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Salesmanship in the high schools

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SALESMAINSHIP IN THE HIGH SCHOOLS

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Introduction

I. History of the Prince School
1. effort of Women's Educational & Industrial Union
2. class of 1905
3. second class
4. third class
   a. advisory committee
   b. support of stores
5. class of 1907
   permanent establishment
6. present course of study
   a. salesmanship
   b. textiles
   c. general merchandise
   d. color and design
   e. arithmetic
7. aims of school
   a. selection
   b. ability
   c. service
   d. personal development

II. History of Retail Selling in Boston High Schools
1. high school curriculum
   a. academic
   b. commercial
2. failure of commercial course
   a. business changes
   b. competition
   c. overcrowding
3. proposal of retail selling course
   a. need of workers
   b. overcrowding in clerical field
   c. need of store experience
4. opposition
   a. exploitation
   b. less to store
   c. adjustment of wage
5. adoption of first course--1912--Girls' High

III. Course in Boston High Schools
1. candidates
   process of selection
2. course of study
3. typical lesson
4. part-time employment
5. advantages of part-time employment
   a. remaining in school
   b. contact and breadth
   c. ease in securing position
   d. stimulus to scholarship
   e. personal development
6. continuation school
   a. voluntary
   b. compulsory
IV Development of Course in other Cities,..................25
1. Pittsburg
   a. impulse of department store heads
   b. study of numbers going into stores
   c. plan similar to Boston
2. St. Louis
   a. study of department stores
   b. importance of teacher
   c. plan similar to Boston
3. Atlanta
   a. urged by department store heads
   b. special classes for boys and girls
   c. part-time employment
   d. obstacles anticipated
4. Erie
   a. purpose of course
   b. salesmanship
   c. customer
   d. psychology of salesmanship
   e. project method
5. Springfield
   a. unique part-time arrangement
   b. advantage to pupil and store
6. Rochester
   a. name
   b. Merchants' Advisory Committee
   c. day by day study
7. Tacoma
   a. difficulties of small city
   b. advertising
   c. popularity

V Administration of Retail Selling.........................39
1. Federal
   a. initiative
   b. standards
   c. propaganda
   d. financial aid
   d. Special Agent
2. State
   a. cooperation with Government
   b. State Director
   c. district conferences
   d. financial aid
3. City
   a. knowledge of local needs
   b. coordination of subjects
   c. appointment of director
   d. equipment
   e. standards for teachers
   f. placement and follow-up work
   g. advertising

VI Modern Attitude Toward Department Store Work..........47
1. change in type of worker
2. change in aims of department store
   a. service
   b. one-price policy
   c. resale objective
3. importance of trained worker in scheme
4. success of retail selling course
INTRODUCTION

Although Retail Selling in the public high schools is considered in its infant stages of growth, yet it has attained remarkable power in the short time since it emerged from its swaddling clothes. Certainly its progress is largely the result of the changed attitude about the place of women in department stores.

Today we marvel at the strange story that only a short three decades ago in a prosperous town in Maine, a storekeeper was almost mobbed because he had the effrontery to employ as a clerk—a woman. Of course the conditions attendant upon and resulting from the Great War have in a large measure contributed to the changed view about woman's place. Yet the present opinion of what a saleslady's duties exclude—as well as include—has decidedly influenced the growing respect for that position.

In addition to the disapproval that the former clerk aroused by her daring appearance as a servant of the public's needs, she had to face both arduous and distasteful duties. Not only did she report for work at the unearthly hour of seven, but she spent her time, before her first customer appeared in scrubbing the floor, cleaning windows, arranging stock in the window and on the shelves. Throughout the long day, which ended at six o'clock, her tasks were more of the manual, than what might be called mental.

If the position demanded such quality of work, it is not strange that it attracted a corresponding quality of worker. Often she possessed a schooling which was the product of an education as far as the fifth or sixth grades. Sometimes she
she had a grammar school diploma. Rarely had she as much as one or two years of high school training. To her the matter of determining the needs of prospective buyers, a thorough knowledge of the merchandise she was supposed to sell were unknown, unchartered seas.

If some rare soul attained the heights of an executive position, it was through indomitable perseverance, combined with a happy talent for understanding people, their wants and the means of satisfying these wants; not because some force was determined to select and encourage and train potential aspirants to these lofty heights. Through the efforts of far-sighted, unselfish educators and business men with keen vision, the present-day salesgirl has secured a place commanding both economic independence and universal respect. Never could this promising state have been realized were it not for the initial impulse of an earnest desire to improve the situation—an earnest and practical purpose that drew the support of school-men and business men.

Today's sales girl has won the regard of the community for her position. She is surrounded by all manner of opportunities, social, educational, physical, recreational. She is on a road that leads, when once ability is proved, to power and financial success;
CHAPTER I

History of the Prince School
In 1905 in Boston, the Women's Educational and Industrial Union attempted a study of training needed for selling. As one of the directors of the Executive Committee, Mrs. Lucinda Wyman Prince became interested in the problem, especially since at that time she was director of a girls' club, composed of some fifty working girls.

Practically all of these girls, working in department stores complained of the meagre, inadequate salary in spite of long years of service. Mrs. Prince recognized the fact that the department stores were paying as much as the girls deserved. In her mind it was a problem, not of inducing employers to pay more under existing conditions, but of so developing the possibilities of the girls and the opportunities offered by their employment, that their salaries would naturally and necessarily increase.

To aid in carrying out her program, intended to train these girls, she asked the cooperation of the department stores. On the grounds that Mrs. Prince could know nothing of department store methods, since she had never worked in one, they refused to come in on her plan. Even when Mrs. Prince demonstrated the soundness of her beliefs, by selling as a special herself in a sale, far outstripping the experienced employees, they offered as a basis for their refusal—first that they could not afford the time lost by sending workers to school, and second that they could not commit themselves to guaranteeing positions to successful graduates.

Unshaken in her convictions, Mrs. Prince began her first course in the fall of 1905 with eight girls, none of whom was very promising material. Again in January, 1906, she organized
a new course, made up of sixteen girls. For their practical experience she secured the food shop and work shop of the Women's Educational and Industrial Union. However she was dissatisfied with the limited opportunities in the nature of merchandise, type of customer, and routine duties that the special store offered. She desired for her training pupils the widest, most varied and hence the most profitable experience.

At this time the emphasis on the need for the cooperation of the large department stores was met by the support of Wm. Filene Son's Company, which offered to take the class on Mondays with a small wage. Thus the third class, numbering seven, was started in July 1906. Now that a better understanding of the purpose and aims of the school was realized, the other department stores showed keen interest in and approval of the plan. The other department stores--Jordan Marsh Company, Gilchrist Company, Shepard Norwell Company, R. H. White Company and James A. Houston Company--showed an eager interest in the work. An advisory committee was formed composed of a superintendent from each of the above-named stores, Mrs. Kehew (President of the Women's Educational and Industrial Union) and Mrs. Prince.

It was this committee that was largely influential in giving definite shape and form to the hitherto tentative plans. As part of the plans, it was decided that those workers who revealed ability should be recommended by the store executive to take the course. This course of training would include, in addition to the theory and principles of effective selling, one day a week spent in store practice. For this store practice, the training pupil would receive one dollar. In addition the stores gave strong support by their guarantee of a permanent position after one month's successful probation.
Despite the encouraging assistance of the stores and the somewhat large class of sixteen, organized in October, 1906, the school found obstacles in the girls' hesitance to lose needed wages and to renew any unpleasant associations with school room atmosphere. That the school was rapidly gaining the approval of the department stores, however, was apparent in certain significant changes in the program of study. Previously the girls had been spending their time daily from 8:30 to 11 o'clock and from 4:30 to 5:30 in the school. Now the advisory committee, representing the department stores, suggested that the final hour be omitted, because it hardly profited to return to school, and that instead the morning period be extended to 11:30. A striking example of the recognition of the services of the school came in the demand by the stores that the girls attend school every morning except Monday; for the pupil-sales girls had received so much of value from their training that they were quite indispensable in the usual Monday morning sales. With the granting of full-time wages, even with the hours spent in study, came the final appreciation of the indisputable worth of the school.

