

## CHAPTER FIVE

# PROFESSIONAL INSTRUCTION

Since the *raison d'être* of Normal was the education and training of teachers, the professional side of Normal's curriculum is of particular interest. Indeed, as was noted earlier, for many years academic courses were included only because it was felt that the students admitted to Normal were seriously lacking in the subject matter of the courses they would have to teach. By 1878 the general consensus, both at the faculty and State Board levels, was that the Normal should henceforth confine its work to the professional side of teacher preparation. This policy was soon abandoned, but this singleness of purpose was to control the thinking and guide the development of the institution until the retirement of President Munson in the middle of the next century.

### *Curriculum*

From the earliest time the approach to the professional training of teachers took the form of instruction in psychology, history, and philosophy of education, in the legal basis and structure of the public school system of Michigan, and in observation and practice.

When, in the spring of 1853, Normal opened its doors to students, the Rev. J. M. Wilson, A.M., gave lectures in Intellectual Philosophy, and a principal of the Model School was yet to be named. The Model School would open in the fall. This was the extent of the *professional* offerings. Two curricula were available—one for teachers in the primary schools (the *English Course*) and one for teachers in the union schools (the *Classical Course*).

But soon the curriculum was to be shaken by a force from Switzerland. Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746–1827) had succeeded in

breaking away from the current teaching method of repeating words and memorization, as well as from the brutality that characterized the learning process. School must be a place where children were loved, and thus innate powers developed. Three quarters of a century later (in 1890) a great American educator, William T. Harris, would comment: "The name of Pestalozzi is forever dear to the hearts of all men. For he is the first teacher to announce convincingly the doctrine that all people should be educated—that, in fact, education is the one good gift to give to all, whether rich or poor."

Principal Welch, an enthusiast for the Pestalozzian idea and method, published in 1862 an instruction book for primary teachers. The following year the State Board gave its sanction. State Superintendent Gregory, in his report for 1863, said:

The Board of Education is now convinced that the time has come when the school can render no greater service to the State, than to so modify its course of study that all its pupils may receive thorough instruction and practice in the Pestalozzian system of Primary Teaching.

Thus, the way was prepared for a new emphasis in teaching—on observation and inquiry, rather than in the mere acquisition of knowledge.

In adopting this philosophy, Normal was neither ahead of nor behind the times. Pestalozzi's work had been known here and there in the United States for some time. It had been given strong support and wide publicity in Horace Mann's Seventh Report (1843). But Pestalozzian methods did not gain a strong foothold until after 1860. Indeed, major credit for the effective introduction of Pestalozzian ideas and methods goes to Edward A. Sheldon of Oswego, New York, who, through his missionary zeal and program of teacher training, was responsible for the development known as "The Oswego Movement," which took its rise at about this time.<sup>1</sup>

Normal, in pursuance of this new policy, reorganized its two programs of study. The First Course, called the Normal Training Course, prepared teachers for the primary school. The Second Course, called the Higher Normal Course, prepared for the union or graded school.

The State Board, in an official circular, explained this new step as follows:

Prominent Educators of the West are aware that a radical change is taking place in the methods of Primary Education. In our best schools there

is a growing conviction that the old routine of early studies, and old methods of teaching, are out of harmony with the wants and instincts of childhood. Many parents are beginning to inquire, why is it that their little ones, though kept faithfully at school most of the year, make no satisfactory intellectual progress . . .

Within fifteen years (by 1868) the professional work could be described as consisting of formal courses in Mental Philosophy, the Philosophy of Education, Professional Ethics,<sup>2</sup> lectures on topics of professional concern, and methods of teaching.<sup>3</sup>

The formula for the teaching process was labeled “The Educational Principle,” and described thus:

Thorough knowledge of subject; presentation in logical order; the Pupil’s degree of Maturity; the Pupil’s self-activity; the Pupil’s progress from the Known to the Unknown, from Easy to Difficult, from Simple to Complex, from Single to Combines, from the Concrete to Abstract, from the Empirical to Rational . . .<sup>4</sup>

The professional curriculum was explained as placing the emphasis on teaching method, and differentiated from the academic curriculum. It is well stated in the following excerpt from the 1868–69 catalog:

. . . generally whatever subject is taught in classes is given with reference to the best methods of teaching it, together with the pedagogic axioms applicable to each step . . . differing in this respect from mere *Academic Instruction*, the chief aim of which is attainment of *knowledge concerning the subject of Study* only with an incidental, often uncertain aim at what is called ‘Mental Discipline.’

