

**PREVOCATIONAL
EDUCATION IN THE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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BY

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PREFACE

DURING the past five years considerable interest has been developed in the problem of securing a better adjustment of our educational methods and ideals to the needs of those who, though they form the vast majority of our children, are, for one reason or another, deriving the least benefit from the present school system, and are leaving its care altogether before reaching the age of sixteen or seventeen years.

Such school systems as have done experimental work looking to the solution of this problem are constantly receiving requests for information relating to the purpose of the work, the methods which are being employed, and the results realized or expected.

It is believed that school administrators and school-teachers in general will find something of interest and value in the information presented in this volume regarding one important branch of this experimental work, namely prevocational education.

For the purpose of collecting and of organizing such information the University of Chicago has conducted, during the past three years, an experimental industrial class. Instruction both in shopwork and in the book subjects has been given very largely by graduate students in the Department of Education, mature men and women sincerely interested in the larger aspects of the problem presented.

The Albert G. Lane Technical High School of Chicago includes among its many departments one of special

interest, consisting of so-called prevocational classes and providing for over-aged boys from grades six, seven, and eight of the elementary schools.

The authors of this book, having access as they do to the resources of these two institutions, have been enabled to collect and to organize the material presented herewith. They have also studied the prevocational work in other cities by personal inspection of the schools and by examination of their courses of study. It is believed that the facts presented will be valuable not only to instructors of prevocational classes, but as well to teachers in those elementary schools where no special provisions are made for the pupils who are failing in the usual school work, or who are apparently hopelessly behind grade or are certainly out of harmony with the aims and methods of so-called "general education." Since prevocational work is almost invariably given for the benefit of such children, doubtless many teachers in the elementary schools will be glad to learn of some of the concrete material which the special schools are utilizing in teaching the regular school subjects; as, for example, reading, history, civics, hygiene, elementary science, arithmetic, shopwork, and drawing.

It is the purpose of this book to present in detail some of the school subjects, setting forth the methods which have been found to be measurably successful, the objects which have been paramount in presenting the subjects, some of the concrete material which has been used, and references to sources of other similar material.

This presentation of concrete material will be preceded by a discussion of the need of prevocational work

as an essential part of the American public school system, and of the present development of the movement.

The discussion deals largely with the work which has been developed for boys. It is believed, however, that the principles apply also in the field of girls' work, and it is hoped that this somewhat neglected side may receive some stimulus from this presentation.

Grateful acknowledgment is made of valuable assistance received from various sources. Members of the Graduate Department of the University of Chicago have coöperated in collecting suitable material for courses of study and in presenting such material experimentally to the industrial classes. Prominent among these graduate students are Miss Miriam Besley, Miss L. Grace Huff, Mr. L. A. P. Harms and Mr. L. V. Koos.

Thanks are due the following school officials for preparing, especially for this volume, detailed information regarding the prevocational work in their several cities: Mr. John C. Brodhead, Associate Director of Manual Arts, Boston, Massachusetts; Mr. Ben W. Johnson, Director of Industrial Education, Seattle, Washington; Mr. J. C. Wright, Director of Vocational and Manual Training Instruction, Kansas City, Missouri; Miss Ethel M. Lovell, Prevocational School, Louisville, Kentucky (now Principal of the Sewing Trades School, Cincinnati, Ohio); and Mr. Charles F. Perry, Supervisor of Industrial Education, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Especial acknowledgment is made of the generous spirit of coöperation shown by the Principal of the Albert G. Lane Technical High School, Chicago, Mr. William J. Bogan, whose sympathy and courage have made possible the remarkable exemplification of prevocational work to be found in that institution.

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