From that time, the autumn of 1907, the school, has in outward form, remained practically unchanged. The policy of admitting candidates only upon the double approval of store superintendent and school director still holds true. Each year the school admits three classes, approximating thirty in each, for a term of twelve weeks. Thus the three-hour morning period results in fifteen hours a week or one hundred and eighty hours a term that the pupils spend in the class room.
As for the course of study itself, briefly it includes salesmanship, textiles, general merchandise, hygiene and physical education, arithmetic, store system, English, Color design. Under salesmanship are included certain big topics of which the successful sales person should have complete understanding. For example, care of stock emphasises the influence that attractive, easy-to-locate stock bears in persuading a possible customer. From that point on, the student takes up the study of pleasant, effective approach and its power in inducing a sale. Then follow the details of presenting the merchandise, "talking up" merchandise, which is nothing but a revelation of the sales persons thorough knowledge of his stock. Finally in closing a sale, the person behind the counter must know how to decide in a positive way the hesitating customer. Throughout all his work, the sales person is made conscious of the aim that she is to fulfill, namely, providing service. Particularly in this phase, she must be made cognizant of service, not as a sort of pleasant attractive manner, but a deep desire to ascertain and satisfy the wants of her customers.

From a study of store organization, the sales person sees the many various departments unified as a whole. Realizing her own part and its relation of the store as a unit, she feels a stronger loyalty to her department store. A well-known authority on matters of organization has said:

"A whole department store is nothing but each individual sales person in front of the merchandise with one particular piece of merchandise in her hand, discussing it with the customer. Every other activity of the store is legitimate in so far as it centers at that point and illegitimate in so far as it does not."

"Department Store Education"—Helen Rich Norton
At frequent intervals during this discussion of salesmanship, talks are given by leading representatives of different fields of department store work—floor managers, buyers, advertising managers.

Inasmuch as a large part of department store work centers about textiles, a course is organized for the study of linens, silks, cotton, laces—the usual fabrics on which a large part of retail trade is based. In this course the pupils study the processes of weaving, the differences between serge and tricotine, charmeen, the advantages of each. Whenever possible, grips are arranged for to nearby mills for first hand knowledge of textiles.

Closely allied to textiles is the subject of color and design. From a study of the fundamental principles of color, the sales person is enabled to arrange her stock with taste. She learns how to advise tactfully and competently the choice of merchandise. Finally in the development of her own artistic taste, in her own attire and surroundings, it is a most worthwhile subject.

In the study of merchandise, since a single group of thirty may represent fifteen different departments, the girls are arranged in small groups, according to the merchandise they sell. One appointment a week with a member of the teachers' class (a group distinct from the store workers class) is devoted to the study of special stock which the pupils handle in the stores.

Perhaps the most marked deficiency of the average store employee is her inability to do arithmetic, particularly that part that deals with fractions. Consequently, this course puts great emphasis on drill to acquire a quick and accurate skill
in working with fractions as arise in dress goods and yard goods counters. Incidental to this study, questions of personal arithmetic arise and many girls are made aware of means of saving and are encouraged to see the economic advantages of thrift.

Since the efficient store worker makes great demands upon physical resources, the course in hygiene and physical education aims to show health averages may be made higher and energy conserved. Especially are stressed the topics of nutrition, its effect on health, hygienic clothes, the work of the nervous system and personal hygiene. In addition, simple, but effective, exercises are given and the pupils are stimulated to seek outdoor healthful recreations in place of the doubtful movie palace and dance hall.

With respect to English, the class work centers about and reflects the main vocational interest. From a study of the correct English that the sales person must have at her command, from the practice in spelling the usual works in department store routine, the pupil is led to branch out to a broader study of English literature.

In no small degree is the unquestioned success of the school due to its fundamental four-fold purpose. Its first aim is to select only those who are really fitted to the task of selling. Natural aptitude and interest in the work are essential. Perhaps for the new recruit, the question whether she likes being among people, knowing their tastes and wants, whether she likes to have a given amount of work to do alone, untroubled by others, is a significant indication of natural interests. However, the school keeps in mind that even though the candidate may have a consuming interest in the work, she may lack the necessary physical stamina.

The school believes in increased salary and promotion based on intelligence—not seniority. The appeal to the girl's am-
bition rather than an arbitrary factor as length of service increases earnestness, adaptability, alertness, willingness.

The school definitely attempts to cultivate good judgment and power, to inculcate the ideals of service which the position demands. The instruction is intended to develop, not alone that judgment to be of use merely in relation to selling but that will give richness to life.

Finally the course aims to suggest high standards in all respects of daily life—high standards morally, mentally and physically.

Without a doubt the shrewd, hardheaded store executives would never have granted this opportunity to the store employees unless they felt reasonable sure, in the ultimate analysis, of a more than compensating gain. It is no mystery that the school has so remarkably succeeded then, for it has kept as its unwavering, unchanging aim the ideal of service to the employees, to the department store and to the community.

As the trained sales person has brought interest, initiative, intelligence to her work, the department store has gained in power in contributing to the wants of its customers, and also in financial returns. With increased returns, the department store has been enabled to provide varied advantages to its workers—co-operative lunch rooms, recreation rooms, libraries, medical attention, summer camp resorts; not to mention the possibilities for advancement to important, executive positions.

The success of the Prince School has been proved by its influence on public schools. Its earnest purpose has made it the pioneer of retail selling training in Boston high schools; and Boston high schools have been the guide to lead other
high schools to adopt a similar course of study. With all its idealism of a balanced and well developed sales girl, it has always kept its work on a most level-minded and practical plane. Therein has been the key of its power—ideals plus reality.
CHAPTER II

History of Retail Selling in Boston High Schools
For many years dissatisfaction with the work of the high school has centered about its solitary aim as a college preparatory institution. For those who could not afford to go to college or had not the inclination to pursue a course of advanced study, the high school offered nothing to satisfy the needs to enter the business world. Although industry and commerce were growing by leaps and bounds, the school with traditional indifference, failed to catch up with the speed of the real, outside world.

When the clerical, stenographic and bookkeeping courses were finally included, they proved their need by their sudden and increasing popularity. Yearly classes electing the stenographic and bookkeeping courses grew larger and larger. All unmindful of the way in which these potential office workers were going to find the positions for which they were fitting, the directors and teachers continued the same course, unchanging in content and purpose. While the ranks of high school stenographers and bookkeepers swelled enormously, the demand for their services lessened, as the result of certain conditions.

For one thing, business was taking on more and more the organization of large scale production and management. Consequent upon this development, came the need for ever higher degree of specialization. In the demand for specialization, the office worker, trained, skillful as she, must bow before the indomitable superiority of machines. Dictaphones, comptometers, calculating, bookkeeping machines—all mean, not only few human employees but workers with no knowledge of the fundamentals of shorthand, the theory of bookkeeping.
In addition, the growing importance of the private secretary encouraged the growth of business schools of collegiate rank. As examples of this higher institution devoted to preparation for business are Simmons College with its department of Secretarial Science and Boston University with its College of Practical Arts and Letters. Gradually the graduates of these schools, by their highly specialized and academic training, are pushing out the high school graduates and diminishing their chances of employment.

Yet in spite of these factors, the high school course disregarded the lessening opportunities for placement of their commercial students. Perhaps it was the unprecedented success of the privately engineered business school with its courses in machine operation and filing that stimulated the public school to a consideration of means of fitting girls for positions which, they had a reasonable assurance, would be open.

Some forward looking public school men were endeavoring to answer the problem of what to do with the high school graduate with whom so much pains were taken in urging a completed course and on whom so much money was spent in maintaining that high school course.

Thus it was that when a regular meeting of the Prince School was held in June 1912, there were present two official school men of Boston together with the principal of the largest girls' high school. Of this very problem of placement, the latter said:

"The Girls' High School registered last fall over 2100 pupils; 1400 are taking the clerical course (that includes bookkeeping and stenography)---Too many are taking the clerical
course and those who are taking it are doing so because they hope to get something from the school which will help them in earning a living or to secure enough points to win the diploma. Not one-third of the 1400 registered in this course will get positions."

