

President Neilson of Smith College in his recent address before the Modern Language Association of America noted with regret the comparative scarcity in our college faculties of the scholar who can teach. If our colleges would stress scholarship more and pedagogy less, and if our graduate universities would stress scholarship less and teaching more, there would be fewer warped and one-sided instructors on our teaching staffs and there would be an increasing number of those who could say with Bede, "I have found it sweet to learn, to teach, to write."

ALFRED ALLAN KERN

### APPOINTMENT SERVICE FOR TEACHERS—PROG- RESS AND PROBLEMS

WE KNOW something of the personal suffering of professional workers occasioned by lack of employment. It has come to our friends, to our relatives, and perchance to ourselves. We, likewise, know something of the havoc wrought alike to individuals and to institutions when professional workers are misplaced; I presume nearly all of us have experienced it personally. Its larger effects are observed daily. How frequently do we hear, "He is a very capable man, but he is misplaced; for his own good and for the sake of the institution, someone should tell him that he should find another position." Many a professional career has been retarded seriously, and even blighted, because the right opportunity for service did not present itself. While psychologists tell us that merit tends to find adequate opportunity for its expression, the chance factors of time, place, and circumstance tend as frequently to bury in obscurity young people

of great potential ability as to raise to prominence those of mediocre calibre.

Our apparent inability to find adequate ways and means to distribute or market professional talent in accordance with personal merit and institutional and community needs is one of the outstanding problems affecting all professions alike.

A recent graduate of a medical school decided not to go to his home town to practice. Where should he go? He talked to his professors who suggested this town and that. He consulted the United States Census of Occupations to see if he could discover cities with fewer doctors than apparently would be needed. He considered factors of climate, proximity to schools and colleges, and finally decided to locate in Seattle. As he remarked later, it would have been just as reasonable to write the names of a dozen cities on slips of paper and then pick one from a "grab bag" as to proceed as he did. His choice might just as well have been Denver, Kalamazoo, Charleston, or Miami.

For many centuries, teachers in our schools and colleges have regarded as part of their responsibility, the placement of the students in whom they have most interest. Professor Monroe has in his possession some of the record sheets of the teachers in the "Charity" schools of England of the 18th century wherein there are frequent entries indicating that the teacher had placed a youth in a certain position, then replaced him in another, and so on. This interest of the public schools in placing young people who leave or complete the work of the school is now expressed through placement bureaus. College and university instructors long have rendered employment service similar to that of the "Charity" school teachers. We may call this the period of individual placement.

We are trying to outgrow this period of in finding appropriate positions for their individual activity on the part of instructors major students. It is reasonable to hope

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that the institutional appointment bureau ultimately will be utilized exclusively by students, professors, and institutional heads, insofar as the placing of new institutional graduates may be concerned.

The old system of individual placement had many virtues. It was direct; a student could be recommended by Professor Y directly to the principal of the high school at Lakehurst without the intervention of what appears to some to be red tape. Professor Y knew just what was needed, knew the high school principal, the type of community, and also the student whom he was recommending. The personal touch added assurance and satisfaction to all concerned. Appointment bureaus must learn how to conserve these values.

But this individual system had many short-comings. Some professors who might have the time and occasion to travel about the state naturally would be looked to more than others for recommendations of new teachers. Students, knowing this, would drift into the classes of such instructors and thus a large department would be built up out of all proportion to the state's needs. Doubtless, every institution represented here could furnish at least one illustration of this development. Another obvious drawback of the old system was the fact that all professors were not equally sagacious in appraising their students or in sensing school needs.

So the institutional appointment bureau represents a step forward. It may be characterized as the second period in the development of appointment service. While it would be carrying coal to Newcastle to describe the mode of operation of appointment bureaus to a group of appointment secretaries, I trust you will permit me to comment upon what seems to me to be one great deficiency in the systems now in vogue in these bureaus.

