

From Normal School to Teachers College

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THE NORMAL school has become the teachers college. While a few institutions are still named normal schools, these will soon be gone. This transformation, which is much more than a change in name, has been amazingly rapid. During the first sixty years of their existence, the normal schools were poorly supported, isolated institutions. They have had, however, a significant central purpose which made them sturdy and fitted them into the American scene. The founders of this nation recognized that education for all the people was essential in a democracy. A citizen who could cooperate with his fellows in making a democracy work was essential. It was also implicit in their thought that the individual, and by that is meant all persons, should have an opportunity to become as much of a person as he could be in this new democracy.

When common schools were first established, it soon became apparent that the quality of the experience which children might have in them was dependent upon the quality of the teacher. It took about fifty years for the intellectuals to discover this and convince the people that a new kind of institution was necessary for the education of teachers. The first publicly-supported normal school was opened in

1839. By the end of the century these institutions had spread all over the country. They did not conform to any established academic patterns. They were folk schools.

With the great social changes characteristic of the last fifty years, the high school became an extension of the common school. The teachers college, close to the people, a part of the public school system, became increasingly the institution for the preparation of teachers in the high school as well as the elementary school.

To say that there had been no association among the leaders of the normal schools in the nineteenth century would not be true. Charles A. Harper has written in *A Century of Public Teacher Education* the history of these years. It is nevertheless true that organized association began about 1900 in the middle west. The American Association of Teachers Colleges was founded in 1917 by the presidents of five institutions in the middle west. This was a signal that the expansion and improvement of the teachers college as an essential part of the public school system, reaching from the first grade through the university, had begun. These far-seeing leaders recognized the need for an organization which would provide for the exchange of ideas and the improvement of their service. In the 23 years that have followed, the association has grown to a membership of nearly 200, distributed throughout the United States.

The institutions have had an honorable, if modest, history. But the new demands upon their resources have obviously meant expansion in student body and in buildings. Just as truly they have required new understanding of the place which the institutions should fill and consideration of the best ways in which needs might be met. The leaders had to educate themselves, administrative officers, faculty members, and boards of trustees. They had to present their needs to the public and obtain the necessary support for securing additional facilities of all kinds. The battle for a teacher, prepared to serve adequately the needs of his generation, had to be fought again as it was fought in the corresponding two decades of the nineteenth century.

Blueprints for accomplishing these changes had become familiar to the leaders in the middle west. The North Central Association, founded before 1900, had no place for teachers colleges and normal schools on its accredited list for colleges and had so many other concerns that it had no program for improvement of the teachers colleges. There was, however, no law to prevent the use of patterns in the American Association of Teachers Colleges which seemed to be producing results for other institutions in the North Central Association. Discussion in regard to standards for accrediting teachers colleges found a place in the program of earlier associations and was the focus of discussion with the founding of the American Association of Teachers Colleges. Committees were appointed. The executives of the association undertook the work of organizing desirable patterns toward which the institutions might grow. It was important to take the best which had been known in the practice of older types of academic institutions but at the same time to hold fast to the distinctive purposes for

which the teachers colleges were founded. Proposals were made, discussed and modified. Finally in 1926 a set of standards was adopted, looking forward to establishing an accredited list of teachers colleges. It should be noted that the teachers colleges had the benefit of association with the university schools of education, whose leaders saw the significance of the enterprise and cooperated with it.

The establishment of an accredited list of teachers colleges was a device. The main value of the whole process lay in the education which came about for the executives and, more remotely, for all other persons connected with the teachers college program. It was the intent from the beginning that the program should benefit all institutions. All were put on the accredited list with their deficiencies noted and time was given for improvement before the more rigid standards would be applied. In 1927 the program of accrediting began.