With such sad commentary on the failure of the high schools, it is not surprising that there was a determination to provide a varied and, what is more, profitable curriculum. Of the subjects proposed, retail selling was suggested as a means not only of providing the pupil with a valuable training but of giving to the departments stores properly educated and intelligent workers. Concerning the adoption of the course in retail selling, the headmaster of this large school summed up the purpose and organization of the course as follows:

"It will make her more intelligent than the average sales woman and older than most beginners, but it will not provide the experience that the girls have who attend the school at the Union. I propose that the store superintendents shall have a share in shaping the policy of the course and I hope that the department stores will cooperate."

Without a single exception, the superintendents adopted heartily the proposal of throwing open their stores as a laboratory. Far sighted business men, they were able to foresee the ultimate gains for all involved—for the pupils, the community, the department stores.

* "Department Store Education"—Helen Rich Norton
Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education
Inasmuch as the inexperienced store worker has always represented a distinct and serious problem, the store superintendents were eager to see carried out a system for the control of this situation. Many young girls enter store work as "Juniors." Their duties include messenger work from department to department, wrapping bundles, carrying change. As the work calls for neither training nor maturity, it pays low salaries. Consequently at the first chance of something better, these girls drop out of the store. Hence the labor turnover among this type of worker is exceedingly high and prevents the full and proper efficiency of the whole store system.

Accordingly, if the department store could secure interested ambitious junior workers, who were desirous not of leaving the store at the first chance, but of advancing to a higher position for which this previous work would be excellent training, they would have strengthened one of the weakest links in department store chain.

While the general value of a retail selling course was realized, yet there were raised a few objections to its institution in the public high schools. Some felt that its disadvantages should be considered in spite of the many and apparent advantages.

In the first place, it was pointed out that the stores would be tempted, consciously or unconsciously, to exploit the youthful workers. Instead of giving the pupils positions graded in importance, positions that would be of value, the superintendents would place them in routine, unprofitable work. Moreover while one position might be worth while
in and of itself, the student might not be allowed to have a variety of positions to test her ability and to acquaint her with the management of the store. Obviously she might be of more use to the store if she remained upon some one task and gained considerable proficiency in that. Thus while the store might benefit, the pupil would lose in a negative way in not realizing all the opportunities available.

However the answer to this argument came in the belief that the store superintendents would not take advantage of the employee's position. In fact, there was complete confidence in the willing, cooperative attitude of the department heads. The advocates of retail selling in the schools were quite certain that the superintendents were strong enough to withstand any unworthy inclination to exploit the pupils. On the contrary, they would be anxious to provide means for testing the power of the employees and devising a system to enable them to grow in power.

Another point of opposition appeared in the belief that it was unfair to the business man. It arranged for a sudden deluge of youthful, inexperienced workers in his store to upset the organization, perhaps to cost a great deal of time and money in adjusting them to the requirements of the work. It would mean loss, in some cases of valued customers, since an awkward, thoughtless, untrained girl might exasperate a valued customer.

Against this charge was pitted the faith in the business man to tolerate a certain amount of inconvenience for the sake of larger, ultimate benefit. For one thing, even an untrained sales girl was no horrible monster to commit atrocities in the way of loss of time and money and valued customers. Perhaps at first she might be a somewhat disturb-
ing factor until the process of adjustment fitted her smoothly into the life of the store. At all events, if the business man had a great deal of confidence in her and in the suggested course of study, was it the task of any one else to worry about the injustice to him?

Finally, there was raised the problem of wages. A half-pay wage had been considered; yet this seemed to be an unfair attitude toward the pupil-sales girl. After all, she was working a whole day with the best of her energy and ability. To give her reduced compensation was to disregard her earnestness of purpose and to discourage her from putting forth her most unselfish work.

To meet this situation, the board agreed upon a full-time wage as the only means of fairness to the employee. This concession recognized her effort on the same plane as that of the experienced worker. It stimulated her to do her best, to take the maximum interest in her job.

These objections proved to be of little weight and force. There was great enthusiasm for the project and hearty belief in its necessity and its soundness. Without exception, the store superintendents favored the plan; and willingly offered cooperation by throwing open their stores as a laboratory. On the point of store practise, all were agreed as to its value.

In the fall of 1912, the first course in retail selling was offered in the Boston high schools, being given at the Girls' High School. This is the largest secondary school for girls in Boston. Within a few months, a similar course was adopted at the Dorchester High School by one of the teachers who had been granted a leave of absence to study at the Prince School. By 1914, the number of schools inclu-
ding this course had grown to nine; and in 1916 another school was added to this progressive group. The schools now offering the course are: Brighton High, Charlestown High, Dorchester High, East Boston, Girls' High, Hyde Park, Practical Arts High, South Boston High and West Roxbury. As for the popularity of the course, although very recent data are not available, the following figures will indicate its appreciative reception. In 1912-1913, 294 girls elected the course; and in 1915-1916, 407 elected it.
CHAPTER III

SALESMAINSHP IN BOSTON HIGH SCHOOLS
The groups into which the high school pupils, electing salesmanship, may be divided are four. There are first those who have chosen the work because it leads to a definite occupation other than typewriting and stenography and strictly clerical work. This is the largest group. Then there are those who are forced to take some course which will give them not only a chance to earn their living when they leave school but also an opportunity to earn enough, by their practise work, to help to put them through school. In the third group fall the students who take the course because they are intensely interested in the work and alive to the possibilities it offers. Finally, the students in the last group are those who merely want to get the necessary points for graduation.

While the different motives for taking the course are recognized, it is the aim of the director and of the teachers to attract only those who really will profit by the instruction. Perhaps, if the student is acquainted with the demands for selling and at the same time made aware of the opportunities in other lines, she may discover her own inaptitude for the merchandising field, and instead her fitness for office and clerical work.

Consequently all students desiring to take salesmanship are first interviewed by the teacher in charge of the work, who urges those not qualified for selling positions to take up some other course of study. By this means, the misfits so commonly encountered in the world of business may be eliminated and a more satisfactory output assured.

In the matter of the course of study itself, much more can be accomplished with students with the same educational
advantages and with the same natural vocational interests. Besides
salesmanship, the course of study includes hygiene, color and
design, commercial geography, merchandise, industrial history
and business arithmetic. About the central aim of preparing for
the vocation of selling, the work centers and is correlated with it.
Seven-points credit are given for the one-year course, that is, three
for salesmanship and other store subjects, three for textiles and one
point for color and design.

The work is outlined usually for a year and emphasis is made in
all the important problems of department store management. In
the first week, the class is introduced to the work of the
term and is made acquainted with the location of the large
department stores in Boston. As an example of the fifth week,
I quote from the report prepared by Miss Helen R. Norton
of the Prince School.* It reads:

Class Room Work:
Sales check practise. Use of coin. Charge with and
without.
Personal appearance; waists, shirts, collars, skirts,
repair and mending.
Discussion for and against Charge Accounts.
Introductory lesson on Cotton, why is it the most im-
portant fiber? Why is a knowledge of cotton neces-
sary to a sales person? Sources of supply
a. foreign countries
b. United States
Clippings and photographs illustrating cotton
production and manufacture

Outside work:
Written paper on "If I were a storekeeper, would I prefer
a cash or a charge business."

The spelling of names and usburbs.
Written test of articles of merchandise made of cotton
Physical geography--Egypt, India, China, Peru, United
States

*Department Store Education--Helen Rich Norton
From this brief extract, one sees the thoroughness and interrelation of the work considered. Not alone is the pupil introduced to the mechanics and routine of selling procedure. She actually faces the big vital problems that every executive and entrepreneur must meet. For example, the policy of charge accounts calls for careful and thoughtful consideration, not sudden decision. Similarly, the pupil studies the topic of cotton from the point of view of the sources from which it comes, how this influences its properties and to what uses the different types of cotton are put.