During the course of the year, instructors

are asked to express their opinions of students who are about to complete their period of training. Standard forms are used, all having about the same headings. As an instructor, I may be asked to express my opinion of Mr. X, a graduate student. I must reply in some way and naturally, if the student is capable, I make a general statement like this: "Mr. X is a capable, energetic man; a fine future is ahead." The appointment service receives half a dozen such reports, edits and types them, binds them in red, yellow, or blue covers, and then waits until a call comes in, whereupon the papers are sent. I have received hundreds of such sets of papers, but not one of them ever has served my purpose satisfactorily. The information of most value which is received in this way is age, sex, nationality, church affiliations, height, and weight. I want to know about the applicant's health. The papers say, "Health is perfect." It always is in the record; obviously untrue! I also want to know what Professor Y thinks of Mr. X for the position I seek to fill. To be sure, Professor Y endorses Mr. X in general, as indicated by his testimonial; but would he endorse him for this particular position? In fact, in many instances, I have written professors under such circumstances and not infrequently the reply has been, "Mr. X is very capable but not adapted to your situation." I am sure many who have to employ instructors feel just as I do about the need of personal endorsement from professors whom we know regarding a specific post we seek to fill. This much of the old plan, where instructors expressed their opinions of the fitness of students for certain positions, must be retained. How is it to be done?

With only one institutional appointment bureau in a state and that one usually conducted by the state university, the situation was relatively simple. But with the development of the systems of state teachers



colleges and the teacher training departments of Land Grant Colleges, all with the accompanying appointment services, it is not unusual to find, in our more populous states, from five to ten institutional bureaus. So long as normal schools and teachers colleges confined their work to the preparation of teachers for the elementary schools, the appointment bureaus of these institutions were not a complicating factor, as their graduates were placed locally, usually within the district in which the institution was located. But when teachers colleges enter upon the preparation of teachers of secondary schools, district lines tend to disappear, and positions become available potentially throughout the whole state. Thus, a half-dozen placement agents find themselves virtually competing with one another. Fortunately, this has occasioned but few adverse effects to date, due not to the plan or to the foresight of appointment secretaries, but to the rapid turnover of the teaching staff and to the shortage of trained teachers.

To further complicate the placement problem, state boundaries, as well as district boundaries, tend to disappear in placing teachers and educational leaders—particularly secondary teachers of special subjects (agriculture, home economics, arts, physical training) and supervisors of elementary schools and special subjects, superintendents of schools, research officials, etc. Many a city these days concludes that it will search the country for the best superintendent of schools that can be found, regardless of where he was trained and where he may be employed now. This long has been the custom in selecting presidents of universities and colleges, and college professors.

And this brings us to the present period, that of coördination among the appointment bureaus of a state and coöperation between the bureaus of the various states. So far as I know, there are no instances among the states of a plan (either official or unofficial)

for the coördination of the appointment bureaus. I believe, further, that there are no plans of coöperation between the states. It must not be assumed that I am saying there is *no* coöperation at present among the bureaus in the states, or between the states. There is a great deal of coöperation; but of the informal sort, which is the result of a coöperative frame of mind and temperament, on the part of secretaries. Your president, in conversation the other day, cited a splendid instance of coöperation between California and Oregon. The Oregon Agricultural College long has been a source for high grade teachers of secondary agriculture. A representative of this institution, through coöperation with the appointment secretary of the University of California, placed a dozen or so teachers of agriculture in California. Many other similar illustrations could be cited.

But this informal coöperation is inadequate, and ultimately will give way to some form of organized effort, determined by the process of evolution. To attempt to start with a formal plan of coöperation probably would result in failure. But the plan which ultimately will formulate itself as a result of necessity and a coöperative frame of mind will be sound and workable. Social evolution, rather than creative or prescriptive legislation, is the safe process.

First individual effort on the part of instructors to place their graduates, then organized institutional service, then coöperative effort between institutional agencies; such is the general sweep of the placement service of institutions to date.

