

WILL WE RUN OUT OF COLLEGE TEACHERS?

No; there will always be someone to fill classroom vacancies. But quality is almost certain to drop unless something is done quickly

WHERE WILL THE TEACHERS COME FROM? The number of students enrolled in America's colleges and universities this year exceeds last year's figure by more than a quarter million. In ten years it should pass six million—nearly double today's enrollment.

The number of teachers also may have to double. Some educators say that within a decade 495,000 may be needed—more than twice the present number.

Can we hope to meet the demand? If so, what is likely to happen to the quality of teaching in the process?

"Great numbers of youngsters will flood into our colleges and universities whether we are prepared or not," a report of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has pointed out. "These youngsters will be taught—taught well or taught badly. And the demand for teachers will somehow be at least partly met—if not with well-prepared teachers then with ill-prepared, if not with superior teachers then with inferior ones."

MOST IMMEDIATE is the problem of finding enough qualified teachers to meet classes next fall. College administrators must scramble to do so.

"The staffing problems are the worst in my 30 years' experience at hiring teaching staff," said one college president, replying to a survey by the U.S. Office of Education's Division of Higher Education.

"The securing and retaining of well-trained, effective teachers is the outstanding problem confronting all colleges today," said another.

One logical place to start reckoning with the teacher shortage is on the present faculties of American colleges and universities. The shortage is hardly alleviated by the fact that substantial numbers of men and women find it necessary to leave college teaching each year, for largely

financial reasons. So serious is this problem—and so relevant is it to the college alumnus and alumna—that a separate article in this report is devoted to it.

The scarcity of funds has led most colleges and universities to seek at least short-range solutions to the teacher shortage by other means.

Difficulty in finding young new teachers to fill faculty vacancies is turning the attention of more and more administrators to the other end of the academic line, where tried and able teachers are about to retire. A few institutions have modified the upper age limits for faculty. Others are keeping selected faculty members on the payroll past the usual retirement age. A number of institutions are filling their own vacancies with the cream of the men and women retired elsewhere, and two organizations, the Association of American Colleges and the American Association of University Professors, with the aid of a grant from the Ford Foundation, have set up a "Retired Professors Registry" to facilitate the process.

Old restraints and handicaps for the woman teacher are disappearing in the colleges. Indeed, there are special opportunities for her, as she earns her standing alongside the man who teaches. But there is no room for complacency here. We can no longer take it for granted that the woman teacher will be any more available than the man, for she exercises the privilege of her sex to change her mind about teaching as about other matters. Says Dean Nancy Duke Lewis of Pembroke College: "The day has passed when we could assume that every woman who earned her Ph.D. would go into college teaching. She needs something positive today to attract her to the colleges because of the welcome that awaits her talents in business, industry, government, or the foundations. Her freedom to choose comes at a time when undergraduate women particularly need distinguished women scholars to



inspire them to do their best in the classroom and laboratory—and certainly to encourage them to elect college teaching as a career.”

SOME HARD-PRESSED ADMINISTRATORS find themselves forced to accelerate promotions and salary increases in order to attract and hold faculty members. Many are being forced to settle for less qualified teachers.

In an effort to attract and keep teachers, most colleges are providing such necessities as improved research facilities and secretarial help to relieve faculty members of paperwork and administrative burdens, thus giving faculty members more time to concentrate on teaching and research.

In the process of revising their curricula many colleges are eliminating courses that overlap one another or are considered frivolous. Some are increasing the size of lecture classes and eliminating classes they deem too small.

Finally, somewhat in desperation (but also with the firm conviction that the technological age must, after all, have something of value to offer even to the most basic and fundamental exercises of education), experiments are being conducted with teaching by films and television.

At Penn State, where televised instruction is in its ninth semester, TV has met with mixed reactions. Students consider it a good technique for teaching courses with

large enrollments—and their performance in courses employing television has been as good as that of students having personal contact with their teachers. The reaction of faculty members has been less favorable. But acceptance appears to be growing: the number of courses offered on television has grown steadily, and the number of faculty members teaching via TV has grown, also.

Elsewhere, teachers are far from unanimity on the subject of TV. “Must the TV technicians take over the colleges?” asked Professor Ernest Earnest of Temple University in an article title last fall. “Like the conventional lecture system, TV lends itself to the sausage-stuffing concept of education,” Professor Earnest said. The classroom, he argued, “is the place for testing ideas and skills, for the interchange of ideas”—objectives difficult to attain when one’s teacher is merely a shadow on a fluorescent screen.

The TV pioneers, however, believe the medium, used properly, holds great promise for the future.