From the first when selling was urged in the public schools it was understood that the course would be supplemented by store practice. Sometimes this store practice is called under the name of part-time employment. By this term is meant no specific, definite arrangement for going to school on certain days and working on others. It merely means the understanding whereby the pupil works at a time in the store for the experience and procures the remainder of her training in the customary manner at school. Its purpose is to enable the pupil to realize fully the life and problems of department store work. To presuppose salesmanship course without selling experience is to imagine a medical student without hospital and clinical work. Its organization depends upon the program of studies for the high school and also upon the demands by the department stores.

Thus on Saturdays, the salesmanship pupils regularly sell in the stores. This is the obvious opportunity for work because the student is free and it is a busy day for the stores. Similarly on Mondays, the department stores are quite crowded; often they run their weekly sales on that day; and accordingly they require additional help. Because
of the altogether satisfactory work done by these special student-employees, the employment heads turn immediately to the schools for help. The call comes to the director who has at her command the files describing the work done by the pupils both in school and in the stores. In this way, she is competent to select not a random choice but a specific student who will satisfy the store and who will especially gain, by her adaptability, from this additional experience.

Then during the period preceding the Christmas and Easter holidays, the department stores again have a need of part-time employees. By arrangement with the schools, the salesmanship pupils are allowed to work in the stores for the two weeks before Christmas and the week of Easter. Moreover, if a pupil is in the Honor Group, that is, has received a high percentage of A's and B's, she is given the privilege of working in the stores an additional week in December.

The advantages of part-time employment are numerous and valuable and important. In the first place, it encourages the pupil to remain in school. For the pupil who would otherwise be required to leave school, it provides a means for considerable self-support, which can be secured without the necessity of withdrawal from school. In addition, it provides a stimulus for remaining in school because it satisfies a need for interesting, practical work. While there are some who would drop out of school, not because of economic pressure, but because of lack of interest in the work of the class room, retail selling supplies a motive, a reason for continuing in school.

From her contact with the life of the store, rich in varied experiences, the pupil gains a breath of outlook and interest which is reflected in all her other school work.
Indeed not only her classroom endeavor benefits but her whole individuality and personality reap the advantages of her broadened experience.

When she is graduated from high school, the pupil finds her training of great value in the ease with which she may secure a position. The department stores are ever in demand of high school graduates with a specific training in store work. Their cooperation with the schools in installing the course was due to their anticipated eager demand for such graduates.

With the provision that honor students may have an extra week of store practice, there is a tremendous stimulus to better school work. Girls heretofore indifferent to their grades realize how much increased effort and resulting superior marks will secure for them. In this way, pupils raise their level not alone in the retail selling course but throughout their whole program of studies.

The very nature of the demands upon the sales person cannot fail to develop certain qualities. Even the most casual shopper is impressed by the unfailing patience of the average store worker. She is trained to endure endless amounts of trivial exasperation and annoyance with complete self-control. Ranking with patience as an attribute very much developed by the exigencies of the work is resourcefulness. Each customer is individual, differing from the next in temperament and needs. In the short time that the sales person is with the customer, she must learn to meet varying types and wants in a quick and satisfactory way.

The final advantage may be considered not a separate one but the sum total of the preceding benefits. The results
to the school in increased interest and effort can hardly
be measured. In the same way, the source of intelligent,
enthusiastic employees with the specialized vocations,
training is of inestimable value to the department store.

The study of the retail selling course in Boston would
not be complete without mention of the work done by the
continuation school. The installation of continuation schools
has brought the younger workers in the stores under the
direction of the department of salesmanship. Without enactment
of law and because of a desire to have workers trained,
four of the Boston stores established continuation schools
in 1913. All of these classes were made up of employees
between the ages of fourteen and sixteen. In the next year,
however, the continuation law was passed, requiring four
hours' attendance out of the employer's time.

Although the pupils may not attend a public school
building for their instruction, they are under the direction
and supervision of public school salesmanship teachers. If
fifteen or twenty children are employed in any one store,
the school is organized in the store which provides room,
furniture, heat and light. The city, however, furnishes the
supplies and the teachers' services. Since it is arranged
that each salesmanship high school teacher teach in addition
a store continuation group, the teacher gains the advantage
of keeping in close touch with the officials and atmosphere
of the store.

In both respects of introduction of salesmanship and
the introduction of continuation school work, Boston has
been the pioneer. Other cities have recognized the need
for expanding the curriculum with so sorely needed a course
as selling. With the success of Boston, other cities were encouraged to adopt and emulate the institution of retail selling in public high schools.
CHAPTER IV

DEVELOPMENT OF COURSE IN OTHER CITIES.
As soon as Boston schools blazed the trail and demonstrated the success of the retail selling course, other cities throughout the country began to investigate their own conditions to discover the possibilities of introducing similar work. The conditions that prevailed in Boston and compelled attention to the organization of salesmanship work were no different in the main from the conditions in other cities. Accordingly, within a very short time after the adoption of retail selling into the curriculum of the large Boston high schools, movements were made to organize the curriculum in various high schools to include this proved necessity.

In Pittsburg, the heads of two of the largest department stores were perhaps the strongest force to urge a similar course in the public high schools. Their example brought forth the support likewise of the other store heads in giving emphasis to the worth while function of such a course.

To support their position, these executives of the stores brought evidence to show the great numbers going into department store work upon graduation. Although the Pittsburg high schools made ample and generous provision for training girls and boys for college and offices, they strangely neglected this crying need. In fact from a study made, it was shown that in spite of the fact that no training was offered in merchandising or selling, yet this vocation attracted by far the largest number of high school girls.

While the evidence showed the popularity of this vocation for high school graduates, it could not throw any light on the numerous ranks that left school before the completion of the four years to go into department stores. Obviously, a considerable proportion of those leaving before graduation
did so, not because of economic pressure, but because of the failure of the high school curriculum to interest them. If the high school could prove its own point, its "raison d'être" by showing how it prepared for a promising and interesting field of work, it would have fought half the battle in lowering the high mortality. As for those who were not included in this group, because they left for need of earning partial self-support, this proposed course with part-time employment would offer a means to secure enough to make possible remaining in school.

With this platform, first the hearty, unqualified support of department stores and second, the argument for lowering the present high rate of mortality, the retail selling course was adopted in Pittsburg. Immediately they encountered their first obstacle in the need for trained specialized teachers. To insure a really successful course of training, they desired teachers with academic and vocational education. They agreed upon a standard type which would be an alternative, either a graduate of some reputable academic college or a mature, experienced and successful store worker. In either case, previous training was to be supplemented by additional work in the psychology and theory of retail selling-courses to be obtained at some school such as the Prince School or New York University or the University of Pittsburg.

As for the class work itself, its organization resembles very strongly that promulgated by the Prince school and adopted by the Boston schools. Attention is given to the theory of selling, the problems of management, such as the policy about charge accounts. Part-time basis allows for actual selling experience through the cooperation of the leading stores. This is obtained on Saturdays, the Christmas
Easter and summer holidays.

In St. Louis, the retail selling movement was started by the impetus given it from the department stores. It had been the statement by the department superintendents that they were altogether willing to pay better salaries to their employees, provided that they could secure better trained workers. Under the circumstances, they felt that they were not justified in giving higher wages to the raw, uneducated material that applied for positions. To them, it was apparent that with careful and intelligent training the future sales person could realize all the latent possibilities in her position. With sufficient education there opened up before the willing store employee the vistas leading to buyers' positions, comparison shopper, personnel head.

The first step in the development of a course for retail selling consisted in an analysis of the department stores of St. Louis. This movement was considered primary and fundamental to the construction of a course to be of real value. An effort was made to determine what were the peculiar problems of department store management, what were the qualifications for an efficient sales person, and what training the potential sales person would require to enable her to develop from a clerk to an executive. In every respect, the department store heads expressed their willingness to cooperate by taking the students into the stores to give them the necessary selling experience.

The course of study, as proved successful in Boston, was adopted with, of course, necessary modifications to meet the particular conditions of St. Louis. Here too especial insistence was made upon the proper kind of teacher. The type
desired was a college graduate with special training in store work. Moreover, it was felt that above all, the retail selling teacher should have an abounding enthusiasm in her calling. Her personality, too, would be largely influential in shaping the attitude of her pupils in realizing the opportunities and responsibilities of store work.

