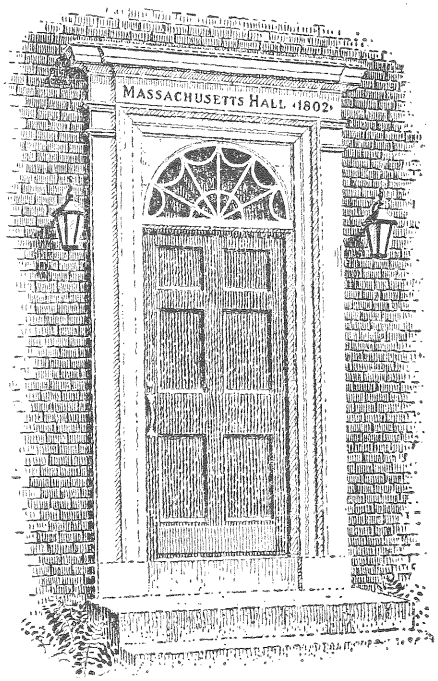

THE CONSERVATIVE TRADITION IN
EDUCATION AT BOWDOIN COLLEGE

REPORT OF THE

Committee on Self Study

September 1956

BRUNSWICK, MAINE

INTRODUCTION

THE SELF STUDY, undertaken and carried through by Bowdoin College, was made possible by a grant to the College from The Fund for the Advancement of Education. It was one of sixteen such grants made in December 1953. From its inception to its conclusion the project spread across three academic years, from 1953 to 1956. The proposal for the study was formulated by a committee appointed by the President in September 1953 following a recommendation made the previous spring by the Committee on Curriculum and Educational Policy. The proposal was submitted to the Faculty and, after extensive discussion, was approved. Following the award of the grant the President continued the Committee and gave it the responsibility for the study. Provision was made for alumni and student advisers.

The Committee had over-all charge of the study. During the academic year 1954-1955 the chairman was relieved of his course responsibilities, and the other four members of the Committee in residence were relieved of various portions of theirs. In February 1954 the College obtained as Assistant to the Committee a person with extensive editorial and research experience, and established an office for the Self Study which remained open until the submission of the report.

The basic method of the study was group discussion. Seven principal subcommittees with members of the central committee as chairmen, and three committees on special topics were established. They held 148 meetings. Practically all the members of the Faculty served on these committees, many on more than one. The office prepared for their use studies of Bowdoin practice, studies of the experience of other institutions, data based on student records, and reports on the various questionnaires used. Each subcommittee, at the conclusion of its deliberations, presented a report to the central committee. On the basis of these reports the Committee formulated its own decisions. It then recessed for a month and a half while the

two members assigned prepared a draft report. The whole committee then reconvened and after consideration approved the final draft. This was submitted to The Fund, the Governing Boards, and the Faculty on September 1, 1955.

The Committee, with the assistance of its alumni advisers, prepared and sent to the alumni a questionnaire covering various aspects of their college experience. Approximately fifteen hundred replied either by returning the questionnaire or by letter. These replies proved to be exceptionally interesting and valuable. They furnished material for a series of articles appearing in the *Bowdoin Alumnus* during 1955-1956.

The undergraduates submitted to the Committee a report based on a questionnaire designed by the Student Curriculum Committee, and a report on fraternities drawn up by a committee appointed by the Student Council. Throughout the study the undergraduates manifested a lively interest in it and cooperated through their designated advisers, and less formally in many ways. Especially helpful was a study of "Attitudes and Accomplishments of Bowdoin College Students Concerning Scholastic Effort and Achievement" written by one of their number as his honors paper in sociology.

The report of the Committee was considered by the Faculty from October 1955 to February 1956 in a series of fourteen informal meetings. The conclusions and recommendations were extensively debated and tentative action was agreed on. This was later confirmed by formal action. With minor changes the recommendations of the Committee were accepted. Action of the Faculty at variance with the report of the Committee is indicated in footnotes to the text of the Report. The relevant recommendations were considered by the Committee on Educational Policy of the Governing Boards, and later by the two Boards, and were approved.

