EDUCATIONAL COMMENT

SALARIES IN LAND-GRAIN COLLEGES

A study of salaries paid to presidents, deans, professors, associate professors, and instructors in 51 land-grant colleges located in every state, Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico, has been made by the Office of Education, U.S. Department of the Interior.

Dr. Walter J. Greenleaf, Office of Education Specialist in Higher Education, who made the survey and prepared a circular report, explains that the study was made to determine the present status of salaries paid to members of the various faculty ranks in the land-grant colleges and universities throughout the country, and to compare present salaries with those before and during the depression.

Depression’s axe fell heavily on salaries of the more than 400 deans, according to the survey. Those employed on a nine-month basis saw their median salaries decreased from $5,193 in 1928-29, to $4,187 in 1934-35, an average decrease of more than $1,000.

Similar depression-period slashes are revealed in salaries paid to professors. Full-time professors on a nine-month basis received an average salary of $4,278 in 1928-29. By 1934-35 their annual income had decreased to $3,775. Those on an eleven-twelve month basis had their salaries cut from $4,161 to $3,682 over the same period of time. Associate professors dropped from $3,352 in 1928-29 to $2,903 in 1934-35; assistant professors from $2,738 in 1928-29 to $2,449 in 1934-35; and instructors from $2,005 to $1,769 over the four-year period. Information reveals that salaries for the present year are higher than last year.

The Greenleaf study revealed a total of 11,416 full-time staff members instructing 179,973 resident and 77,710 extension and correspondence land-grant college students. Of these 11,416 staff members, one-third were deans or full professors, while two-thirds or nearly 7,500 held ranks below that of professor. Approximately 85 percent of the staff members receive less than $4,000 salary per year. The median range of salaries for the entire group of staff members in the land-grant institutions was found to be $2,500 to $2,749, representing a $500 cut from the median range of $3,000 to $3,249 for the years 1929-31.

Dr. Greenleaf’s report, “Salaries in Land-Grant Colleges,” is available from the Federal Office of Education, in Washington, as Circular No. 157, single copies of which are free.

GOOD WILL DAY MATERIAL AVAILABLE

The International Relations Committee of the National Council of Teachers of English has prepared a bulletin for teachers containing plans for the celebration of Good Will Day (May 18) and suggestions for other activities to promote international understanding. The booklet covers classroom projects, assembly programs, special
day observances, extra-curricular activities, Red Cross co-operation, and panel discussions and gives a list of essays, poems, and plays suitable for students’ reading. Anyone wishing a copy of the bulletin should write to National Council of Teachers of English, 211 West 68th Street, Chicago, Illinois, enclosing ten cents in stamps or coin.

THE READING TABLE

AMERICAN SPEECH


Within the last generation scholars have suddenly become aware of the American use of the English language as a fascinating and important study. The result has been a rash of articles and books on American speech. George Philip Krapp’s The Pronunciation of Standard English in America (1919), and The English Language in America (1925) are the standard works on this subject. H. L. Mencken’s The American Language (1921) is a significant contribution to the study. At the present time a large group of researchers are at work on a Linguistic Atlas of America, under the general leadership of Hans Curath, and a definitive Dictionary of American English is being prepared by the Chicago University Press, under the editorship of Sir William Craigie. John Samuel Kenyon’s American Pronunciation, first published in 1924, has held a vital place in the scholarship of American speech. Now in its new revised edition it is at once an admirable textbook on pronunciation for the student and an authoritative, up-to-date survey of the whole subject of American English for the teacher.

The author, professor of English in Hiram College, consulting editor of pronunciation for Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition, and a member of the Administrative Council of the International Phonetic Association, approaches his difficult subject with candid pedagogical purpose. His desire is “to awaken the interest of students in their mother tongue, its behavior and laws of development, particularly as these have a bearing on an intelligent attitude toward what constitutes good English speech.” He believes that because of a general lack of knowledge of phonetics many teachers have wrong habits of speech and that they unintentionally mislead their pupils in pronunciation; that a study of phonetics will broaden interest in the pronunciation of English in different regions of America and England, and help to establish a rational attitude towards questions of authority and standards of usage, as well as to stimulate good articulation.

This work in phonetics, he declares, “involves the same mental processes of accurate observation, comparison, logical deduction, and generalized concepts, that have been rightly the chief argument for the disciplinary value of the study of Latin and Greek.”

One section of this book is devoted to a brief review of the history of English and a frank consideration of the various estimates of “standard English speech.” He does not try to set up any rules for a uniform English, but accepting the several types of American and British English, he proceeds to discuss “a science of pronunciation” that will apply to all sections of this country. His observations are based on the “familiar, cultivated colloquial” speech of northern Ohio, representative of what has come to be known as General American English. Everywhere, however, he explains the variations from this type, as they appear in the Eastern and Southern types.

Another section is given over to the organs of speech, with some excellent charts of mouth-positions in the forming of English sounds. In other sections the many troublesome problems of phonetics are dealt with, including clear explanation of such phenomena as assimilation and the influence of spelling on standard pronunciation.