Readers who have come this far may be willing to look at the whole picture for a little longer before we come to the discussion of the library program in detail. The standards set up the following requirements:

Standards

An institution must have for its central purpose the education of teachers. It must admit only graduates of a standard four-year high school. It could allow no credit for teaching experience toward the college degree. Each student must complete 120 hours of work for graduation. A reasonable ratio of students to faculty, to be determined by later study, must be maintained. In this standard as in others, it was expected that continued study would lead to the modification of the standard and moving goals be characteris-

tic of the program. The faculty must have a minimum preparation of the master's degree. The maximum teaching load for the staff was set at 16 hours a week. A training school for practice teaching was a specific requirement. The curriculum must exhibit sequence of courses and there must be segregation of immature from mature students. Requirements for safeguarding health and developing health habits were set up. The living conditions of students must receive adequate consideration. The library must have 15,000 volumes well distributed, but more of this specific requirement later. General requirements for laboratories and shops were made. The location, construction and care of buildings were considered, and adequate financial support required. A general requirement made it possible for the accrediting committee to judge the general tone of the teachers college on less tangible elements than those directly mentioned in the standards. The administration of the accrediting plan allowed for local differences but made improvement by all necessary.

Administration Made More Effective

The standards have been modified since their first adoption and their administration made more effective. Twenty-four studies offering objective evidence for necessary changes have been printed in the Yearbooks of the association. These studies have been made by individuals or committees usually under the supervision of the standards committee, which now has in progress studies on publicity, extension programs, health, curriculum, student personnel, and library. A standard in regard to tenure has been recently added.

So much for a general statement. I shall not attempt to list the changes which have come about in the institutions. The

first accredited list was published in February 1928, and none of the institutions fully met the minimum standards. The number has increased to 158 institutions and all meet the minimum requirements of the standards. It would not be fair to attribute all changes to the adoption of standards and the accrediting process. It would be agreed among the executives that this device has been one of the major influences in the education of all concerned in the improvement of the institutions.

In 1928 a bachelor's degree was typical for faculty preparation. One out of five in the faculties today has a doctor's degree. One out of three has sixty hours of graduate preparation. Almost all members of the staffs have the master's degree, including the teachers in the campus school. The importance of the training school and of student teaching has been continuously stressed and definite standards enforced. Significant developments have occurred in the health area. All students are examined by a physician annually, some form of hospital care is provided, and instruction in health is given to all students.

One further word before going to the specific question of the library. To appreciate the progress made in teachers colleges it is necessary to visit the institutions. The campuses have been widened, building programs have been in evidence nearly everywhere. The quality of the student body has improved. In 1928, 25 per cent of the graduates received the bachelor's degree; 75 per cent were at the two-year level. In a little over a decade this situation has been reversed.

If a librarian has been patient enough to read thus far we shall now reward him with details in regard to the library. The first objective study made on which to base a program of improvement concerned

the standard for libraries. It was made by G. W. Rosenlof, who was then a graduate student at Teachers College, Columbia University, for his doctoral thesis and was made under the direction of Edward S. Evenden. He collected information about:

- Number of books and their classification
- Number of periodicals
- Types of library indexes, reader's guides, and other aims
- Records of accessions
- Library personnel
- Policies of duplication
- Support of libraries
- Training school, seminar, departmental and textbook exhibit libraries
- Physical plant and equipment
- Library administration

The first report was made in 1928 and was printed in the Yearbook of the association. Even the summary and conclusions of this study are too long to quote. Those who are interested may refer to the Yearbook. The number of books reported by 59 schools showed a range of from 5335 to 101,414, the average for all schools being 16,934. Two-thirds of the schools reported fewer than 15,000 books. The professional collection represented from 6.7 per cent to 26 per cent of the total libraries, the average for all schools being 14.3 per cent. Duplication ranged from 1.3 per cent to 52.5 per cent. The range for the number of periodicals was from 40 to 305. The typical librarian had completed a four-year college or normal school course and had approximately one year of technical library training with some teaching experience. The library staff was found in most instances to be altogether inadequate to the need. No uniformity was found in regard to the budget for libraries. The method of its

handling indicated that the library was not typically considered to be of major importance.