PREFACE

FOR EVERY INSTITUTION, as well as for every person, it is well to pause occasionally in the course of events to reassess aims, the manner of their achievement, and the extent to which fundamental objectives are being fulfilled. For an institution as old as Bowdoin College, it is essential that its program be critically reviewed from time to time, in terms of the interpretations of human values — intellectual, moral and spiritual — of the contemporary world. So often our colleges and universities, while contributing greatly to such progress as man may enjoy, themselves fail to keep pace with the changes wrought by that progress.

At the conclusion of the sesquicentennial period of the College, a comprehensive and critical review was appropriate and timely. With the support of a Self Study Grant from The Fund for the Advancement of Education, a committee of the Faculty ably carried out the review, with the active participation of all members of the Faculty, and with consultation and assistance from the alumni and students.

That the Self Study Committee has been successful in immediate results is attested by the acceptance of its report and recommendations by the Faculty and Governing Boards, almost without change. That the adoption of those recommendations will further the ultimate goals of the College will be attested by the Bowdoin graduates of the years to come. In any case, the College stands in the debt of all who participated in the Self Study.

James S. Coles

Brunswick, Maine
July 14, 1956

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THE CONSERVATIVE TRADITION IN EDUCATION AT BOWDOIN COLLEGE

This Report embodies the results of an evaluation of what is believed to be the distinctive characteristic of Bowdoin College in our time: the maintenance of the conservative tradition in education. Perhaps at no other period in the history of the College have so many members of its constituent elements — alumni, administrative officers, faculty, and undergraduates — been so intensively concerned with a single problem as in the past eighteen months of study of the validity of this tradition. Perhaps the consideration of no other topic involves so many questions reaching, not only into every nook and cranny of the curriculum in which the conservative tradition is implicit, but also touching at every point, in and out of the classroom, those manifold activities and aspirations of teachers and students forming the context in which that tradition has operated in the past and continues to be shaped from year to year.

Of the central importance of the conservative tradition in the development of Bowdoin as a college of liberal arts in the twentieth century there can be little question. Despite fairly frequent alterations in details, the main outlines of the Bowdoin program have remained essentially the same throughout the last thirty years. This stable pattern is true of the requirements for admission and for graduation. It is also true of the composition of the freshman year, of the distribution requirements of the middle years, and of the regulations governing a field of concentration in the upperclass years, and the major or comprehensive examination for seniors.

In addition to preserving this stability in her curricular requirements, Bowdoin has refused to follow the fashions set by many colleges of liberal arts following the end of World War II. She has resisted increasing pressure to give a vocational emphasis to pre-professional courses; she offers no courses in business administration; she permits no concentration in such

fields as education or physical education. And even more significant as evidence of her attachment to the conservative tradition is her considered refusal, reached after extensive study by several able faculty committees, to embark upon any program of General Education at a time when the excitement attending such innovations was persuasively presented in impressive documents by the faculties of Columbia, Harvard, and other influential institutions of learning.

So steadfast an adherence to familiar patterns may, of course, be defined simply as an obdurate resistance to change. It may also be attributed in part to an effect of the remarkable continuity of administration in which the guidance of the policies of the College for the sixty-seven years from 1885 to 1952 was in the hands of Presidents William DeWitt Hyde and Kenneth Charles Morton Sills. It may be partially explained by the comparative geographical isolation of the College, a conditioning circumstance from the beginning of Bowdoin's history. Other factors doubtless have had their measure of influence. Bowdoin has remained a "small" New England college drawing its students predominantly from Maine and Massachusetts, and largely from public rather than private schools. In selecting its student body, the College has continued to emphasize entrance requirements in subjects fundamental to the liberal arts.

Whatever reasons may be adduced to account for the maintenance of the conservative tradition at Bowdoin, the particulars of this tradition have been constantly subjected to challenges by those who would change them. There have been advocates of an admissions policy which would abandon the subject matter prerequisites; of the adoption of a freshman program made less rigid by the abandonment of the classics-mathematics option, and by the provision of more free electives; of the institution of courses in General Education in the humanities and in science. Proposals for such substantial changes, however, after full faculty debate, have hitherto invariably been rejected.

