

**THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
AND WOMEN IN  
OFFICE SERVICE**

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The Public Schools and Women in Office Service by Various

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**VARIOUS**

**THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
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# THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND WOMEN IN OFFICE SERVICE

BY

THE DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH  
WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL AND INDUSTRIAL UNION  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

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## PREFACE

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The report of the Commission on National Aid to Vocational Education, published June 1, 1914, recommends that more definite studies be made to supply information which may be used in the training of commercial workers. The report points out that there is a surprising lack of information respecting commercial conditions affecting commercial education. It is, perhaps, strange that an enterprise like commercial education which has been so largely undertaken in our public schools should possess so meager a basis of concrete evidence for established procedure. Our organized information upon commercial education has been limited to statistics regarding number of pupils, teachers, schools and appropriations. The report above-mentioned states that we need information concerning other and more important matters, such as supply and demand for trained commercial workers, distribution, selection and placement, and the changing conditions of commerce and their consequent effects upon commercial education.

During the past year three important investigations have been undertaken in and about Boston with the purpose of securing this much needed fact basis for commercial education, and this report presents the results of one of these studies. The other two investigations were conducted respectively by the Committee on Education of the Boston Chamber of Commerce, and by a Committee of Commercial Teachers representing the Massachusetts State Board of Education. No reports have yet been published as the result of these latter investigations. The investigation carried on by

the Chamber of Commerce was intended to study primarily commercial conditions affecting the commercial education of boys; the investigation by the Massachusetts State Committee consisted chiefly of an examination into the business careers of boys and girls who had been out of school for some years; the investigation conducted by the Department of Research of the Women's Educational and Industrial Union and embodied in the present report, dealt with conditions applying to the commercial training of girls.

Of the three investigations it is fair to state that this report presents the most far-reaching and thorough-going results. It was prepared by the Department of Research of the Women's Educational and Industrial Union, from data secured by four college graduates holding fellowships in research, Miss Lucy C. Phinney, Miss Jean M. Cunningham, Miss Margaret M. Lothrop and Miss Hazel Manning, working under the direction of Miss May Allinson, Associate Director of the department. The resources and experience of the makers of this report have enabled them to gather matter of value from a wide field in which conditions prevailing in the business house, in the school, and in the home are presented. There is a tone of moderation throughout the report and there is evident no spirit of unnecessary challenge or indictment of the methods and purposes of commercial courses. Commendation is freely given to successful effort on the part of the schools, and criticism with a full appreciation of hampering conditions is stated with the evident purpose of helpfulness and encouragement. The attitude of the report will be found dispassionate, and commercial teachers reading it will feel impelled to renew their efforts with cheerfulness rather than with discouragement.

Practical results of this investigation have not awaited its formal publication. The new Clerical School of Boston, begun in September, 1914, shows in its organization, course of study and general procedure the sub-



stantial principles advocated in the report. Supplementary commercial courses recently incorporated in our general high schools, such as salesmanship, part time plans, practice work in offices and stores, vocational guidance and placement, are instances of the recognition on the part of the schools of many of the principles which the report advocates.

F. V. THOMPSON,  
*Assistant Superintendent of Schools.*

BOSTON, MASS., November, 1914.



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