

CHOOSING A VOCATION

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Choosing a vocation by Frank Parsons

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FRANK PARSONS

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BY

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DEDICATION

To Mrs. Quincy A. Shaw, the progressive daughter of Agassiz, whose far-sighted and beneficent philanthropy has done so much for the young people of Boston, and indirectly through the spread of her institutions, for young people throughout the country, this book is dedicated in a spirit of reverent affection and respect.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THE manuscript of this book was practically ready for publication when Professor Parsons died. For a year prior to his death he had given a large part of his time to Vocation Bureau work. Some of the material here used appeared in articles in *The Arena*, and a number of the "cases" in Part III have been published in the daily papers of Boston and New York. The appearance of these articles brought hundreds of letters of inquiry from all parts of the United States, expressing interest in the effort to give scientific vocational counsel to the young. That Professor Parsons would have carried the plan to a greater completeness had he lived, there is no doubt; but the work that he did do is of such value that it is believed many will be grateful to get such information about it as can be given in this volume.

Whatever doubts there may be of the practicability of giving expert vocational counsel to young men and women, there are certain simple truths upon which the plan is based, and which I believe no one will deny.

1. It is better to choose a vocation than merely to "hunt a job."

2. No one should choose a vocation without careful self-analysis, thorough, honest, and under guidance.

3. The youth should have a large survey of the field of vocations, and not simply drop into the convenient or accidental position.

4. Expert advice, or the advice of men who have made a careful study of men and of vocations and of the conditions

of success, must be better and safer for a young man than the absence of it.

5. *Putting it down* on paper seems to be a simple matter, but it is one of supreme importance in this study. No young man can make the self-analysis which Professor Parsons calls for *on paper* without gaining a distinct benefit, a guide, a rudder, a plan which will reduce very greatly his liability to become a mere piece of driftwood upon the industrial sea.

A thoughtful reading of the "cases" in Part III will give the reader a fair test of the practical application of the plan and its freedom from dogmatism or any undue claim to the word "scientific." In practical helpfulness to the scores of people who have applied to the Bureau it has established its worth and its sanity; and I am convinced that it will be reproduced in other communities, and eventually, in its fundamental principles, in our educational system itself.

RALPH ALBERTSON.

Boston, May 1, 1909.

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