THE ADMINISTRATION
OF
PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS FOR TEACHERS

By
WALTER D. AGNEW

BALTIMORE
WARWICK & YORK, INC.,
1924

THE ADMINISTRATION OF PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS FOR TEACHERS

THE ADMINISTRATION OF PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS FOR TEACHERS

By
WALTER D. AGNEW

BALTIMORE
WARWICK & YORK, INC.,
1924

Dedicated to My Wife

Whose Constant Cooperation
Made This Study Possible

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The professional schools for teachers in the United States are passing through a rapid transition. The traditional normal school offering only two years of training to high school graduates is rapidly merging into a teachers' college with a thorough and diversified course of study covering the regular college period of four years and granting a suitable bachelor's degree upon its completion.

Of the one hundred sixty-seven institutions now listed as professional schools for teachers, under state auspices, ninety-one are offering a four-year course and twenty-four, a three-year course, leaving only fifty-two of the traditional type with a course covering only a period of two years. At the mid-year meeting of the Normal School Council and the Association of Teachers Colleges, workers in the field were so convinced that the college type of institution would prevail that the former organization was asked to join the latter, eliminating a time-honored organization and giving great impetus to a movement that will doubtless soon be honored with large success.

In assuming the title and functions of a college, this new institution must not be content with meager and minimum changes in its curricula and slight additions to its equipment. A full vision of its opportunity and its obligation will impel its executive officers to plan for its maximum possibilities. Executive functions will increase as the scope of the work is enlarged. New and responsible executive officers must be added to the staff of the chief executive. Appropriate administrative practices must be introduced to meet the demand for increased efficiency. Suitable titles, long accepted in the administration of American colleges, should be given to all administrative officers. Larger participation on the part of the faculty in directing the policies of the institution should be conceded and the social life of the students, now more mature, should be correspondingly enriched. It is believed that this demand will be fully justified by the following discussions.

The following chapters, with an historical introduction, present a study of current administrative practices in thirty of these growing institutions in eighteen states, with recommendations for their improvement. In securing the data, the presidents or principals of twenty-eight of these institutions were personally interviewed, and in the case of two, data was secured from the highest subordinate officers. Seventeen of the institutions were visited and the data secured on the ground. The questionnaire used in the interviews contained three main divisions: the first called for certain personal data; the second asked for an analysis of his administrative organization—subordinate administrative officers and faculty committees; and the third contained a careful list of administrative functions concerning which it was asked—"to whom delegated," "how authorized," and what relation the president sustained, whether he initiated, executed or merely approved. The information secured through the interview was in every case supplemented by copies of the catalogue, the school laws of the state, and by-laws or resolutions of the governing authority that in any way related to the duties of the president and faculty. Constitutions of student government organizations were secured and other literature available that bore upon matters of administration.

The same methods were employed in securing similar data from twelve liberal arts colleges, widely distributed throughout the states. It will be observed that many of these data have been organized and used for purposes of comparison.

In order that the administrative officers interviewed might give the fullest information and speak with the utmost frankness concerning their various problems, they were assured that the names of institutions would be withheld from publicity wherever such disclosure might in any way embarrass them in their work.

A studious effort has been made to respect these confidences. No successful executive is ever quite satisfied with his organization. Some of the most alert and aggressive administrators are often forced to work under conditions far below their ideal.

They should not necessarily be held responsible for adverse conditions. In any case a study of this kind should be entirely impersonal. Every known means has been employed to make this a study of administrative measures free from personal reflections. An exception might be noted in Chapter II, where the catalogues of certain institutions are named as references. This apparent exception is justified because the quotations are copied from the literature of the schools and colleges in question, widely distributed, open to inspection and already familiar to a wide constituency.

The introductory chapter presents an historical survey of the origin and development of the normal schools, with special reference to administrative practices. In each of the chapters which follow, the study of current practice is preceded by an historical introduction, the object of which is to discover the origin and trace the development of practices in the administration of the professional school.

