The vocational-guidance movement, its problems and possibilities

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THE VOCATIONAL-GUIDANCE MOVEMENT
ITS PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES
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Set up and electrotyped. Published January, 1918.

GIF Publisher
EDUCATION DEPT.

Norwood Press
J. S. Cushing Co. — Berwick & Smith Co.
Norwood, Mass., U.S.A.
To

E. G. B.
PREFACE

VOCATIONAL guidance is bound up first of all with educational problems, and second with economic and social questions. On this account the reader must not expect a book on the subject to offer anything like a complete program or solution of the problem. The breadth of the field considered in this book, however, should prove a distinct advantage to those readers who are willing to set aside the desire for short cuts and to work out thoughtful proposals for bettering hopeful but inadequate pioneering on the one hand and complete neglect on the other.

If the movement for vocational guidance has so far proved but one thing, it is that the indefinite education for the vague thing called “complete living” or “physical, mental, and moral development” must give way to a well-considered aiming at specific needs—needs such as those represented by the individual’s right, duty, and desire to fulfill family relationships, to vote intelligently, to maintain a good standard of living, and to cooperate in all phases of endeavor for human good. These specialized trainings are by no means narrow; it is the indefinite education which has been narrow.

Vocational guidance must be considered as different from vocational education; the latter is concerned with
but one of the steps in adequate guidance, but its advocates have too often neglected the other steps in the complete series. This complete series, so far as the individual is concerned, may be stated as follows: (1) Laying a broad foundation of useful experiences; (2) Studying occupational opportunities; (3) Choosing an occupation; (4) Preparing for the occupation; (5) Entering upon work; (6) Securing promotions and making readjustments.

As a civic force, vocational guidance is concerned with increasing the knowledge of occupational problems, as a necessary basis for their coöperative solution. As a moral force, the counselor must inculcate not only the personal virtues needed in the successful pursuit of one’s calling, but also the social helpfulness based on the understanding that the coöperative opportunities are greater than the competitive, and on the theory of society, “We are members one of another.” As an agent of culture, vocational guidance seeks for harmonious and refined living in street, store, factory, shop, farm, and mine, as well as in the literary society and at the fireside.

This book is offered as a contribution to the preparation for the task ahead of us: it is the hope of the writer that it may become a part of the literature of the reconstruction.

I thank Professor Paul H. Hanus for his guidance and criticism during the course of the investigation, and the other members of the Division of Education of Harvard University for occasional assistance and suggestion.
Mr. Meyer Bloomfield gave me the benefit of his wide experience in the movement. Mr. Frederick J. Allen read the manuscript and offered valuable help. Miss Susan J. Ginn gave information relative to the work in Boston. Counselors in various parts of the country contributed by detailed replies to my requests for further enlightenment about their work. Edith Gaddis Brewer assisted throughout the study.

Economy in publication has been aided by an abbreviation of the footnotes. In all cases the proper names refer directly to the Bibliography, Appendix II. Three books to which constant reference is made in the text and the footnotes are as follows: Bloomfield’s Youth, School, and Vocation and Readings in Vocational Guidance; and Davis’ Vocational and Moral Guidance.

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