## II.

Meanwhile agencies, aside from institutions, have entered upon the placement of teachers. It was inevitable that this should be so, for as yet institutions alone have not been able to render the required service. The commercial agency, in this country,



antedates in origin the institutional bureau. Ten years before the civil war there were at least three agencies of this type. The period of greatest growth was from 1875 to 1890. Since that time the developments have been characterized by specialization and consolidation. The latest development is the organization of the National Association of Teachers Agencies with a membership of over sixty agencies. Several agencies now confine their efforts to the collegiate field; others, to the so-called special subjects; a number operate upon a national basis with offices in the more important population areas. To the members of this Association, the national agencies are of special interest as they illustrate the feasibility of disregarding, to a large extent, the smaller and customary geographical boundaries. The pattern of these national organizations could be studied with profit.

It is certainly not within the province of this discussion to evaluate the commercial agencies or to attempt to predict that they will be either permanent or transitory. However, like the proprietary professional schools of two decades ago, these bureaus exist for monetary profit, and, in the last analysis, monetary considerations must be well to the fore. Some of them make money for their owners while rendering a very worthy professional service; others have the reputation of making money by capitalizing what some call the "exploitation of professional distress." No one of them is endowed, and none operates under direct state control; some, however, must conform in their practices to the statutes governing private employment agencies. But it would be unfair to make the sweeping generalization that the commercial agencies, under existing circumstances, have no legitimate place. It would be a great step forward if some of them could be endowed. We know dozens of capable teachers and executives who can make no claim upon institutional bureaus

and who must look periodically to the commercial agencies for positions. We likewise know of school superintendents and boards of education that prefer the commercial agencies to the institutional bureaus.

In 1906, Massachusetts authorized the State Board of Education to conduct a registry for teachers. Since that time hundreds of teachers have been placed through this registry. The development of departments of registration in the state departments of education seems to me to have possibilities of great magnitude, where the departments are on a professional basis and where they are free from political influence. In my opinion, there are at least six state departments that well might seek the necessary legislation to establish a placement service.

One state teachers association (perhaps there is more than one) very recently has entered upon a plan looking toward placement service for its members. This state association has an elaborate organization, a large and representative membership, and a salaried staff of secretaries. Its mode of operation has not yet been standardized nor has its field of service been delineated. It is an interesting outgrowth of the current movement, on the part of teachers, for more effective concerted effort to improve their conditions and the school systems as a whole; a movement which is more far-reaching in its possibilities than almost any other development in education during the past two decades. There are some who believe that the functions of such associations should be primarily to foster necessary and desirable school legislation, increase the amount of financial support of school systems, and raise teachers salaries. These tasks are of sufficient magnitude to require the undivided efforts of the voluntary associations for a long time. There is danger that personal politics may hamper the most effective service in placing teachers. To say



the least, the experiment will be watched with interest.

Teachers Federations, also, are entering upon placement programs. To the speaker, it seems perfectly clear that such a placement service is not for the best interest of the schools or, ultimately, for the teachers themselves.

The Coöperative Bureau for Women Teachers, with headquarters in New York City, seeks to render, on a national basis, an educational service for schools and colleges by: (1) raising the standards of the teaching profession by making available information and criticism as to methods of training, conditions of employment, and standards of service; and (2) affording to schools an extensive registry of successful and prospective teachers; and (3) affording to teachers information regarding requirements, opportunities for training, vacancies, and characteristics of schools. Colleges, associations, schools, and teachers may become members and may receive the benefits of the Bureau upon the payment of the designated fees, varying according to the type of membership.

Another entrant in the registry and placement field is the American Council of Education, through its Division of College and University Personnel. Limiting its efforts to the colleges and universities, this organization is attempting to have all young men engaged in teaching in such institutions, or those qualified to enter such service, file in Washington complete personal and professional data. The Council, as I understand its plan, will not attempt to find a position for an individual; rather it hopes to develop such a complete and useful registry that Deans and Presidents may obtain from the files a list of promising men for the position they seek to fill. While the Council prefers that the university executives come to Washington and discover for themselves a list of eligible candidates, the Secretary

will undertake to make a tentative list upon receipt of a set of specifications regarding the position to be filled. It is the nation's most impersonal service now in existence. It operates upon a strictly professional basis, and neither personal nor institutional politics or prejudices are factors. It is certainly sound theoretically to assume that the United States of America is the most appropriate placement unit, and that Washington is the center thereof; but practically it will be a very long time before this is a reality. In my opinion, the natural population and institutional units will have to be considered if this placement enterprise is to net the maximum results. As the Council seems to have no inclination to regard its Personnel Division as the only one which should function in the collegiate field, in this discussion it may be listed as another enterprise to be added to those already enumerated; institutional bureaus, commercial agencies, and bureaus of state boards of education, teachers' associations, teachers' federations, and coöperative bureaus.

