Examples Of Industrial Education

Mitchell Leavitt Frank
EXAMPLES OF INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION

BY

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One example is worth a thousand arguments.—Gladstone

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PREFACE

It is not to be doubted that we are in the midst of a complex and gigantic movement, somewhat indefinite and indistinct as to its direction and its ultimate results, but certainly involving great social and industrial changes and promising universal betterment. The forces which are bringing about these changes seem to be dominated by the desire to secure for the less prosperous members of society a larger measure of comfort and happiness and a more abundant life.

There is probably no single agency which has had so many demands made upon it to help in the solution of the problems which this great movement is presenting as has the public school, and the response which it has made to the demands should be a matter of pride to those who believe in the great mission of this most important of democratic institutions.

It must be admitted, however, that, in the securing of a fair opportunity for all to attain reasonable happiness; in the necessary reduction of poverty, unemployment, and delinquency; and in the promotion of individual efficiency and social solidarity, the schools have only a fractional part of the responsibility. To reach the results for which the promoters of industrial education are so enthusiastically working, society must coöperate in securing the enactment and the adequate enforcement of wise child-labor and school-attendance laws, and the improvement of working conditions in general.

Though this volume deals with only a fractional part of the whole problem, the author believes it to be a most important
part. The educators of the country wield an immense influence, and this influence will be increased rather than diminished when, by dealing successfully with a practical problem closely related to the lives of the people, they convince the public that they are not dominated alone by their interest in scholarship and disinterested truth and knowledge, but by a desire to advance in every way possible the social and moral welfare of every child committed to their care.

It is hoped that by bringing together the accounts of several examples of public industrial schools and classes,—the visible and tangible proofs that educators are applying themselves to the solution of the problems to which we have alluded,—this volume will serve to stimulate other and even more successful efforts to advance the movement for popular and universal education.

The author makes no apology for drawing so liberally on the utterances of others, but rather takes this opportunity of acknowledging his indebtedness to the many friends who have allowed him to use their valuable material. Whatever may be the reader's attitude toward the opinions and theories expressed by the author, he is urged to examine this material with care and to attempt to interpret for himself the several examples of industrial education which it describes.

FRANK MITCHELL LEAVITT
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EXAMPLES OF INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION

CHAPTER I
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MOVEMENT FOR INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION

The movement for industrial education is a part of a great educational advance which extends over the whole civilized world. It results from the attempt to bring about universal and appropriate education. It frankly recognizes that all cannot have and do not need the same education. It takes cognizance of the enormous increase in the sum total of human knowledge and art which the last century has brought, and the ever-increasing gap which separates this sum total from the capacity of the most receptive and most assiduous student. It is strongly influenced by the principle that, in making the selection of the knowledge and art which any individual or group of individuals should acquire, the vocational purpose should be second only to the moral and social purposes, with which, in fact, it is rarely in opposition. Thus vocational education is the larger term and includes professional, commercial, and agricultural education, education in domestic arts and sciences, and industrial education. It is to the consideration of this latter phase of modern educational advance that our discussions are to be specifically directed.

Industrial education means the complete and appropriate education of industrial workers of whatever grade. It therefore means much more than the introduction of shopwork into the
present curriculum,—the addition of another subject, however important that subject may be. It means a thorough revision of our school system with the purpose of furnishing for the working classes an education which bears somewhat the same relation to their prospective life work as does the college education to the future work of the professional and managerial classes. It means that, at whatever grade it may be introduced, it will be a type of secondary education, and will presuppose a basis of general cultural training and provide for considerable variety in both the length and the breadth of the special superstructure. It means reality. The word "reality" is used here in contradistinction to artificiality. Industrial education, therefore, provides participation in, rather than fancied preparation for, some activity. It means practice in real work for real people as an effective medium of education. It means, in the final analysis, the fitting of a particular boy for a particular job, and it is therefore strongly individualistic.

For the student of education it means the study of real conditions,—not alone the conditions of children in the schools, but also, and perhaps primarily, the conditions of children who, in the past, have benefited the least from formal education. He must be interested to study the children who lag as well as those who progress, those who can spend little as well as those who can spend much time in school training, those aiming toward the market, the shop, or the farm as well as those preparing for college. He must inquire at what ages children leave school and for what reasons; what they do after leaving, and with what profit or success. He must make a study of industrial methods and developments, and of the industrial and social opportunities open to the rising generation.

He should endeavor to make careful and specific adjustment of educational principles and practices to these conditions, and to work out in detail courses of study suitable for typical cases.