The policy statement concluded in a sweeping vein:

Indeed everything in and about the Normal School,—its course of study, discipline, movements, arrangements, surroundings and moral influence, its very spirit and atmosphere, is intended to have an important and direct bearing upon the professional training of the students.

Some twenty years later (in 1888, under Principal Sill) the Pestalozzian emphasis on the psychology of the child (with its obverse side of de-emphasis on the acquisition of facts, of the mere hearing of recitations by the teacher) had developed into a major emphasis on

psychology in the professional curriculum. The two professional courses were again reorganized, this time consolidated into one inclusive program called *General Instruction in the Science and Art of Teaching*. Twenty weeks were now to be devoted to Psychology as a subject of study, followed by consideration of applications to the theory and art of teaching, the order in which both physical and mental powers are developed, and the "harmonious" development of the child.<sup>5</sup>

### *Graduate Programs*

Another development was the beginning of a short-lived venture into graduate work at Normal. Two programs of this character were initiated. One was the offering of the degree of Master of Pedagogics. This was to be conferred upon holders of the Bachelor of Pedagogics degree who could show five years of successful teaching and present a thesis acceptable to the faculty on some educational problem. The new degree was first granted in 1890. The other program was entitled "Professional Course for Graduates of Colleges." This was designed for "graduates in the Literary and Scientific Courses of the University and incorporated Michigan Colleges." It was a strictly professional course, and led to a life certificate and degree of Bachelor of Pedagogics. Its program included applied psychology ("mental science applied to teaching"), methods of teaching, the history of education, and practice teaching.

Graduate work was resumed after many years when, in 1938, a joint program under the auspices of the University of Michigan was inaugurated. In late 1952 it became an independent department of the Normal.

From the mid-nineties the influence of Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776–1841) of Germany and of America's G. Stanley Hall made a visible impact on Normal's curriculum. Psychology was becoming a science, and much more attention was given to it. The thinking of Herbart showed in the gradual abandonment of the Pestalozzian view that mind consists of distinct capacities or "faculties," in favor of the Herbartian view of mind as a unity.

Herbart's further insistence that the aim of education is broadly social rather than personal found recognition in such new education courses as Sociology (1898), Social Education (1913), Social Psy-

chology (1914) and Socialized Curriculum (1919). Hall's emphasis on child study was first formally reflected in a course in Child Study (1900).

The appearance of two new areas of teacher preparation, Special Education and Rural Education, brought some expansion of curriculum, particularly in the application of existing principles to those specialties. Special Education (the preparation of teachers of handicapped children) became a department in 1924, but work was first offered in 1915 in a course called Psychology of Exceptional Children. A Department of Rural Education, for the preparation of teachers for rural schools, was organized in 1919 and brought in special courses in Rural Education (1921) and Rural Research (1925).

Proliferation of courses in the several areas now well established was conservative during the first decade of the present century (the Jones era), extensive during the second and third decades (the McKenny era). By 1931 they were being arranged under eight headings: General and Educational Psychology; Principles, History and Philosophy of Education; Tests, Measurements and Research; Administration and Supervision; Philosophy; Rural Education; Social Aspects of Education; and Special Education.

During the period of the Great Depression and World War II (the Munson era), expansion slowed to a walk, but was not to be entirely denied. Courses were added to the Special Education Department, a course in audio-visual aids to teaching was offered (1937), a graduate program in Education and Special Education was initiated in 1938, and in 1941 a program in Occupational Therapy was adopted. In 1953 a course called Core Curriculum was introduced which became a staple in the professional offerings.

An unfortunate casualty of this period was the offering in philosophy. Begun in 1905, under Professor Charles Hoyt, as "Degree Courses," two courses in this academic field were presented. The education staff thence provided the work in philosophy for thirty-three years. It was terminated by the death of Professor O. O. Norris in 1938. When revived, with the coming of Professor Manuel Bilsky in 1960, it was placed with the Department of History and Social Sciences, and at the present time has expanded to offer both major and minor concentrations.

Course work in Philosophy of Education was also initiated in 1905, and terminated by the death of Professor Norris. Twelve years

later (1950) a course in History and Philosophy of Education was offered by Professor Carl Hood, and although Professor Hood died in 1958 the course continues.

Today, courses offered by the College of Education total 164, of which 42 are undergraduate offerings and 122 are at the graduate level. To these must be added 28 undergraduate methods courses, given by the several liberal arts and specialty departments (music, industrial arts, etc) to inform students how to teach the subject matter of their major areas.