### III.

It is reasonable to assume that, of the seven types of agencies now engaged in placement service, some are better adapted to the ends in view than others; that some should be encouraged and some discouraged even to the point of elimination. By what process are we to determine which should be fostered and which eliminated? Obviously standards and criteria are needed. I propose for your consideration four criteria; certainly not with the hope or expectation that they will be adopted as presented, but in order that you may have something definite before you which, by the process of revision and substitution, may lead to a satisfactory formulation.

1. The non-profit or non-commercial agency should be regarded in a preferred group.



There is no need to argue this thesis. To permit a money-making agency to prosper because of the necessity of a professional worker to find a position, or the need of a school to find a trained worker, is a social waste and unjustifiable in the extreme. It is particularly inappropriate in the teaching service, which is a state service not to be exploited or arranged for by a money-making agency.

2. Only those placement agencies which can operate and do operate on a high professional plane should be fostered.

The placement service must advance the development of our schools and colleges. It must be conscious of and share in the larger ends of education. To do this, requires that positions be filled by persons who can render the most effective service. The interests of individuals, groups of individuals, and training institutions are of secondary importance. This thesis implies that those agencies are in a preferred class which are actuated by the highest professional motives, which are equipped to discover accurately the needs of our schools and colleges and the qualifications of available teachers, and which can operate on a confidential basis.

3. Other things being equal, the organization should be preferred which, incident to discharging its placement function, will tend to make available to teacher training institutions and certifying bodies the data obtained about the educational needs of the schools in terms of personnel.

In other words, the agencies closely related to or a part of normal schools, or schools of education, or state boards of education, are to be preferred. The placement agencies stand in a potentially helpful relation to teacher-training institutions. Those agencies which can make the most of this relation should be fostered.

4. With the greatly increased need for specialists in all educational endeavor, the agencies which can operate with only inci-

dental reference to the smaller district boundaries or zones will be most helpful. For example, in filling a college or university position, it is frequently necessary to canvass the entire country. Herein lies the great advantage of the Personnel Service of the American Council of Education and similar agencies.

While I have listed but four criteria, many more will come to the minds of the members of the organization. The definite evaluation of the seven types of bureaus certainly does not fall within the scope of this discussion. It would be indeed a rash individual who, alone and unaided, would attempt such a task.

#### IV.

Each association, to bring its purposes from aspiration to reality, must have an appropriate organization and mode of operation. I venture to suggest that the commission<sup>1</sup> plan of organization might be suited to the needs of this group. There are many problems which will be of the utmost importance for a number of years. Each of the more important problems could be considered by a commission constituted by the officers of the association. Each commission could pursue its work throughout the year and submit a report at the annual meeting. At the start, the following commissions might be formed: research, state legislation, standardization, and coördination. The association needs facts. The research commission could promote the gathering of data by its members and the writing of theses and dissertations by graduate students in schools of education. Certainly state legislation is needed, but it will take much thoughtful consideration to determine upon the proper form of legislation. A certain amount of standardization in procedure among the placement agencies probably would be desirable as would also a certain

<sup>1</sup>The Association of American Colleges has found this to be an admirable plan.



degree of coördination. These topics are well adapted to the commission plan of procedure.

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## AN ATHENIAN BOY'S DAY FROM SUNRISE TO SUNSET

AN ACTIVITY IN ART, ENGLISH, AND HISTORY

### I. What the Children Did

A. The children made a book to be used as reference by succeeding classes.

1. They decided on a table of contents.

(a) They organized the table of contents into chapters, having each chapter a different phase of the Greek boy's day.