The school officials felt that the success of the plan in Boston was almost sufficient proof of the success of the work in St. Louis. They were quite content to accept the outline of the pioneer city in the main with the slight changes that were necessary to meet the situation in that particular city. Inasmuch as the circumstances that prompted the course in Boston were nearly approximated in St. Louis, the organizers felt that they could do no better than to recognize the soundness and efficacy of the Boston plan.

Again in Atlanta, Georgia, the need for retail selling was first acknowledged by the department stores. It was just another example of the far sighted vision of business men in realizing the value of something new. Rather than the school officials, it was they who pointed out the overcrowding of the market with clerical workers. Even if the school had been aware of the difficulty of its commercial graduates in securing office positions, it did nothing to suggest diverting these students into other channels of activity.

Through the efforts then of the business men, the school board was induced to provide a retail selling course in the commercial high schools. When the course was organized, the phase was particularly emphasized that concerned the psychology of influencing the will of others. Incidentally, the point was made that a training such as selling was
based on the effect of influencing others, was valuable training for any activity in life.

Since it was found in Atlanta that a number of boys, as well as the usual number of girls, were interested in the course, special classes for the two groups were arranged. Thus for the girls, the work consisted of textiles, color, salesmanship and store routine. For the boys, the work comprised personal salesmanship, that is, training to meet the individual with his peculiar problems. The special topics considered were pre-approach, approach, close attention, awakening interest and desire. In both groups, the personal qualifications received a great deal of notice, health, ambition, application, tact, honesty, personal appearance and responsibility.

Part-time employment was considered absolutely essential and so arrangement was made with the stores for employment on Saturdays, during the Christmas, Easter and summer holidays. To secure additional contact with store life, the leading executives and business men were asked to address the classes at different times on their special phase of work. A great deal of interest and ambition were aroused by the impression these successful business leaders made upon the students.

In describing the work in retail selling in the Commercial High School, Mr. Conner T. Jones said that they feared at first that certain obstacles would operate to prevent the success of their plans. For one thing, adequate teachers and books could not immediately be obtained. While there were text books giving the psychology of sales-

*Conner T. Jones—Journal of Education—April 4, 1918
manship, they were altogether too remote and difficult for high school pupils. Teachers, too, had not been prepared for this new work. However, in a very short time these fears were proved to be groundless. Many excellent text books made their appearance on the market, providing just the sort of material needed. As for teachers, many who had been teaching the more or less traditional subjects were interested and encouraged to prepare for the new field. Far from presenting a discouraging front, the retail selling course was experiencing success with all the prospects for increasing power and growth.

For a city of moderately large size, Erie, Pennsylvania has gone far in working out a retail selling course. First of all, it is recognized as a science. Its purpose is to develop sales persons who have the ability to influence the intellect, the emotions and the will of the prospective customer. Further, the course is broken up into the separate study of the salesman, the customer, salesmanship and the psychology of selling.

In the study of the salesman, there is a discussion of tact, courtesy, initiative, responsibility, sympathy and personal appearance. From a demonstration class in selling, the pupils procure material for a criticism of the technique of selling. If any undesirable traits have been demonstrated, they are pointed out. Then the pupil committing the error, is asked by what means he will eliminate the poor trait. On the other hand, if the pupil reveals any commendable quality, it is recognized in discussion and so emphasized that it will tend to be repeated.

Then the customer is considered. First of all, the
student learns to classify customers into large general groups, tired, irritable, pleasant, undecided. From this study, she proceeds to the proper treatment of customers according to their types and, of course, their needs. Particularly, the student is acquainted with the fact of the great variety of her work, because of the great variety of natures and personalities. Consequently, she must train herself to prompt and facile adjustment to many and varied circumstances. From this part of her course, she secures a training which is invaluable in whatever work she may undertake.

Finally the pupil takes up the study of the psychology peculiar to salesmanship. This deals with the means of arousing attention and compelling interest. Consideration of advertisements and their uses in arousing attention is discussed. While the course does not aim to turn out potential advertising students, it does aim to develop an appreciation of the methods and value of advertising.

As part of the selling course, the project method calls for a good deal of attention. The underlying motives in this type of work are, first, to have the pupil select one specific topic for study and discussion in which she is especially interested, secondly, to require a purpose in the work undertaken, thirdly, to carry through to completion a study once begun. For instance, in the the discussion of electrical devices, the girl who has used at home an electric iron is, naturally, the one to talk up its points, to tell how it works and in what way it is superior to the ordinary type of iron. In this way the potential sales person is getting the right foundation for the effective means of putting across merchandise--from a knowledge based on first hand and
personal experience.

The course in retail selling at Springfield, Massachusetts, was the result of the combined interests of department store superintendents and public school officials. In the general outline of the course, it follows the usual two-semester, two-year system. In the matter of part-time employment, however, Springfield has a most unique and distinctive arrangement. Largely this arrangement is due to the efforts of Miss Helen E. Parker, teacher of retail selling. She says:

"Incidentally I have been very much helped in giving this course by the fact that I have had a number of years' experience in one of the best-known stores in the country and also by the fact that for over a year I have been constant advisor of three small town stores."

At the suggestion of the stores, and through arrangement at school, the girls have the following schedule. Five days a week they go to school from 8:30 to 11:35, have their luncheon, and are at work in the stores at 12:15, where they remain until 2:45. Then on Saturdays they sell at least for three hours and many sell all day. This, however, is arranged by the individual store according to its needs.

In this way the girls cover the luncheon hours of the regular sales people. A standard wage is paid by the stores for these student workers. Thus they secure spirit of loyalty, engendered through recognition of being fairly treated. In its second year of adoption, the plan has shown its value by the fact that several of the five original stores are using more girls this year than last. In addition, two more have joined the list of cooperating stores.

The course is not limited to girls who desire permanent

* Prince Alumnae News--January, 1924--Miss Helen E. Parker
store work for the reason that the girls cannot judge whether they are going into store work definitely until they have tried working in a store. Two marked consequences of this system have been shown: first, the retention in school of girls who otherwise would have to leave if it were not for the money they earn; second, the bridging of the difficult period of adjustment between school and work by the constant interpretation in the school room of the pupil's store experience.

Besides these two definite results, the school authorities feel that the plan is exceedingly practical in that it gives the pupil some experience in the store every single day. In this way, she has no chance to forget from week to week the problems that she must face and their proper solution. Then too from the standpoint of the department store, a source of help is provided at a most opportune occasion—when the usual sales force is lessened by the lunch hour. This arrangement offers an opportunity to the school to acknowledge the kindness and helpfulness of the cooperating stores, without whose aid the retail selling course would lose an inestimable means of progress.

In at least three respects the teaching of salesmanship in Rochester, New York, is quite distinctive. To begin with, the course is not called retail selling but Retail Distribution. The reason for this change in the fall of 1922 is based on the fact that the course is far more comprehensive than the mere mechanics of selling.

In the second place, Rochester has a very able and effective means of putting across new educational features in the maintenance of a Merchants' Advisory Committee. This
Committee is composed of the superintendents of six of the largest department stores in Rochester. Together with the Director of Business Education and with the teachers of Retail Distribution they work to effect a program to be of real value in preparing a student for the department stores. Thus the course never escapes from the close, vital relation with the aim which it intends to fulfill. Examples of the service that the Committee renders may be shown in their settlement of the problem of the wage for the part-time worker; and also in their assistance in putting over a store-visiting campaign for high school teachers.

The organization of the course of study does not follow the usual plan whereby in each of the four terms some big topic is considered, such as store system. Instead, each of the five days of the week is devoted to one particular phase. On Mondays, Question Box Day, each student prepares a question, concerning some big store problem. These are taken up in turn; if any are left over they become part of the day's assignment. The essential advantage in this device is in the direction it gives to stimulating the pupils' responsibility in suggesting the question and to developing their judgment in answering the difficulties.