In defending the conservative bastion against such assaults,

the champions of the conservative tradition have advanced a philosophy of education consonant with Bowdoin's function as a college of liberal arts. Education in the liberal or general sense is *peculiarly* but not *uniquely* the province of the college. On the one hand, it shares with the secondary school — from which it differs in degree rather than in kind — the responsibility of teaching proper use of the tools for living. On the other hand, it is related to the professional school because in the measure that it provides training necessary for business and the professions, the college itself is to some extent vocational.

Despite the impossibility of separating sharply the different objectives pursued by secondary schools, vocational schools, and colleges of liberal arts, and however often these objectives blend with each other, the college is distinguished from secondary and vocational schools by its devotion to the central purpose of providing a liberal education.

In striving to live up to such a commitment, the college of liberal arts seeks to teach its students:

(1) *To be more widely informed and more deeply understanding* by helping them to gain a more accurate knowledge of the world in which they are living by means of an awareness of the contributions of the arts and sciences of the ancient and modern civilizations.

(2) *To become wiser* by training them to think analytically, and encouraging them to develop a set of values by which to order their lives, and to make relevant use of their knowledge for the common good.

(3) *To be more effective* by developing their power to give clear, cogent, and interesting oral and written expression to what they think and believe.

The college must be judged finally on its ability to achieve these ends for its students. Although the curriculum and the classroom are the primary means of realizing these aims, these chief agencies of organized instruction are supplemented by various extracurricular activities and by the social life of the undergraduates. Many of these activities, notably those

in dramatics, debating, music, and the college newspaper and literary magazine, are intimately connected with classroom studies; moreover, the living arrangements in dormitories and chapter houses may also contribute positively by offering a congenial atmosphere for the social amenities to develop, and by providing opportunities for the give-and-take of discussion whereby effective expression of ideas and their intelligent analysis may be sharpened by practice.

With this preliminary statement of the objectives of the college of liberal arts, and a brief enumeration of the agencies through which it seeks to achieve them, we may turn in this context to the conservative tradition in education. Has the maintenance of this tradition at Bowdoin been the result of mere resistance to change or has it been a consistent procedure to advance the values it seeks to protect — especially those values which tend to teach the student to become a more *understanding, wise,* and *effective* member of society?

The Nature of the Conservative Tradition

Education at Bowdoin began in 1802 with President McKeen, Tutor Abbott, and their eight students in a classroom in Massachusetts Hall. There were no extracurricular activities, and the social life was austerely subordinated to the classroom. The conservative tradition continues to put primary emphasis upon the classroom and upon the teacher and the taught. This does not mean that it underestimates the importance of extracurricular activities and the value of student life. On the contrary, it sees in them many hitherto neglected opportunities for the enhancement of the values of a liberal education. In welcoming their contribution, however, the proponents of the conservative tradition insist upon the *primacy of what takes place in the classroom* as the chief agency through which the College seeks to achieve its central purpose.

A second characteristic of the conservative tradition is its concern with *what* is taught. Here it parts company with those who believe that what is taught should be largely deter-

mined by the interests of the students themselves, and that the interest generated by freedom of choice is far more important than the specific content of the curriculum. Although the architects of the Bowdoin curriculum have provided for considerable freedom of choice within the main divisions of the curriculum, they believe that the foundation of a liberal education must come first, and that the Faculty is the best judge of what constitutes that foundation. Hence the first half of the curriculum has been devoted to the accomplishment of two main objectives:

> (1) The attainment and improvement of basic skills in writing and speaking; the ability to read a foreign language; the introduction to one of the two great divisions of the curriculum — the arts or the sciences — by a study of Latin or Greek or mathematics.
>
> (2) The introduction to the chief fields of human knowledge by means of distribution requirements which include a year's study of one of the laboratory sciences.

Since the first two years are foundational, a student's choice of subjects is necessarily somewhat limited. By the end of sophomore year, however, foundations having been laid, the student is in a position to develop his own interests. Hence the greater freedom of the last two years with the most important freedom, the choice of a major subject and the freedom to pursue it.