FOR THE LONG RUN, the traditional sources of supply for college teaching fall far short of meeting the demand. The Ph.D., for example, long regarded by many colleges and universities as the ideal “driver’s license” for teachers, is awarded to fewer than 9,000 persons per year. Even if, as is probable, the number of students enrolled in Ph.D. programs rises over the next



few years, it will be a long time before they have traveled the full route to the degree.

Meanwhile, the demand for Ph.D.'s grows, as industry, consulting firms, and government compete for many of the men and women who do obtain the degree. Thus, at the very time that a great increase is occurring in the number of undergraduates who must be taught, the supply of new college teachers with the rank of Ph.D. is even shorter than usual.

"During each of the past four years," reported the National Education Association in 1958, "the average level of preparation of newly employed teachers has fallen. Four years ago no less than 31.4 per cent of the new teachers held the earned doctor's degree. Last year only 23.5 per cent were at this high level of preparation."

HERE ARE SOME of the causes of concern about the Ph.D., to which educators are directing their attention:

► The Ph.D. program, as it now exists in most graduate schools, does not sufficiently emphasize the development of teaching skills. As a result, many Ph.D.'s go into teaching with little or no idea how to teach, and make a mess of it when they try. Many who don't go into teaching might have done so, had a greater emphasis been laid upon it when they were graduate students.

► The Ph.D. program is indefinite in its time requirements: they vary from school to school, from department to department, from student to student, far more than seems warranted. "Generally the Ph.D. takes at least four years to get," says a committee of the Association of Graduate Schools. "More often it takes six or seven, and not infrequently ten to fifteen. . . . If we put our heads to the matter, certainly we ought to be able to say to a good student: 'With a leeway of not more than one year, it will take you so and so long to take the Ph.D.'"

► "Uncertainty about the time required," says the Association's Committee on Policies in Graduate Education, "leads in turn to another kind of uncertainty—financial uncertainty. Doubt and confusion on this score have a host of disastrous effects. Many superior men, facing unknowns here, abandon thoughts about working for a Ph.D. and realistically go off to law or the like. . . ."

ALTHOUGH ROUGHLY HALF of the teachers in America's colleges and universities hold the Ph.D., more than three quarters of the newcomers to college and university teaching, these days, don't have one. In the years ahead, it appears inevitable that the proportion of Ph.D.'s to non-Ph.D.'s on America's faculties will diminish.

Next in line, after the doctorate, is the master's degree.

For centuries the master's was "the" degree, until, with the growth of the Ph.D. in America, it began to be moved into a back seat. In Great Britain its prestige is still high.

But in America the M.A. has, in some graduate schools, deteriorated. Where the M.A.'s standards have been kept high, on the other hand, able students have been able to prepare themselves, not only adequately but well, for college teaching.

Today the M.A. is one source of hope in the teacher shortage. "If the M.A. were of universal dignity and good standing," says the report of the Committee on Policies in Graduate Education, "... this ancient degree could bring us succor in the decade ahead. . . .

"The nub of the problem . . . is to get rid of 'good' and 'bad' M.A.'s and to set up generally a 'rehabilitated' degree which will have such worth in its own right that a man entering graduate school will consider the possibility of working toward the M.A. as the first step to the Ph.D. . . ."

One problem would remain. "If you have a master's degree you are still a mister and if you have a Ph.D., no matter where it is from, you are a doctor," Dean G. Bruce Dearing, of the University of Delaware, has said. "The town looks at you differently. Business looks at you differently. The dean may; it depends on how discriminating he is."

The problem won't be solved, W. R. Dennes, former dean of the graduate school of the University of California at Berkeley, has said, "until universities have the courage . . . to select men very largely on the quality of work they have done and soft-pedal this matter of degrees."

A point for parents and prospective students to remember—and one of which alumni and alumnae might remind them—is that counting the number of Ph.D.'s in a college catalogue is not the only, or even necessarily the best, way to judge the worth of an educational institution or its faculty's abilities. To base one's judgment solely on such a count is quite a temptation, as William James noted 56 years ago in "The Ph.D. Octopus": "The dazzled reader of the list, the parent or student, says to himself, 'This must be a terribly distinguished crowd—their titles shine like the stars in the firmament; Ph.D.'s, Sc.D.'s, and Litt.D.'s bespangle the page as if they were sprinkled over it from a pepper caster.'"

The Ph.D. will remain higher education's most honored earned degree. It stands for a depth of scholarship and productive research to which the master has not yet addressed himself so intensively. But many educational leaders expect the doctoral programs to give more em-

phasis to teaching. At the same time the master's degree will be strengthened and given more prestige.