For the work on Tuesdays, the class discusses the fundamental problems of selling, as developed in Nystrom's "Economics of Retailing" and Norton's "Retail Selling." This more formal discussion relates to the problems of store organization, wages, merchandise, routing and so forth.

Wednesday is given over entirely to the topic of Personality--what it is, how to achieve forceful personality, and its effect in making for selling success. Incident to this work, each pupil keeps a Personality Book in which personality resolutions are noted and a record of progress
determined.

Textiles and Merchandise Day is the name by which Thursday is called in the Retail Distribution course. To supplement the study of weaving, processes of manufacture, types of cloth, the class is conducted to neighboring factories and stores for first hand contact. Also in connection with this phase of the work, leading business men are secured who talk on their lines of work; and prove to be a powerful influence in stimulating the interest and ambition of the pupils. Moreover, it is fruitful opportunity for urging remaining in school. Often these successful business men are an invaluable aid in pointing out the gain to be realized by staying in school.

The last day of the week, Salesmanship Day, includes, besides the discussion of salesmanship, a demonstration of a buying incident. This has been found to be a very great help in clarifying many selling situations by staging an impromptu sale right in class, where the pupils in turn act as customers and sales people. Not only does it crystallize the correct procedure and secure the unfailing interest of pupils, but it provides the pupil with the needed resourcefulness and assurance when she actually comes to see on her part-time position.

The problem of the small city in establishing a retail selling course is a difficult one, and calls for unbounded interest and cooperation of both stores and school. Tacoma, Washington, for example, presented a somewhat trying situation for the installation of salesmanship course. In this city, numbering some 110,000 inhabitants, there are five large department stores. Yet only two of them employ more
than fifty sales persons. Consequently, at the very outset, the course was met with the problem of how to secure placement for those who successfully should pass the course.

At present the course is given to two classes from each of the two Tacoma Commercial High Schools. It includes one hour daily in the high school and laboratory work both on Saturdays and after school. Remuneration for part-time employment is granted on a uniform wage basis. Only to seniors is this course given, because of the necessity of limiting the number in order that there may not be too great a disappointment in being placed.

In spite of the excellence of the material, occasionally some of the members fall by the wayside. Then too the classes at times run up against a snag in the form of an unprogressive buyer, manager or sales head. While these forces tend to hold back the work and discourage success, especially under they trying conditions that of necessity prevail, the retail selling course has been recognized as a potent factor in motivating school work; and in answering a real need of the stores.

In order to hold the interest and cooperation of the public, of the schools and the stores, the retail selling teacher finds she must rely to a great extent upon advertising. She cannot rest merely upon the laurels she has gained in instituting the course; she realizes she must ever be on the alert to guard against any flagging or waning of interest. Accordingly, Miss Anne Drummond, the retail selling teacher of Tacoma, has outlined an extensive and effective advertising program. This schedule arranges for talks before the City Commercial Club, the Retail Association, the Girls' Business Club, Women's Clubs, and Store Organiza-
tions, as well as the School Board and Teachers' Institute. In addition public demonstration sales are given by retail selling students to show the valuable work being accomplished.

As part of their class work, each student weekly writes a store problem report, which is mailed to the store management and which the stores often use as the basis for discussion at store organization meetings. In this manner, the department stores are assured of the earnest interest of the pupils in store problems and their solution. Also such an arrangement encourages the initiative of the students; so that when they enter as graduates into store work, they have a foundation for meeting the various, inevitable difficulties.

That the retail selling course, largely through the untiring efforts of the teacher and director, has been successful is evident in the unstinted approval and enthusiasm of pupils, school authorities and department stores. The students are enthusiastic because they find retail selling one of the most practical subjects ever studied. The school authorities are enthusiastic because, by linking the business world with the schools, they are meeting a need of modern education. And finally, the merchants are enthusiastic because the retail selling students are adding to their profits. While the department stores alone have the means of expressing their opinion by refusing to hire those who are not graduates of retail selling training, yet this attitude is just as active and dominant in the other two groups.
CHAPTER V

ADMINISTRATION OF RETAIL SELLING
In the administration of retail selling courses, it is both sound and natural to infer that the local conditions will play the largest part in the establishment of such a course. Local needs, first of all, must determine the kind of training required. At the other end, the extent of local resources in the form of money, will be the force to limit the development of such a course. While there may be pressing need for a detailed and elaborate plan of instruction, yet there may be lacking the financial support, the public spirit support, to enforce its adoption. Similarly, though we must recognize this as a less probable case, there may be adequate resources but little demand for the introduction of a retail selling course.

However, the Federal Government must play an important part of setting up standards; by gathering and making available all experiences that will aid in the organization of courses; by partial contributions to help defray this type of vocational training; by requiring adequate supervision of instruction. In regard to these points, the Federal Government stands in a powerful position to aid and guide the smaller localities. Not alone in matters of financial resources, but in its centralization with accumulated data and progressive research is it enabled to introduce the work in needed localities and to bring up to a higher standard that work which has already been begun.

Because of its very position, the Federal Government should take the initiative in the country-wide development of retail selling and merchandising courses. Moreover, since there are more people engaged in the retail industry than are to be found in office positions, it is quite imperative that training for this vocation be given in well-organized
commercial departments. Although recognition of this fact was made some time ago, it is only recently that the Federal Government has taken any positive step in planning a retail selling program.

Its first endeavor to call attention to this situation appeared in the publication in 1919 by the Federal Board for Vocational Education of a bulletin, "Retail Selling." This was prepared by Mrs. Lucinda Wyman Prince, founder and director of the Prince School for Store Service. Written by the acknowledged authority on store problems and store education, the bulletin outlines briefly the plans for retail selling education.

Through the publicity given to the movement by means of the bulletin and through similar advertising, a large number of cities have become interested in retail selling courses. The Federal Government has volunteered its aid in securing the organization of such courses in those cities which are interested in the work. According to the bulletin, "Commercial Education"—

It is the Board's intention to follow up this bulletin work with such field work as is necessary to insure the right kind of start in the rapid development of education for retail selling and general store work. *

In the matter of financial aid, the Smith-Hughes Act, passed in 1917, allows for contributions from the Government to the amount of half the cost of instruction. However, "Commercial Education--Organization & Administration" June, 1919--Federal Board for Vocational Education
this aid is granted only upon the condition that the type of work measures up to the agreed standard with respect to qualifications of teacher, method and order of teaching. Inasmuch as the cost of instruction is ordinarily free from all equipment—even stereopticon slides are often lent by industrial concerns—this financial assistance is devoted practically to salaries and overhead expenses.

In one other regard, the Federal Government exercises a considerable influence in retail selling education; and that is in the appointment of a Special Agent for Retail Selling. Her task is to further the work of retail selling by investigation of the cities which do not include it in the curriculum in the endeavor to have it included in the program wherever advisable. She also coordinates the work being done by various and distant cities. In addition, she speaks before assemblies of all types, advertising and explaining the purpose and opportunities of the retail selling course. At present Miss Isabel Craig Bacon, former Prince School graduate, is the Special Agent for Vocational Retail Selling Education.

When the need of training and the method have been emphasized by the Federal Government, it is the duty of the State to develop the course of retail selling. Above all the State should recognize the value of such training on the basis of vocational needs and the necessity for contact with the vocation. It is exceeding important that the pupil shall have direct contact with the occupation for which she is preparing. To this end, definite arrangement should be made for part-time employment and for credit for time so spent. To refuse to do so is to ignore the immeasurable value of first
hand experience.

The State should cooperate with the Federal authorities in setting up acceptable standards of work. Under this term would be included not only method of procedure and amount of ground covered but also the general and specific qualifications of the teacher.

In addition the State should appoint a specialist or director of business education whose duty it would be to coordinate and relate all business teaching. In this way the connection between retail selling and other lines of commercial training would be established and strengthened. Each line of endeavor has much to learn from the other and much to give to the other. Such a director would be instrumental, too, in bringing together factors that often are opposed, if not hostile. For example not all communities have been so fortunate as to have been characterized by thorough understanding and amicability between department store heads and public school officials. In this case, a director would be of great value in bringing together for mutual benefit these two forces.

