

UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE LEARNED PROFESSIONS

AN INTERNATIONAL STUDY OF
OCCUPATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL
PLANNING

BY

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FOREWORD

THIS book represents a first attempt to deal in a comprehensive way and on an international scale with a problem which, though essentially a problem of the younger generation, is of paramount importance for the cultural, social, and political evolution of society. The plan for the book and the inquiries which led up to it originated with International Student Service, which itself had arisen out of the needs of the post-War student generations in Europe and elsewhere. During the first years after the World War International Student Service endeavoured to meet the physical wants of the institutions of higher learning and their students. Through relief and the establishment of self-help organizations it helped many institutions and tens of thousands of students to overcome the disastrous consequences of the war and its aftermath. Later on it shared in their discussions of the more fundamental problems besetting the modern universities by publications such as *The University in a Changing World* (Oxford University Press, 1932). In 1932 it set out on a study of one of the most difficult issues confronting the institutions of higher learning and their students—the problem of the overcrowding of the universities and the growing unemployment of their graduates. Thanks to the generous support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, given through the International Institute of Teachers College, Columbia University, this study developed into a world-wide survey of which the more important results are summarized in the present volume.

Scores of university teachers, educational administrators, public men and women, secretaries of appointment boards and of professional organizations, students and others in some thirty different countries collaborated in this survey. To them we owe most of the information on which our findings and conclusions are based. Only those who know how defective educational and professional statistics are in most countries, how reluctant educational institutions or professional organizations sometimes are to part with information, the divulging of which they consider contrary to their interests—only they will realize how much we owe to these collaborators. Most of them have given their help voluntarily, and it is our first duty to thank them and all those who have aided us with advice and criticism.

Notwithstanding the large measure of co-operation which we have found, it is evident that our exposition of the facts and their analysis can in no sense do full justice to our problem. The very magnitude of the issues imposed certain limitations of which more will be said later on. Owing to altogether inadequate information or in order to avoid tedious repetition certain countries had to be omitted from the survey. On the other hand the wide ramifications of the problem made it inevitable that certain aspects should be treated in a very cursory way. We are aware of the dangers which this implies: any selection depends on a personal point of view which is always assailable. But we do not apologize for what is in the nature of all learning. In the inescapable perspectivity of all knowledge lies the motive power for ever new effort and research. We are not afraid of criticism but we dread inertia. If this publication stimulates discussion, if it leads to further searching, it will have attained its purpose.

One thing must not be forgotten. Behind the dry figures of our statistical tables, behind the dispassionate analysis of cause and effect, there lies the misery of a whole generation. It has been ever present with us as this book was being prepared: the utter despair of thousands and thousands of parents who saved and slaved a lifetime to give their children an education, only to see them in the end unemployed, very often broken in body and in spirit; the impotent wrath and the slow demoralization of promising young men and women, loaded with degrees and certificates, to whom society denies the opportunity to put to any use their gifts and their knowledge. To them this book is dedicated.

W. M. K.

GENEVA,

October 15th, 1936.

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In the foreword I dedicated this book to the younger generation. It deals with their problems. Yet it is their book also in another sense. Throughout the years of preparation and while it was being written a group of young people, mostly recent graduates, gave freely of their time to help the writer in the collection of the necessary data, and to keep up to date what in the end became a formidable collection of material. Their enthusiasm and their assistance, given unstintingly, were both a tremendous help and a continuous source of inspiration. I can only mention those who have spent months on end in such unselfish service: Miss Kerstin Berggren (Lund), Miss Nancy Challoner (Geneva and London), Miss Margot Erkelens (Holland and Geneva), Mrs. Thomas Hale Ham (New York), Miss Gerda Kaufmann and Miss Bertha Woodall (both of London and Geneva), and finally Mr. Peter Rhodes (New York and Oxford).

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