In the process the graduate schools will have taken a long step toward solving the shortage of qualified college teachers.

SOME OF THE CHANGES being made by colleges and universities to meet the teacher shortage constitute reasonable and overdue reforms. Other changes are admittedly desperate—and possibly dangerous—attempts to meet today's needs.

The central problem is to get more young people interested in college teaching. Here, college alumni and alumnae have an opportunity to provide a badly needed service to higher education and to superior young people themselves. The problem of teacher supply is not one with which the college administrator is able to cope alone.

President J. Seelye Bixler, of Colby College, recently said: "Let us cultivate a teacher-centered point of view. There is tragedy as well as truth in the old saying that in Europe when you meet a teacher you tip your hat, whereas over here you tap your head. Our debt to our teachers is very great, and fortunately we are beginning to realize that we must make some attempt to balance the account. Money and prestige are among the first requirements.

"Most important is independence. Too often we sit back with the comfortable feeling that our teachers have all the freedom they desire. We forget that the payoff comes in times of stress. Are we really willing to allow them independence of thought when a national emergency is in the offing? Are we ready to defend them against all pressure groups and to acknowledge their right to act as critics of our customs, our institutions, and even our national policy? Evidence abounds that for some of our more vociferous compatriots this is too much. They see no reason why such privileges should be offered or why a teacher should not express his patriotism in the same outworn and often irrelevant shibboleths they find so dear and so hard to give up. Surely our educational task has not been completed until we have persuaded them that a teacher should be a pioneer, a leader, and at times a non-conformist with a recognized right to dissent. As Howard Mumford Jones has observed, we can hardly allow ourselves to become a nation proud of *machines* that think and suspicious of any *man* who tries to."

By lending their support to programs designed to improve the climate for teachers at their own colleges, alumni can do much to alter the conviction held by many that teaching is tolerable only to martyrs.

WHAT PRICE DEDICATION?

Most teachers teach because they love their jobs. But low pay is forcing many to leave the profession, just when we need them most

EVERY TUESDAY EVENING for the past three and a half months, the principal activity of a 34-year-old associate professor of chemistry at a first-rate mid-western college has centered around Section 3 of the previous Sunday's *New York Times*. The *Times*, which arrives at his office in Tuesday afternoon's mail delivery, customarily devotes page after page of Section 3 to large help-wanted ads, most of them directed at scientists and engineers. The associate professor, a Ph.D., is job-hunting.

"There's certainly no secret about it," he told a recent visitor. "At least two others in the department are looking, too. We'd all give a lot to be able to stay in teaching; that's what we're trained for, that's what we like. But we simply can't swing it financially."

"I'm up against it this spring," says the chairman of the physics department at an eastern college for women. "Within the past two weeks two of my people, one an associate and one an assistant professor, turned in their resignations, effective in June. Both are leaving the field—one for a job in industry, the other for government work. I've got strings out, all over the country, but so far I've found no suitable replacements. We've always prided ourselves on having Ph.D.'s in these jobs, but it looks as if that's one resolution we'll have to break in 1959-60."

"We're a long way from being able to compete with industry when young people put teaching and industry on the scales," says Vice Chancellor Vern O. Knudsen of UCLA. "Salary is the real rub, of course. Ph.D.'s in physics here in Los Angeles are getting \$8-12,000 in

industry without any experience, while about all we can offer them is \$5,500. Things are not much better in the chemistry department."

One young Ph.D. candidate sums it up thus: "We want to teach and we want to do basic research, but industry offers us twice the salary we can get as teachers. We talk it over with our wives, but it's pretty hard to turn down \$10,000 to work for less than half that amount."

"That woman you saw leaving my office: she's one of our most brilliant young teachers, and she was ready to leave us," said a women's college dean recently. "I persuaded her to postpone her decision for a couple of months, until the results of the alumnae fund drive are in. We're going to use that money entirely for raising salaries, this year. If it goes over the top, we'll be able to hold some of our best people. If it falls short. . . I'm on the phone every morning, talking to the fund chairman, counting those dollars, and praying."

THE DIMENSIONS of the teacher-salary problem in the United States and Canada are enormous. It has reached a point of crisis in public institutions and in private institutions, in richly endowed institutions as well as in poorer ones. It exists even in Catholic colleges and universities, where, as student populations grow, more and more laymen must be found in order to supplement the limited number of clerics available for teaching posts.

"In a generation," says Seymour E. Harris, the distinguished Harvard economist, "the college professor has lost 50 per cent in economic status as compared to the average American. His real income has declined sub-

stantially, while that of the average American has risen by 70-80 per cent."