Comparable to this arrangement, the State should make frequent district conference of commercial teachers. Here would be grouped with the traditional bookkeeping and stenography teacher, the teacher of retail selling. By dividing the State into conference districts and calling meetings only twice a year in convenient places, large numbers of teachers could be brought together to their individual advantage.

Lastly the State should consider whether or not financial aid should be made available for the carrying out of
the retail selling course. Federal aid for part-time courses may be given only where provision has been made for such courses in the State plans for vocational education.

Without question the Federal Government and the State have a great responsibility to pledge themselves to aid the development of retail selling. It is on the city, however, that full responsibility for effectively meeting special, local needs in the way of specific training must rest. The local authorities alone are in a position to know local conditions, requirements, and to recommend the type of training that will meet these conditions and requirements. Not only must the city be alive to the demands of business which the pupils must meet on leaving school, but the city must be aware of the opportunities for State and Federal aid and the conditions which must be satisfied in order to merit the aid.

In the organization of the curriculum for the retail selling student, the city should require that all subjects center around this main point as the pivot. English, science history, all must be related to the central subject and be coordinated with it. Accordingly, these subjects should be developed to meet the particular needs of pupils going into department store work; they must be distinct from those courses given to the college preparatory pupil. Moreover, with reference to this difference in vocational aim, the purpose of this course must be considered as finishing not preparatory; college entrance requirements then have no place or value in the development of the retail selling course; only the requirements of local conditions should determine the standard and content of this course.
Even more compelling than the need for a State director of business education is the need for a city director of business education. He may be called Director or Coordinator of business education. In either event, his work is the same--first to bring into harmony the different phases of commercial training and second to unite the retail selling teacher and the department store representative. They must be brought to realize the unity of their aims. And there is no more adequate force to accomplish this than a trained, experienced director who has studied the needs and conditions of both sides.

In the high school of larger cities an organization without intermingling of retail selling and academic pupils should be insisted upon. This will make for greater freedom in the development of courses, more flexibility in the daily program and more cooperation between the school and stores. For example, when there is a grouping together of vocational and academic students in classes, special assemblies for the former cannot be called upon short notice. Yet such assemblies are invaluable as a means of giving the pupils the benefit of the experience of successful men. To think of a retail selling course without this excellent contact is to take away from its effectiveness a value almost as great as that of part-time employment. Whether a city establishes its commercial course, of which retail selling is a part, or a separate business high school, or in a cosmopolitan high school, provision should be made for prompt assembly to share in the experiences of leading executives and business men.

As in other branches of commercial vocation, the city authorities should maintain adequate equipment for the accomplishment of this work. In the case of retail selling, the
the need of such equipment has often been dismissed as slight and inappreciable. Yet one cannot imagine a better source for acquainting pupils with the study of textiles than through the allotment to each pupil of an individual envelope containing a standard number of samples of cloth, carefully chosen and graded. Again, for the study of such topics as sericulture, pottery making, there is great value in the use of a stereopticon slide. Sometimes individual firms are willing to offer their own facilities in order to acquaint pupils with their products; when such opportunities are not available, it is the duty of the city to provide this equipment.

Because the study of retail selling is comparatively new, certain cities have feared that they must content themselves with insufficiently trained teachers. Accordingly, the license requirements for this type of teacher often are unsatisfactory. In reality there is no occasion for any laxness about the qualifications for retail selling teachers. Within the past few years, excellent teacher training courses have been organized not only at the Fiske School but at New York University and the University of Pittsburgh. These courses usually prefer college graduates with a Bachelor's degree to whom will be given the Master's degree for this added year of graduate work. However they will admit non-graduates who have demonstrated especial fitness and ability for store work. With this splendid type of teacher available, the city has no excuse in maintaining any standard for retail selling teachers that does not compare favorably with the standard for academic teachers.

Besides arranging for the Director of Business Education, the city should exploit all possibilities for bringing into close relationship the school and business. Membership in the
Chamber of Commerce, Advertising Club, Board of Trade and other similar organizations should be provided for the teachers of retail selling. In this way, the teachers come to sense the problems of the department store, while the department stores learn the weaknesses and power of the high school pupils.

Perhaps no part of the retail selling work will do so much to enlist sympathy and approval as the assumption of full responsibility by the school board of placement for all students. Placement alone is not enough however. The attempt should be made to fit every boy and girl to the kind of position for which he or she is best suited by education and personal qualifications. In the very beginning of the course, the teachers should interview all candidates for this course in an effort to determine suitability. An enthusiastic teacher can do much to encourage the indifferent, undecided pupil to see the opportunities both for hard work and advancement in this calling. Vocational guidance, however, does not end with introduction into the course or even with placement. Its final step is follow-up work to insure merited advancement and to stimulate effort and ambition.

Finally it is incumbent upon the school board to advertise its facilities in giving this type of commercial work. More than concerning any other form of education the public must be educated away from its wrong, ignorant attitude toward selling as a demeaning position. Merely publishing a pamphlet or a school circular is not enough. More effective publicity work such as is used by mercantile concerns must be undertaken if the public is to know that its educational and vocational needs are being met in the public school system.
As an example of this type of work is the little booklet published by the Boston Chamber of Commerce, called "The Bend in the Road." Here is presented graphically the picture of the girl, at the end of high school course, at the crossing of the ways. The department store road lies waiting the trained graduate, with promise of future buyer, department head and personnel work. On all sides she is surrounded too by the advantages of library, summer camp, trained doctors and nurses. Thus the parents and pupils are acquainted with the possibilities and opportunities of a great and promising field of work.
CHAPTER VI

MODERN ATTITUDE TOWARD DEPARTMENT STORE WORK
Without a doubt the public is gradually being educated to the value and importance of department store work. No longer is the work considered demeaning or lacking in prestige. The fact that the college trained men and women have given themselves over whole-heartedly to store problems has been a powerful force in raising the general conception of this type of endeavor. Also the advertising campaign of the Chambers of Commerce and similar organizations has done a great deal to point out to parents of boys and girls the opportunities that await the eager, ambitious store worker.

So successful has been the retail selling movement that the department stores today are in a position to insist upon high school graduates with retail selling training. Rarely will the department store employment manager ever consider the type of applicant that was popular not many years ago. Perhaps no account sums up so strikingly this great advance than an article by Flora Taylor Young.

"The merchant took that diffident girl who had only a fourth-grade education and developed her into a buyer who circumnavigates the globe twice a year in search of treasures to adorn your home or person. He took that freckle-faced boy who ran away from the deadly, dull fifth grade and made of him a system man.***They have found their 'metier' and their salaries run into five figures but it took twenty years to develop those people, because their poor foundation in elementary school work held them back. That lack has meant an economic loss both to the employer and to the employee. I look forward to the time when we shall be able to take a high-school graduate who has specialized in salesmanship and make her a Europena buyer in five years."*

* "Retail Selling Education--The Merchant's Point of View" National Vocational Education Society--1920
The recent developments in the department store's relation to the community has made imperative this demand for specially trained employees. The department store has adapted itself first to the ideal of service, second to the standard of one-price policy and third to the assurance of satisfaction or money-back-guarantee.

To accomplish the first aim the department store has devoted itself to the object of saving time as well as saving money. Accordingly, we find that large department stores are invariably concentrated in one central locality; so that if the shopper fails to find desired merchandise in one store, she may quickly and easily turn to an adjacent shop.

Soon after the first gain due to changes in organization was effected, came the second in the form of abandon of the policy of price dickering. The service rendered here consists of saving the time lost while the clerk formerly haggled with the customer as to the price. Moreover when a storekeeper fixes a price, it is as if he proclaims to the customer that he has judged the market and bought his goods after due consideration of all the factors affecting the price. Because he has studied the market conditions and based his price at a point he knows to be fair, he can adopt the attitude "Take it or leave it." Such a stand cannot do otherwise than increase the respect and confidence of purchasers.

