returns from the expenditure of Government funds in the training of pupils, it is imperatively necessary that close attention be paid to the use to which that training is put. There is no work connected with our whole system of education which will bring a larger percentage of profitable results than efforts to give the greatest

possible amount of vocational guidance to both pupils and parents.

NOTE.—The information contained in this article concerning the status of vocational guidance in the United States has been digested from the Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor for 1910, on Industrial Education. The attention of teachers and others desiring fuller information upon this subject is directed to this report and to the pamphlets published by the Vocation Bureau of Boston and by the High School Teachers' Association of New York.

The man who is fitted to take care of himself in all of the conditions in which he may be placed is, in a very important sense, an educated man. The savage who understands the habits of animals, who is a good hunter and fisher, is a man of education, taking into consideration his circumstances. The graduate of a university who cannot take care of himself—no matter how much he may have studied—is NOT AN EDUCATED MAN.—ROBERT G. INGERSOLL.

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The American School Board Journal for September starts off with a full-page cartoon saying that "vocational education needs not only school boards but also advisory boards composed of practical men in the trades." Considerable space is given to the subjects of school architecture and city play-grounds while the address delivered before the 1912 National Education Association by C. A. Proner, Secretary of the National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education on "Facilities for Industrial Education" is published in full.

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The Republic of Uruguay is making rather remarkable progress in primary education. Six years ago Dr. A. J. Perez, in charge of the service, aroused by the backwardness of the country in this respect, entered upon a campaign of education. The result is that the Republic has increased its appropriations for the aid of schools; normal training has been greatly improved; and the efficiency of the local inspectors has been greatly increased.

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