The following are the criteria which furnish a standard of judgment as to best practice:

1. The experience of the past with reference to the success or failure of administrative measures is used as a basis for judgment.
2. Insistent trends in practice through a long period have been accepted in some instances as a guarantee of what is wise in administration.
3. The testimony of administrators now in office, to the success of certain current practices has been taken as good evidence that such practices should be continued.
4. A few recommendations have been justified on account of the success of the proposed measures in liberal arts colleges. This criterion has been used only in such administrative relations as are very obviously held in common by the colleges and the professional schools.

All the recommendations in this study are justified in some form by one or more of these criteria.

The writer is under great obligations to many who have given generous assistance in making the survey of the institutions and good counsel in the preparation of this material. The chief executives of the professional schools for the most part left nothing to be desired in the hearty co-operation which they gave. Grateful acknowledgments are accorded here to Doctor

William C. Bagley for his frequent and wise counsel and criticism; to Doctor Edward H. Reisner for his careful reading of the historical sections and his subsequent helpful criticism; to Doctor N. L. Engelhardt for his criticism of the sections dealing with the administrative problems; and to Doctor Edward S. Evenden, Doctor William H. Kilpatrick, Doctor William A. McCall and Professor Edward D. Randolph for helpful and friendly suggestions.

W. D. A.

January, 1923.

Chapter I

TWO FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES HISTORICALLY CONSIDERED

An historical review of two fundamental considerations in the administration of professional schools for teachers is presented in this chapter.

I. The first, now pretty generally accepted, is the theory that it is the function of the state to provide professional preparation for teachers in the public schools.

II. The other, not so generally accepted, is the principle that the professional school will be more efficient when it is devoted entirely to the single professional aim of preparing teachers for the public schools.

I. Teacher Training a State Function.

With reference to the first principle, the professional school during the period of its development has met with two significant opposing practices. The first in point of time was the preparation of teachers in institutions under private rather than public control. This practice could be found to some extent as a policy down to the opening of the present century.

The other, widely popular for more than a quarter of a century prior to 1905-10, was the practice of communities' (towns and cities) maintaining their own local schools for the preparation of teachers. This practice still obtains in the large centers of population. These two developments will be considered in the order of their historic sequence in the following discussion.

1. Teacher Training a State Rather Than a Private Enterprise.

The professional school passed through a long period of evolution before it was recognized in all the states as a necessary state institution. This has been true with respect to other of our American institutions. In a free society where the institutions arise through a felt need of the people, at first

incipient, they do not usually come suddenly, full-grown and full-orbed. Whether social, religious or educational, they are subject to the law of struggle for survival. They are the expression of ideas, and with ideas as with all the forms of life, only "the fittest survive."

Innovations in society are often first tried out as private enterprises; nearly all the eleemosynary institutions in America now supported by the state began in this way. Often they were sustained by religious bodies. This was true of education. Schools for the preparation of teachers began first as academies under private auspices. The public mind yields slowly to new ideas. In a democratic state, the fear of taxes, the fear that a new institution will react against others long established, and the general prejudice against innovations, all make necessary a springtime of seed sowing in soil still in the grip of the frost, before the summer of harvesting can come. It was so with this new institution. It was necessary then that there should be a long period of agitation.

The Period of Agitation. Perhaps the earliest significant proposal in America with reference to the training of teachers was made by Benjamin Franklin in establishing an academy in Philadelphia in 1756. One of the purposes of this academy was, "that others of the lesser sort might be trained as teachers." Among the earliest appeals made for the preparation of teachers was an anonymous article entitled, "The Importance of Studying the English Language Grammatically," which appeared in "The Massachusetts Magazine" for June 1789, sometimes assigned to that famous master, Elisha Tichnor. The writer recommends the maintenance of institutions for the preparation of young gentlemen for school keeping.[1]

After the opening of the nineteenth century, literature on this subject began to multiply. Denison Olmsteads' commencement address at Yale College in 1816 was a notable appeal for seminaries that should be designed especially for the preparation of teachers. The decade from 1820 to 1830 was productive

[1] J. P. Gordy: Rise and Growth of the Normal School Idea; footnote, p. 9.

of the first significant body of literature on this subject in the United States.