In place of the former attitude of attempting to put something over on the customer, the modern store tendency is to rely on the "resale" argument. Now in place of "caveat emptor" or let the buyer take care, the present view is let the seller beware. For if the department store indulges in discourteous or offers a poor quality of goods, he is certain
to drive a prospective customer to the doors of a competitor. While the store executive may see to it that his merchandise is of good quality and satisfactorily priced, he must turn to the person behind the counter to offer courteous, intelligent service.

Finally the department store has come to realize the importance of its sales force in cementing friendship between seller and buyer. The sales person, in the last analysis, is the determining factor in the contact of customer and store executive. The salesman is the tool which must fashion the prospective customer into the finished product of a satisfied consumer.

"A dull or ignorant sales force will drain away the effects of the most costly advertising campaign by which prospective customers have been drawn into a store or nullify the whole policy of service built up at enormous expense of time, money and energy of the executives of the firm."*

With this crystal clear view of the need of trained employees, it is not strange that the department stores have been willing to aid in instituting such a course in the high school curriculum. In many cities it is they who have first taken up the cudgels to compel the school officials to introduce this work. Everywhere they have been most eager to help its development.

*"The New York Plan for Training Teachers of Retail Selling" Lee Galloway in Vocational Educational Bulletins--1918-1919
The future of retail selling field is at present very promising. The hardest work has been done. Through Mrs. Prince's devoted efforts, the Prince School has demonstrated its value. With this demonstration, the public schools of Boston have universally supported and collaborated with the movement. With the establishment of the course in Boston schools, successful and growing in popularity, other cities have adopted programs very similar to the Boston plan.

Federal recognition has been secured. The work now reaps the benefits of the Smith-Hughes Act and partial financial aid. A bulletin has been published, written by Mrs. Prince, "Retail Selling" summing up concisely and conclusively the arguments for salesmanship courses. A Special Agent of Retail Selling has been appointed whose duties it is to coordinate and further the work done throughout the country. The future of retail selling is indeed promising.

The greatest proof however of its success lies in the satisfaction of the parties most vitally concerned—the department store head and the high school pupil. The department store have great enthusiasm for the work and feel a great privilege and responsibility in urging its progress. The high school pupils find in it a means of vocational satisfaction and an opportunity "to earn while I learn."
SUMMARY
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Through her relation with the Women's Educational and Industrial Union, Mrs. Lucinda Wyman Prince became interested in the problems of the department store worker. She realized the need of specific training for sales persons; and accordingly outlined a plan of study for such workers. The department store heads were skeptical of the practicalness of the course and were hesitant to ally themselves through the offer of their stores for "laboratory" experience. However when the fourth class was organized in 1907, Wm. Filene's Sons Company recognized its basis soundness and offered to support it. Immediately the other stores followed suit; an Advisory Committee was formed; and the school took on a definite and permanent shape under the name of The Prince School for Store Service.

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For many years the American high school had offered only a college preparatory training. Then came the introduction of commercial courses which showed their need by their immediate and ever-growing popularity. In spite of the overcrowded field of clerical workers, which was swelled by the numbers from collegiate schools of business, no attempt was made to expand the curriculum and give training in other lines of business.

In 1912 a meeting was called of the Advisory Committee of the Prince School where was present the headmaster of the largest high school for girls in Boston. He made a plea for a richer vocational program, especially urging the study of retail selling. Although objections were raised at the suggestion, these obstacles were speedily disposed of. The department store executives volunteered their assistance.
and plans were made to organize, after the direction and 
supervision of Mrs. Prince, a course of study in retail sell-
ing for the Boston high schools. Within two years nine schools 
were offering the course and in 195 the tenth and last high 
school introduced the study into its program.

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To begin with an effort is made to interview all students 
who desire to take the course with the view of encouraging 
only those who have both inclination and natural fitness for 
the work. A lesson which is quoted illustrates the practical 
value of the course and its close relation to the actual prob-
lems of department stores. To insure the greatest value from 
the course, arrangement is made with the cooperating stores 
for part-time employment. Part-time employment means provi-
sion for working in the department stores as a part of 
the school work and as a source of school credit. The advan-
rages of part-time employment are: it allows for partial self-
support; it provides an opportunity for remaining in school;
it broadens the experience of the pupil; it insures a good position upon graduation; it stimulates good school work;
it develops specific qualities—patience, resourcefulness.

Also provision is made for study through the continuation 
schools. Those who leave school between the ages of 14 and 
16 and go into store work were allowed, in 1913, to attend con-
tinuation schools; since 1914 they are required to attend 
school for 4 hours a week out of their employer's time. Often 
the continuation school instruction is given in the stores; 
so that the teacher gains additional contact with store life.

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As soon as the course proved its immediate success in 
Boston, other cities were quick to see its value. In Pittsburg
it was the department store heads who saw the opportunity for such a course in their city. They showed that the largest number of students went into stores instead of offices. They pointed out that such a course with part-time employment would be a means for further stay in high school, would add interest and value to the curriculum, and would therefore appreciably lower the high mortality. They were successful in urging the introduction of the course based on the plan adopted in Boston.

The department store executives in St. Louis were the first to call attention to the need of a retail selling course. They made a survey of the problems of department store organization to serve as a basis for a course of study. Their arguments were compelling and the course was instituted much after the outline of the Boston system. A great deal of emphasis was placed on the importance of a well-educated and specially trained teacher.

In Atlanta, Georgia, the need for retail selling was first acknowledged by the department stores. They urged such a course to divert the increasingly rising stream of office workers into a more profitable channel. Distinct classes were formed for boys and girls with separate aims and purposes. Here, too, arrangement is made for part-time employment.

The course of study in Erie, Pennsylvania is divided into the problems of the salesman, the customer, the psychology of salesmanship. In Erie, the project method is followed with great success. This demands that the student have an interest in a chosen subject and that he carry through to a finish any problem undertaken.

At Springfield a unique plan of part-time employment is adopted. This calls for time spent in the stores during the lunch hour when the regular employees are away from the counters.
The advantages are two-fold: first, the opportunity for store experience for a short time each day; and second, a supply of intelligent, trained help at a time when it is most needed.

Rochester has several distinctive features. First of all the course is called Retail Distribution to fit the broader purpose of study. Second, a Merchants' Advisory Committee, composed of superintendents of six of the largest stores, gives valuable help in maintaining close relationship with store problems. Each day of the week is devoted to some especial phase of the work—hence, Question Box Day, Salesmanship Day, Personality Day, Textiles Day.

In Tacoma, the problem of the retail selling course is summed up in the lack of department stores. Consequently, the numbers who may take the course are limited. The course is given only to seniors and post graduates. To avoid disappointment in placement such an arrangement is necessary. The work of the schools is constantly advertised through the initiative of the retail selling teacher. In spite of limitations all parties are satisfied—the department store heads, the school officials and the pupils.

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In the administration of the retail selling course, the Federal Government must take a large part of the initiative. To the Federal Government the small local units look for standards of work and teachers' qualifications. In the matter of financial aid, under the Smith-Hughes Act, the Federal Government arranges for partial payment, provided that certain conditions are met. Through propaganda, such as Mrs. Prince's bulletin "Retail Selling" the Federal Government is doing a great deal to acquaint the general public with the value of this movement. In the appointment of a Special Agent of Retail
Selling, the Federal Government makes possible closes correlation of all activities in this field.

The State should cooperate with the Government in carrying out a successful policy for retail selling. It should support the Federal Government especially in the maintenance of high standards with respect to the work and the teachers' requirements. Arrangements should be made for the appointment of a State Director of Business Education. The State, too, should decide about the question of financial aid to local units.

Upon the city must rest the plans for successfully meeting the local needs and problems. The program of studies should call for correlation of and interrelation between all subjects. Equipment should be provided to fulfill in the most efficient way the outlined plan of the course. High standards for teachers should be required. In the matter of placements and follow-up, the city should exert itself to meet its great responsibility.

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As the modern trend of business has changed, so must change the qualifications of the sales person. The modern department store is based on the idea of service, one-price policy and the resale objective. In the final contact between store and customer, the sales person is the most important factor. That such a retail selling course is successful is proved in the enthusiasm of school board, department store head and pupil.
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