Teaching Personnel

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A PERIOD OF GREAT SIGNIFICANCE lies ahead for higher education. Many developments now under way will become fixed habits of higher education; many expedients now adopted may become enduring weaknesses. The experiment of higher education for all is now in progress. In spite of the fact that this experiment will be tried under conditions of severe handicaps, its success or failure will greatly affect the public's attitude in the future. Success may lead to a very large measure of higher education for all, with sufficient support to eliminate most of these handicaps.

No element is as important in this connection as the quality of instruction accorded the students. This matter received much attention during discussions of the Round Table on Personnel Problems held in connection with the recent Emergency Conference on Higher Education of the American Council on Education, 11–13 July. A number of points were made which may be important enough to warrant attention from the educational public generally.

Colleges and universities appear to be caught in a web of circumstance making it hard to secure the services of competent instructors, particularly in the scientific and technical field. Traditional salaries are low. Many colleges hesitate to extend the privileges of tenure and retirement provisions to temporary employees. Housing provisions are generally inadequate, and transient faculty members can scarcely buy. Purchase prices for housing are extremely high for persons on college salaries. It seems likely that the pressure for teaching staffs will cause overloading of teaching schedules, thus nullifying many of the attractive features of academic life, such as freedom for research, study, and travel, and rich personal relationships with students which can only come if teaching loads are moderate enough to provide some time for leisure.

The round-table group was of the opinion that the manner in which colleges and universities meet this problem will have a large effect on the future well-being of American higher education. If the veteran's excursion into higher education is the rich, satisfying experience that it should be and if it leads to a competence that will possess reasonable market value, the American public will in the future be certain to back higher education for qualified youth. If the average veteran has a sour experience, the effect on the public's reaction to tax support for higher education is not likely to be salutary.

It must be remembered that the present crisis in personnel is only the first round. As the wave of enrollment passes on to higher classes, the degree of specialization of the curricula will rise and the diversity and technical difficulty of teaching will increase, requiring an abler and better-trained faculty than for freshman classes alone. At the same time, large freshman classes are to be expected for a few years yet.

It should be emphasized that colleges and universities can secure adequately trained staffs if a real attempt is made to compete with salaries offered by the two main competitors of education—industry and the Government. Many schools have already made provisions for a large share of their teaching staffs, and many have achieved full staffs. Even though the higher salaries offered in competing activities have lured many former teachers, and many good prospective teachers, from the academic path, it is generally recognized among industrial employers and among government administrators that it would be folly not to preserve the ability of the colleges and universities to produce highly trained personnel. These activities have a stake in the situation. It is believed that cooperation in making suitably trained personnel available for whole or part-time work could be counted on. However, a necessary first requisite is an adequate salary.

The dilemma of the colleges, then, is primarily one of being able to pay suitable salaries and offer conditions of service which will attract good men. That the Congress has recognized this is evident in the recent amendments to the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, which permits the Veterans' Administrator to pay to institutions the estimated total cost for veterans of teaching personnel and supplies instead of only the established tuition charges. Colleges and universities then can pay better salaries if necessary and can pass the costs on to the Federal Government. *This is in recognition of the fact that the Congress and not the colleges guaranteed the veteran an education.*

The reaction of administrators to the present situation appears to be a hesitation to raise salaries sufficiently to compete actively for proper personnel because of the fear of building up their salary scale to a level which might be hard to maintain if a slump in enrollments were later to occur or if the greater part of their income were later to be from other than veteran fees. This is, of course, a very real problem, and the attitude of the administrators is quite understandable. But it was pointed out by a number of administrators attending the round table that the other side of the picture should not be ignored. The report of 20 May 1946 to the President by the director of War Mobilization and Reconversion, entitled "The Veteran and Higher Education," predicts that higher education

enrollments will pass beyond the 3,000,000 mark by 1960. Veteran enrollment in the fall of 1947 will be greater than in the fall of 1946 and will not reach its peak until the fall of 1948. Not until 1950–51 will the number of veterans in college begin to decline significantly. It is confidently believed that after that period nonveteran enrollment will have increased and will continue to increase. This period is sufficiently long so that if a recourse is had to the employment of temporary, poorly qualified staffs, these staff members will have acquired a degree of permanence such that it will be difficult to replace them without doing some violence to the concept of tenure in college faculty employment. Inertia alone will tend to perpetuate them in their posts. It should not be necessary to add that this generation of veterans deserves well-qualified teachers.

In summary, it seemed to the members of this round table that higher education is at a crossroad. In one direction, that of temporary expediency, lies the road of poor instruction, poor public relations, and a long-time weakness in American life resulting from a poorly trained generation. In the other direction, that of a courageous insistence on qualified instruction regardless of cost, lies the road to success in the experiment of higher education for all, good public relations, and an adequately trained generation of veterans. It seemed to the members of the round table that education should have complete awareness of the implication of this situation.

Obituary

Velyien Ewart Henderson
1877-1945

The death of Prof. Henderson on 6 August 1945, at the age of 68, removed from the field of pharmacology and related medical sciences an outstanding teacher and critical investigator. An influential member of American scientific societies, this distinguished Canadian was long an officer of the American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics, of which he was president in 1936 and 1937. In 1936 he also served as president of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology. A fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, he was president of the Biological Section in 1937, and in 1944 he was awarded its Flavelle medal for meritorious contributions to medical science. From 1941 to 1943 he was president of the Canadian Physiological Society, of which he was a charter member. He was also the founder of the Toronto Biochemical and Biophysical Society and its chairman in its second and twenty-first years.

Born and educated in Ontario, Dr. Henderson studied at Upper Canada College and in 1902 was graduated in medicine from the University of Toronto, the institution with which, except for a few post-doctorate years, he remained associated throughout his entire career. After a brief interest in a career in pathology and a period at the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Henderson became a pupil of Hans Horst Meyer, then at Marburg. The impressions gained while under the tutelage of this great leader remained vivid throughout Dr. Henderson's life, and it was largely as a tribute to Meyer that he translated into English the seventh edition of *Experimental pharmacology,* the important textbook of Meyer and Gottlieb. After a few months with Starling in London, Dr. Henderson returned to the University of Toronto, where he was for a time in the Department of Physiology. He undertook the development of the Department of Pharmacology in 1906, at the age of 29, and became professor of pharmacology six years later. In 1914 he entered the Canadian Expeditionary Force as a combatant officer and was reluctantly transferred to the Medical Corps toward the end of the war, from which he returned as a major in 1919.

Prof. Henderson was extremely well versed in his subject and was gifted with a remarkable memory and unusual clarity of thought. An indefatigable teacher, he shouldered the lion's share of the responsibility for the instruction of the large medical classes by the staff of his Department. Lacking the facilities for student participation in other than very simple exercises in experimental pharmacology, he gave generously of his time by the presentation twice weekly throughout each school year of elaborate mammalian demonstrations chosen carefully to illustrate important pharmacological principles. Subsequently, photostatic copies of the kymographic tracings were presented to the students for detailed analysis, a practice much less enjoyed by the students than was the drama of the demonstrations.

In research, his interests were widely diversified, but he was particularly well known for his contributions