Result of Study

As a result of this study the following standards were recommended:

Books—Each teachers college shall have a live, well distributed library bearing specifically upon subjects taught. There should be at least 15,000 volumes, exclusive of all public documents, distributed approximately as follows:

	Per cent
General library economy, etc.	7.5
Philosophy and psychology	5.0
Religion and bible stories	2.5
Sociology and education	20.0
Languages and philology	2.5
The sciences	7.5
Useful arts	7.5
Fine arts	5.0
Literature	20.0
History and geography	20.0
Fiction	2.5

Not more than 15 per cent of the total number of books should represent duplicate copies.

This library shall be administered by one or more professionally trained persons who have a minimum academic training and who hold a bachelor's degree or its equivalent. Preferably these shall be persons who have had some teaching experience.

Periodicals—Each teachers college shall have a well selected library of periodicals including not only locally but nationally well known and recognized periodicals. These should be well distributed as to the various subjects of the curricula and interests of students and faculty. Such a collection should not be less than 125.

Each teachers college shall provide for a textbook exhibit library, consisting of all accepted and standard textbooks and other library material.

Each teachers college shall have a training school library of not fewer than 2000 well distributed books of both general cultural and special reference nature. These should preferably be housed in the training school under the administration and supervision of a special training school librarian.

Each college should have a definite annual appropriation of not less than 5 per cent of the total college budget exclusive of

capital outlay to be used exclusively for library purposes distributed in such a manner as to give due regard to each of the items properly included in a library budget. Such items and their proportionate share of the budget for library purposes are suggested as follows:

	Per cent
Salaries and wages	55
Library supplies	2
Travel	1
Printing and publications	2
Binding and repairs	5
Books	25
Periodicals	5
New equipment	5

What has happened as a result of this program of improvement? Again it will be impossible to give the answers in detail. Those who are interested may consult the files of the Yearbooks. An index of the entire file was first published in 1938 and printed in the Yearbook. It would be necessary to visit the campuses of our teachers colleges to appreciate fully what has happened during this period and what the present status of our libraries truly is.

The Carnegie Corporation became interested in the libraries of teachers colleges as it had been interested in those of arts colleges and junior colleges and made grants to 29 institutions for the improvement of their collections. One of the inspectors for the Carnegie Corporation was Foster Mohrhardt, librarian of the Carnegie Library at Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Va. His interest in this problem has led him to compare the original findings of Dr. Rosenlof with the data submitted in the annual reports for 1939, a ten-year span. I quote from this as yet unpublished study:

Before presenting the comparison showing the ten-year development, it should be pointed out that a larger and more representative number of colleges are included in the 1938 statistics. It seems possible that many of the schools which did not supply information to Dr. Rosenlof were reluctant to

fill out the questionnaire because of their inadequate library support and facilities. The 1928 results, therefore, probably show a flattering picture of the condition at that time.

Teachers Colleges and Normal Schools 1927-28	Teachers Colleges and Normal Schools 1937-38
Vols. in Library	
Range 2,097-101,414	10,720-148,500
Median 9,200	28,108
Per Cent of Duplicates	
Range 1.3-52.5	2-45
Median 14.8	11
Budget for Books and Periodicals	
Range \$250-\$9,450	\$526-\$13,221
Median \$1,950	\$2,745
Total Library Budget	
Range \$1,500-\$39,106	\$1,865-\$38,106
Median \$6,750	\$9,888
Per Cent of Holdings in Education	
Range 5.6-42.3	3.5-40
Median 15.1	15

Even when it is admitted that teachers college libraries in 1928 were far below what they should have been, a study of the development over the period from 1928 to 1938 is impressive. The increase in the median for book holdings from 9200 volumes to 28,108 volumes is particularly significant. Possibly it was influenced by the emphasis of accrediting bodies, but even so it is an unprecedented development. This tripling of the library book stock was probably a most healthy and provocative influence. Teachers college administrators had to meet many problems arising from this. The readers' demands on the libraries increased. Housing facilities became crowded and inadequate, and a practical test was made of the abilities of the librarians.

The decrease in the percentage of duplicates is commendable, and a further decrease is recommended. Teachers college budgets are still far too small to permit the heavy buying of duplicates which is so common.

Medians for both the total library budgets and the book budgets have increased over 40 per cent in this period. If this trend can be continued for the next decade, these libraries will reach a level where they can provide the service needed by the faculty and students.