

Effective vocational guidance must, therefore, aim at so preparing the individual that he may be able to make wise decisions and learn how best to adjust himself to changing conditions, and to recognize and take advantage of opportunities as they arise for bettering himself and giving better service to the community.

The victories of applied science leave the battlefield of industry strewn with victims whose occupations are gone and who must be re-educated for new jobs just as were the soldiers maimed in the Great War.

Accompanying such changes in specialized occupations is the drift of population between the great groups of occupations. This is one of the most significant results of the mechanization of industries, the tendency being towards a reduction in the percentages of the total active body of workers engaged in primary production and manufacture, and an increase in the percentages engaged in distribution and personal services.

Another marked feature is the development of large corporations bringing about an increase in the proportion of wage or salary earners, and a decrease in the numbers of those who are working on their own account.

Vocational guidance, to be fully effective, must take account of all these factors, and must also be able to foresee the general trend of conditions so far as they may affect the prospects of each individual. Means must also be provided for helping the worker at every stage in his life where he finds himself thrown permanently out of one occupation and is compelled to look for a new kind of job.

In changing economic conditions the problem of vocational guidance is therefore one of extraordinary difficulty. It is perhaps true, that, given time and the necessary finance, a reliable assessment of the abilities and qualities of the individual can be made; but it is hopeless to expect that the specific needs of all the thousands of occupations (some 25,000 occupational designations are listed in the 1930 census of the United States of America) changing with bewildering rapidity, can be scientifically studied and accurately assessed; and even if this were possible the problem of placement, of putting the round peg in the round hole, would still remain to be solved.

The problem of vocational guidance and placement cannot be solved by general formulæ. Each case must be taken separately on its own merits and in its own environment. Each case must also be regarded as a recurrent problem, requiring periodical adjustment to changing conditions. In present circumstances the individual himself must make these adjustments or be thrown into the "pool of unemployment." Practical measures for helping him would appear to include, first, training him in childhood and adolescence for the greatest possible handiness and adaptability; secondly, providing him with a sound knowledge of his own powers and limitations of intellect, character, and physical constitution; and, thirdly, providing him with opportunities for retraining and continuing his education in adult years.

The first of these is possible in a good modern school with comprehensive courses. The second, in so far as it is a matter of scientific measurement, requires the facilities of a good psychological laboratory which are only available to a limited extent at present. The third measure of providing opportunities for assisting in retraining, and for adult education, is a matter of part-time day and evening classes in properly equipped institutions. For this work the technical and combined schools and colleges are equipped and staffed, and it is of the greatest importance that they should endeavour to knit school and industry together in the training and retraining of workers young and old.

Where school and industry are closely connected in this way it will be possible to give effective assistance to the individual in adjusting himself to changing conditions of employment.

Although it cannot be said that much progress has been made hitherto in this Dominion towards the solution of the difficult problems of vocational guidance and placement, very useful work has been accomplished by specially trained teachers in certain of the technical schools, particularly in Christchurch, Dunedin, and Wellington. This work has been of very great value in present conditions of unemployment, since these teachers have linked themselves up with special committees supported by Chambers of Commerce, the Young Men's Christian Association, and other local organizations for the placement of unemployed juveniles, and have thus been able to render good service to pupils from all the schools.

THE TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOLS.

No fundamental changes in curricula or methods of instruction have operated during the year under review, but it is possible to discern in many directions a striving to direct the teaching away from bookishness towards reality. There is no doubt but that the present unhappy times have caused a critical examination to be made by many earnest teachers of their aims and methods, and many of the values of which the truth was formerly unquestioned are now subjected to criticism and revision. The prevailing industrial conditions, which have prevented the normal flow of pupils to industry, have had the effect of keeping pupils in the schools for longer periods than was previously the rule. The effect of this has been that the Technical High Schools have been greatly strengthened in their senior work, a result which if it had been due to other circumstances is one greatly to be desired, since the third or fourth years of any post-primary course faithfully followed are likely to confer vastly greater benefits on the student than a two-year course ending at an age of almost complete immaturity.

During the year, however, some definite progress has been made, particularly in education for commerce. It is worthy of note that very considerable attention is being given to this problem in European countries, particularly in England, at the present time, where it is being realized that the problems of marketing and distribution are as vital as those of production, but that the technique of distribution has lagged behind that of production. The Association of Commercial Science, a body conducting examinations and issuing certificates and diplomas, has extended its activities and enhanced