2. They wrote chapters on these topics, collecting materials from the following sources:

(a) How the Athenian boy dressed

Compton, *Picture Encyclopedia*, Volume III; Hall, *Our Ancestors in Europe*, p. 36; Harding, *Old World Background to American History*, p. 26.

(b) What the Athenian boy ate.

Compton, *Picture Encyclopedia*, Volume III; Burnham, *Our Beginnings in Europe and America*, pp. 52-54; Hall, *Our Ancestors in Europe*, p. 36; Harding, *Old World Background to American History*, p. 26.

(c) What kind of home the Athenian boy inhabited.

Burnham, *Our Beginnings in Europe and America*, pp. 53-54; Hall, *Our Ancestors in Europe*, pp. 40-42.

(d) How the Greek soldiers dressed.

Burnham, *Our Beginnings in Europe and America*, p. 58; Southworth, *American History with European Beginnings*, p. 6.

(e) Some important buildings in Greece at the time this boy lived.

Atkinson, *An Introduction to American History*, pp. 45, 46, 48; Hall, *Our Ancestors in Europe*, pp. 30-32; Harding, *Old World Background to American History*, pp. 41-42.

(f) How the Athenian boy was educated.

Atkinson, *An Introduction to American History*, pp. 42-44; Hall, *Our Ancestors in Europe*, pp. 45-51; Monroe, *History of Education*, pp. 1-50.

(g) How the Athenian boy amused himself.

Atkinson, *An Introduction to American History*, pp. 32, 44, 67, 68; Burnham, *Our Beginnings in Europe and America*, p. 70; Hall, *Our Ancestors in Europe*, pp. 29-34.

(h) A letter the Athenian boy wrote to a Roman boy.

Atkinson, *An Introduction to Amer-*

*ican History*, pp. 40-52; Harding, *Old World Background to American History*, pp. 13-56.

3. They illustrated their book by:

(a) Collecting pictures of

(1) Greek soldiers.

(2) Greek buildings.

(3) Greek statues and copies of paintings.

(b) Making from colored paper pictures of the following things:

(1) Greek temples.

Burnham, *Our Beginnings in Europe and America*, p. 67; Hall, *Our Ancestors in Europe*, p. 31.

(2) Greek dresses.

Hall, *Our Ancestors in Europe*, pp. 35 and 41.

(3) Greek shields.

Burnham, *Our Beginnings in Europe and America*, p. 58; Southworth, *American History with European Beginnings*, p. 6.

(4) Greek helmets.

Burnham, *Our Beginnings in Europe and America*, p. 58; Southworth, *American History with European Beginnings*, p. 6.

(5) Greek lyres.

Compton, *Picture Encyclopedia*, Volume I, pp. 15 and 24.

(6) Greek weapons.

Burnham, *Our Beginnings in Europe and America*, p. 53; Hall, *Our Ancestors in Europe*, p. 37.

(7) Greek warships.

Burnham, *Our Beginnings in Europe and America*, p. 60; Southworth, *American History with European Beginnings*, p. 3.

(8) Greek Chariots.

Hall, *Our Ancestors in Europe*, p. 5.

(c) Making line drawings of

(1) A Greek sunshade.

(2) A Greek fan.

(3) A drinking bowl.

(4) A spoon.

(5) A Grecian urn.

(6) The Doric column, the Ionic column, and the Corinthian column.

(7) A wax tablet.

(8) A Greek scroll.

(9) A stylus.

(10) A Greek lamp and stand.

4. They filled in the following outline maps:

(a) Greece, showing how the population centered around the coasts.

Hall, *Our Ancestors in Europe*, p. 7.

(b) Europe, Asia, and Africa showing the colonies of Greece at 400 B. C.

Hall, *Our Ancestors in Europe*, p. 15.

(c) Outline map of Europe showing route of the Greek boys' travels to Rome.

5. They assembled their book.

(a) They made a frontispiece, a title page, a dedication page, and compiled a bibliography for their book.