

courses dealing with the adolescent pupils were added. When the commercial curriculum, with its specialized subject-matter, was organized, specialized professional courses were included. The special curricula for teachers of the mentally retarded and children with defective speech was made up largely of specialized and professional materials.

All these added professional specializations are, in the main, incidental to the extension of the education of teachers into new areas. The differentiation and specialization in the elementary field, however, present a different picture.

The reorganization of the Normal School in 1920 marked a radical change in the differentiation in the curriculum for the preparation of teachers in elementary education. The 1920-1921 catalog states that the curricula which are offered have been "organized on the principle that teaching in the elementary schools can be classified into sufficiently definite types to require specialization. Each curriculum prepares for a specific type of teaching position." At the end of the first semester, students select one of the curricula "for the purpose of specialization in a specific field of teaching."

Similar statements are found in the catalogs down to 1938. Although the curricula were revised in that year, the theory of specialization in the elementary field was reaffirmed. The 1938-1939 catalog stated: "If the elementary curriculum is chosen a student must specialize in the Kindergarten-Primary, Intermediate, Rural, or Special Education Group." This statement was repeated in the catalogs down to 1943. In the catalog for 1943-1944 the change of one word — *must to may* — removed special-

ization from the elementary area as a requirement and made it optional with the student. There has been no change on this point to the present time.

The college began as an institution training elementary teachers with a single undifferentiated curriculum. Thirty years ago the institution organized sharply differentiated curricula in the elementary area on the principle that teaching in the elementary schools requires specialization. This theory was maintained for twenty-three years. Since then specialized subjects on the elementary level are available to the student but the choosing of them is optional.

This partial abandonment of the principles of specialization can be interpreted as a change in attitude toward the theory of transfer of learning. In 1920 the differentiation of professional courses for elementary teachers seemed to derive from the theory that the teacher in training must learn many specific things. The 1950 practice of preparing teachers for the elementary field without reference to particular grades reflects the view that the professional education of teachers is mainly a matter of learning principles which have application in a variety of situations.

These have been important changes in the professional portion of the curricula developed at Bloomsburg. Sometimes these changes have been slight; at other times they have been quite radical. They represent changes in professional thinking and willingness to abandon practices that have proved to be unsound. In so far as they have been based on intelligent experimentation they give teaching a better claim to the status of a profession.

## ENGLISH

S. L. WILSON

While the curriculum in English over the past thirty years has remained fundamentally the same, there has been change by way of a shift of emphasis away from a highly professional approach and by way of enrichment in the number of elective courses offered. Thirty years ago we prepared teachers primarily for the elementary and the junior high school grades.

At that time there was a junior high school on the campus with training school teachers in charge of each subject in the seventh, eighth and ninth grades, and with college teachers supervising the work in their fields. We then required all prospective teachers of English to take three semesters of the teaching of English, — one for the teaching of English in grade seven, one for grade eight and one for grade nine. Later this was reduced to two semesters, one for the teaching of literature in the three grades and one for the teaching of composition. Still later this was made a one semester course required of all, as it still is in the elementary curriculum. Finally the course was discontinued. There has since been offered from time to time, largely to teachers-in-service and during summer sessions, a course in the teaching of English in the secondary school.

Throughout these years all students have been required to take two semesters of composition, one of oral English and one each of English and American literature. Students in the Business Education Curriculum also have one semester of business correspondence. In addition to these courses all English majors and minors must take courses in English philology and advanced composition, plus a number of elective courses, open not only to them but to all students who wish to broaden their cultural background. Among such courses are Shakespeare, World Literature, Modern Novel, Short Story, Contemporary Poetry, The Victorian Period, The Romantic Period, Biography and Autobiography, Children's Literature and Journalism.

The guiding principle in the selection and arrangement of courses has been that prospective teachers of reading and literature, of writing, speaking, and listening must have adequate training in each. In literature we feel that a teacher should have a knowledge of English, American and World literature and of the various literary types. An elementary teacher certainly should be at

home in the field of books for children, and a secondary teacher in the field of books for adolescents. Only with such familiarity will he be able to cope with the problem of selecting materials suitable for the stage of maturity and individual needs of his pupils at these various levels of instruction. Even more important today, we feel, is the ability to take authors and selections out of their old, scholarly categories and adapt them to purposes of instruction in preparing pupils for better living and a better understanding of the world in which they are living.

We feel that teachers of the language arts should understand the control of the voice and how to use their own voices effectively in presenting material to the class. The ability to spell correctly, to punctuate properly, to capitalize and to use acceptable English would seem as important today as ever. In fact, the current emphasis on the communication of ideas should give these skills added usefulness. The emphasis here is, more than ever, to avoid setting these things aside as ends in themselves, and to look on them more and more as aids to effective expression. The approach should be to determine the weaknesses and needs of any given group and then select and present material accordingly.

In writing, prospective teachers should learn the principles and practice of selecting and organizing ideas for presentation to others. They should be able to evaluate writing and should hold themselves and later their pupils to generally accepted standards of usage. The more experience in creative writing the teacher himself can have, the better will he be able to guide young people in their attempts at self-expression.

It is the better to strengthen these new concepts that we are now moving toward a more integrated program, especially in the communication arts linking more closely written and spoken English, and in general culture, linking world literature with the history of civilization and with appreciation of art and appreciation of music. This step is being taken to make our program fit in more closely with the new curriculums for the elementary and secondary schools of the state. Our chief purpose, after all, is to prepare our students for the teaching situation in which they will find themselves.