Figures assembled by the American Association of University Professors show how seriously the college teacher's economic standing has deteriorated. Since 1939, according to the AAUP's latest study (published in 1958), the purchasing power of lawyers rose 34 per cent, that of dentists 54 per cent, and that of doctors 98 per cent. But at the five state universities surveyed by the AAUP, the purchasing power of teachers in all ranks rose only 9 per cent. And at twenty-eight privately controlled institutions, the purchasing power of teachers' salaries *dropped* by 8.5 per cent. While nearly everybody else in the country was gaining ground spectacularly, teachers were losing it.

The AAUP's sample, it should be noted, is not representative of all colleges and universities in the United States and Canada. The institutions it contains are, as the AAUP says, "among the better colleges and universities in the country in salary matters." For America as a whole, the situation is even worse.

The National Education Association, which studied the salaries paid in the 1957-58 academic year by more than three quarters of the nation's degree-granting institutions and by nearly two thirds of the junior colleges, found that half of all college and university teachers earned less than \$6,015 per year. College instructors earned a median salary of only \$4,562—not much better than the median salary of teachers in public elementary schools, whose economic plight is well known.

The implications of such statistics are plain.

"Higher salaries," says Robert Lekachman, professor of economics at Barnard College, "would make teaching a reasonable alternative for the bright young lawyer, the bright young doctor. Any ill-paid occupation becomes something of a refuge for the ill-trained, the lazy, and the incompetent. If the scale of salaries isn't improved, the quality of teaching won't improve; it will worsen. Unless Americans are willing to pay more for higher education, they will have to be satisfied with an inferior product."

Says President Margaret Clapp of Wellesley College, which is devoting all of its fund-raising efforts to accumulating enough money (\$15 million) to strengthen faculty salaries: "Since the war, in an effort to keep alive the profession, discussion in America of teachers' salaries has necessarily centered on the minimums paid. But insofar as money is a factor in decision, wherever minimums only are stressed, the appeal is to the underprivileged and the timid; able and ambitious youths are not likely to listen."



PEOPLE IN SHORT SUPPLY:

WHAT IS THE ANSWER?

It appears certain that if college teaching is to attract and hold top-grade men and women, a drastic step must be taken: salaries must be doubled within five to ten years.

There is nothing extravagant about such a proposal; indeed, it may dangerously understate the need. The current situation is so serious that even doubling his salary would not enable the college teacher to regain his former status in the American economy.

Professor Harris of Harvard figures it this way:

For every \$100 he earned in 1930, the college faculty member earned only \$85, in terms of 1930 dollars, in 1957. By contrast, the average American got \$175 in 1957 for every \$100 *he* earned in 1930. Even if the professor's salary is doubled in ten years, he will get only a



TEACHERS IN THE MARKETPLACE

\$70 increase in buying power over 1930. By contrast, the average American is expected to have \$127 more buying power at the end of the same period.

In this respect, Professor Harris notes, doubling faculty salaries is a modest program. "But in another sense," he says, "the proposed rise seems large indeed. None of the authorities . . . has told us where the money is coming from." It seems quite clear that a fundamental change in public attitudes toward faculty salaries will be necessary before significant progress can be made.

FINDING THE MONEY is a problem with which each college must wrestle today without cease.

For some, it is a matter of convincing taxpayers and state legislators that appropriating money for faculty

salaries is even more important than appropriating money for campus buildings. (Curiously, buildings are usually easier to "sell" than pay raises, despite the seemingly obvious fact that no one was ever educated by a pile of bricks.)

For others, it has been a matter of fund-raising campaigns ("We are writing salary increases into our 1959-60 budget, even though we don't have any idea where the money is coming from," says the president of a privately supported college in the Mid-Atlantic region); of finding additional salary money in budgets that are already spread thin ("We're cutting back our library's book budget again, to gain some funds in the salary accounts"); of tuition increases ("This is about the only private enterprise in the country which gladly subsidizes its customers; maybe we're crazy"); of promoting research contracts ("We claim to be a privately supported university, but what would we do without the AEC?"); and of bargaining.

"The tendency to bargain, on the part of both the colleges and the teachers, is a deplorable development," says the dean of a university in the South. But it is a growing practice. As a result, inequities have developed: the teacher in a field in which people are in short supply or in industrial demand—or the teacher who is adept at "campus politics"—is likely to fare better than his colleagues who are less favorably situated.

"Before you check with the administration on the actual appointment of a specific individual," says a faculty man quoted in the recent and revealing book, *The Academic Marketplace*, "you can be honest and say to the man, 'Would you be interested in coming at this amount?' and he says, 'No, but I would be interested at *this* amount.'" One result of such bargaining has been that newly hired faculty members often make more money than was paid to the people they replace—a happy circumstance for the newcomers, but not likely to raise the morale of others on the faculty.