In 1823, William Russell, a teacher in the New Township Academy at New Haven, Connecticut, wrote a pamphlet entitled "Suggestions to Teachers." In the same year, James T. Kingsley, of Yale College, made an important contribution to "The North American Review" in an appeal for the preparation of teachers. Three years later, Mr. Russell became editor of the "Journal of Education" in Boston, which is said to be the first periodical in the English language devoted exclusively to the subject of education.[2]

Reverend James G. Carter, of Lancaster, Massachusetts, during the winter of 1824-5, under the name of "Franklin," wrote a series of articles which appeared first in the "Boston Patriot and Mercantile Advertiser," and later were published in pamphlet form and given wide distribution in the state of Massachusetts.[3]

Under date of January fourth, 1825, there appeared in the "Connecticut Observer," of Hartford, over the signature "A Father," the first of a series of articles by Reverend Thomas H. Gallaudet. These articles, entitled "A Plan of a Seminary for the Education of Instructors of Youth," also appeared in pamphlet form and attracted much attention in Connecticut and other parts of New England, and were republished in the newspapers of the time. The plan was presented and discussed in the educational conventions which met at Hartford in 1828 and 1830. The writer found an extensive quotation from this pamphlet in an essay read by Reverend Samuel R. Hall before the Institute of Instruction in the session of 1833.

Governor Dewitt Clinton of New York, in his annual message to the legislature in 1826 and again in 1827, made a plea for "the education of competent teachers" and for "the establishment of a seminary."

Walter R. Johnson of Germantown, Pa., during the year 1828, "without any knowledge of the views of Mr. Carter or

[2] Henry Barnard: Normal Schools. p. 9 (1850). Ibid: p. 75 ff.
[3] Report of Session of Institute of Instruction (1833). p. 248 ff.

Mr. Gallaudet," in a pamphlet, entitled "Observations on the Improvement of Seminaries of Learning," set forth the necessity and advantage of schools for the special training of teachers.[4]

Samuel R. Hall's "Lectures on School Keeping" were published in 1829 and ten thousand copies were distributed free to the teachers of New York by the regents of the university.

Henry E. Dwight, on returning from his travels in the north of Germany during 1825-6, published in 1829 an account which included observations of the seminaries for the training of teachers.

About the year 1830, the period of real organization began. Monthly publications began to spring up devoted to the cause of public education and making constant appeals for better trained teachers. Not until after 1850 did they become numerous but a few began prior to 1850 and were helpful in promoting the normal school movement. Among the most prominent of these journals were: "The Massachusetts Teacher"; Woodbridge's "Annals of Education"; "The Common School Journal," edited by Horace Mann and published by the Massachusetts Board of Education. At Cincinnati, Ohio, the first journal west of the Alleghenies began in 1836 under the name of "The Western Literary Journal and Teachers College."

It was also during the decade of the thirties that educational leaders began to effect such organizations as the Institute of Instruction, which held its first session in Boston in 1830.[5] And there were important conventions such as those that were held in Hartford in 1828 and 1830, and the historic meeting in Plymouth County, Massachusetts in September 1838.

In the autumn of 1839, the institute movement began in a session at Hartford, Connecticut, under the direction of Henry Barnard. The previous year in the legislature he had tried to secure the passage of a bill authorizing the expenditure of $5000 to aid in the preparation of Connecticut teachers but the

[4] J. P. Gordy: Rise and Growth of the Normal School Idea. p. 14 ff.
[5] Henry Barnard: Normal Schools, p. 125 ff.