### *A Department of Education*

In 1893, (under Principal Boone) the work in professional education was organized as a department, with Daniel Putnam as its head. It was called the *Department of Mental and Moral Science and Theory and Art of Teaching*; its more convenient label, the *Pedagogical Department*. In 1897 the name was altered to *Department of Psychology and Pedagogy*. With the arrival of President Jones in 1902 it became *Department of Psychology and Education*. And from 1916 it was the *Education Department* until absorbed into the *College of Education* when, in 1959, the institution changed from college to university.

Professor Putnam, the department's first head, died in 1906. For a decade and a half thereafter a three-headed arrangement prevailed. Professor Samuel Laird represented Psychology, Professor Nathan Harvey Pedagogy, and Professor Charles Hoyt the Science and History of Education. By 1921, however, Hoyt appeared clearly as Chairman of the Department of Education. In the same year a new division was created within the department, called Rural Education. Professor Marvin Pittman was placed in charge.

The long career at Normal (thirty-two years) of Charles Oliver Hoyt deserves special attention. He was, in early training and experience, a Michigan, even a local area, product. His story up to the time of arrival at Normal reveals much about the status of public education at the time. Attending high school at the nearby village of Saline, he first taught in a rural school, became principal of a small-town high school (Blissfield), then was superintendent of schools successively at Wyandotte, Grass Lake, Jackson, and Lansing. It was not until he had held these positions that he received his AB de-

gree from Albion College. He immediately (1896) joined the staff at Normal as Director of the Training School. What is exceptional in this story (though fairly typical of the colleagues with whom he was associated—D'Ooge, Ford, Sherzer, Gorton) is that he took a leave of absence from Normal and went to Germany where he earned the PhD degree from the University of Jena, center for the Herbartian movement (1903). His position as head of the department, subsequent writings, and the publication of his book, *Studies in the History of Modern Education* (1908), made him a figure of national interest.

Professor Hoyt died in 1928, and was succeeded in 1930 by Charles Leroy Anspach, Registrar and Dean of Ashland College, Ohio. Anspach headed the Education Department at Normal for four years, served as Dean of Administration for one, returned to Ashland as its president, and concluded his career as President of Central Michigan College (now Central Michigan University) over which he presided with marked success for a period of twenty years. He returned to Normal, now Eastern Michigan University, in 1961 as a Regent appointed by the Governor of the State.

In 1935, Noble Lee Garrison became head of the department. Garrison had been with the Normal since 1925, had published papers on coordination between college and training school, on teaching and on democratic participation in administration, and a book on *The Technique and Administration of Teaching*.

Retiring in 1953 (during the Elliott administration), Garrison was replaced by R. Stanley Gex, of the staff of Teachers' College, University of Cincinnati. The following year saw the several professional areas and departments of instruction grouped under the general direction of a Dean of Professional Education. The function of the dean was to coordinate the work of the departments of Education, Special Education, Extension Education (shortly to become designated as Field Services), the Laboratory Schools, and the methods courses. Earl Mosier, a member of President Elliott's staff when he was State Superintendent of Public Instruction, was named by Elliott to fill the new position. In 1956 Dean Mosier resigned, and two years later was replaced by Gex. The replacement for Gex as head of the Education Department was Kenneth H. Cleeton, a member of the Education staff at William and Mary College. In 1960, in line with the institutional change of name to Eastern Michigan University, the *College of Education* was organized and Gex

was named Dean. The departments assigned to this college were Education; Library Science; Special Education and Occupational Therapy; Physical Education, Health, Recreation and Athletics; and the Laboratory Schools.

Under President Sponberg, whose administration began in 1965, some further adjustments were made. A new *Center for International Studies* was created and Dean Gex, whose interest had developed strongly in this direction, was placed in charge. His position as Dean of the College of Education went to Allen Myers, then head of the Special Education Department. Cleeton was placed in charge of the *Special Projects and Research Development*—a new agency prompted by the numerous opportunities that had developed in the post-World War 11 years for obtaining grants (federal and other) for fellowships and research projects at the faculty level.

The purpose for which Normal was founded was religiously and exclusively adhered to for nearly a century—and effectively served throughout its existence. The teachers who went forth from its halls became noted from coast to coast for their sound preparation and dedication to their calling. They brought national distinction to their alma mater.

It is noteworthy that those faculty who attracted national and international attention and respect came very largely from the liberal arts side of the curriculum. The stone that once was rejected became the cornerstone of a proud edifice.