"We have been compelled to set the beginning salary of such personnel as physics professors at least \$1,500 higher than salaries in such fields as history, art, physical education, and English," wrote the dean of faculty in a state college in the Rocky Mountain area, in response to a recent government questionnaire dealing with salary practices. "This began about 1954 and has worked until the present year, when the differential perhaps may be increased even more."

Bargaining is not new in Academe (Thorstein Veblen referred to it in *The Higher Learning*, which he wrote in

1918), but never has it been as widespread or as much a matter of desperation as today. In colleges and universities, whose members like to think of themselves as equally dedicated to all fields of human knowledge, it may prove to be a weakening factor of serious proportions.

Many colleges and universities have managed to make modest across-the-board increases, designed to restore part of the faculty's lost purchasing power. In the 1957-58 academic year, 1,197 institutions, 84.5 per cent of those answering a U.S. Office of Education survey question on the point, gave salary increases of at least 5 per cent to their faculties as a whole. More than half of them (248 public institutions and 329 privately supported institutions) said their action was due wholly or in part to the teacher shortage.

Others have found fringe benefits to be a partial answer. Providing low-cost housing is a particularly successful way of attracting and holding faculty members; and since housing is a major item in a family budget, it is as good as or better than a salary increase. Oglethorpe University in Georgia, for example, a 200-student, private, liberal arts institution, long ago built houses on campus land (in one of the most desirable residential areas on the outskirts of Atlanta), which it rents to faculty members at about one-third the area's going rate. (The cost of a three-bedroom faculty house: \$50 per month.) "It's our major selling point," says Oglethorpe's president, Donald Agnew, "and we use it for all it's worth."

Dartmouth, in addition to attacking the salary problem itself, has worked out a program of fringe benefits that includes full payment of retirement premiums (16 per cent of each faculty member's annual salary), group insurance coverage, paying the tuition of faculty children at any college in the country, liberal mortgage loans, and contributing to the improvement of local schools which faculty members' children attend.

Taking care of trouble spots while attempting to whittle down the salary problem as a whole, searching for new funds while reapportioning existing ones, the colleges and universities are dealing with their salary crises as best they can, and sometimes ingeniously. But still the gap between salary increases and the rising figures on the Bureau of Labor Statistics' consumer price index persists.

HOW CAN THE GAP BE CLOSED?

First, stringent economies must be applied by educational institutions themselves. Any waste that occurs, as well as most luxuries, is probably being subsidized by low salaries. Some "waste" may be hidden

in educational theories so old that they are accepted without question; if so, the theories must be re-examined and, if found invalid, replaced with new ones. The idea of the small class, for example, has long been honored by administrators and faculty members alike; there is now reason to suspect that large classes can be equally effective in many courses—a suspicion which, if found correct, should be translated into action by those institutions which are able to do so. Tuition may have to be increased—a prospect at which many public-college, as well as many private-college, educators shudder, but which appears justified and fair if the increases can be tied to a system of loans, scholarships, and tuition rebates based on a student's or his family's ability to pay.

Second, massive aid must come from the public, both in the form of taxes for increased salaries in state and municipal institutions and in the form of direct gifts to both public and private institutions. Anyone who gives money to a college or university for unrestricted use or earmarked for faculty salaries can be sure that he is making one of the best possible investments in the free world's future. If he is himself a college alumnus, he may consider it a repayment of a debt he incurred when his college or university subsidized a large part of his own education (virtually nowhere does, or did, a student's tuition cover costs). If he is a corporation executive or director, he may consider it a legitimate cost of doing business; the supply of well-educated men and women (the alternative to which is half-educated men and women) is dependent upon it. If he is a parent, he may consider it a premium on a policy to insure high-quality education for his children—quality which, without such aid, he can be certain will deteriorate.

Plain talk between educators and the public is a third necessity. The president of Barnard College, Millicent C. McIntosh, says: "The 'plight' is not of the faculty, but of the public. The faculty will take care of themselves in the future either by leaving the teaching profession or by never entering it. Those who care for education, those who run institutions of learning, and those who have children—all these will be left holding the bag." It is hard to believe that if Americans—and particularly college alumni and alumnae—had been aware of the problem, they would have let faculty salaries fall into a sad state. Americans know the value of excellence in higher education too well to have blithely let its basic element—excellent teaching—slip into its present peril. First we must rescue it; then we must make certain that it does not fall into disrepair again.