A third characteristic of the conservative tradition is its emphasis upon *teaching.* The teacher cannot become the forgotten man in this tradition simply because its reassertion of the primacy of the classroom and the importance of what is taught there presupposes a community of effective teachers, dedicated to their work, and able and willing to maintain their effectiveness. It prefers, in President Sills' words, "great teaching in wooden halls to wooden teaching in marble halls." It is not surprising that the maintenance of the conservative tradition in education at Bowdoin should have been paralleled by a tradition of great teaching which the sons of the College like to regard as her chief distinction. Such teaching is de-

manded not only by the emphasis which the conservative tradition places upon classroom procedures and upon the somewhat prescribed content of the curriculum, but also by the concept of the function of a college of liberal arts where, to quote President Hyde, "small groups of students. . . according to the original meaning of the word *college,* live together in mutual good will, in friendly helpfulness, and in earnest study."

The conservative tradition demands of its teachers something more than professional competence and attainment. It requires nothing less than a sense of dedication. Within reasonable limits, the teacher must be in love with what he teaches, he must identify himself with the best interests and main purposes of the academic community of which he is a part, and he must have more than a professional concern or an impersonal interest in his students and colleagues. Although these qualities are more easily felt than described, they are of first importance for the functioning of a closely-knit, small, residential college of liberal arts where every problem is essentially an educational problem. What is needed is a sense of community to which there is a strong allegiance. Such allegiance does not put a premium upon complaisant adaptability; nor does it require an uncritical acceptance of the *status quo.* A college is never static. It thrives by a constant critical scrutiny of its own methods and policies. The conservative tradition welcomes changes which promise to promote the values it is seeking to promote and to transmit. Whatever differences of opinion may exist, there must be a basic loyalty and commitment to the primary function of the college. This function remains, as it was announced by President McKeen in 1802, the cultivation of the student's "mental powers" for "the common good." It involves high competence in the use of the tools for effective living. It strives for understanding by a knowledge of many areas of human experience, and the achievement of a reasonable mastery of one integrated field of study.

The Conservative Tradition: A Revaluation

No one in the Committee has seriously challenged the ob-

jectives of a liberal education as they have been here set forth. It is the purpose of the Self Study to determine whether the conservative tradition with its emphasis upon classroom, teacher, and curriculum (along with its utilization of the subordinate but important values inherent in undergraduate extracurricular activities and social life) promotes or hampers these aims. Those engaged in this evaluation have sought to learn whether or not the College has actually accomplished what it set out to do. Have our results lagged far behind our hopes? What is the best course for the future? Is it to be found in continuing essentially in the same direction, but in redefining it? Is it to be found in changes? in whole or in part? remedial or drastic? After a year and a half spent in looking at what we are doing, asking ourselves why we are doing it, and debating changes and alternatives, there has emerged the clear image of the conservative tradition as we see it, and our conviction that this tradition has provided and will provide the best course for the College.

The ensuing sections of this Report contain the detailed suggestions, conclusions, and recommendations of the Committee. Before turning to them, however, it may be wise to take a forward glance over the terrain which lies ahead. What prompted the journey of exploration? In what mood did the Committee set out on its travels? In what areas was the going impeded by underbrush and made tortuous by more formidable barriers? Were our old maps and trusted guides always dependable? Where was a re-mapping made necessary? In what direction does the road ahead seem to point?

The mood of the travelers was not one of complacency. The very stability of the conservative tradition over so long a period of time called for a rigorous scrutiny and re-thinking of our position. Such revaluation was also prompted by the cumulative findings of certain objective measurements of our achievement compared with those of other colleges in the United States. Statistical studies of the collegiate origins of American scientists in 1952 and of younger American scholars in 1953 gave Bow-

doin a respectable position nationally, but not an impressive standing among those colleges of liberal arts with which it habitually compares itself. The report to the colleges in the spring of 1952 of the standing of their students in American medical schools was also somewhat disturbing. In addition to such evidence, the Committee was further concerned with the apparent reluctance of many a Bowdoin student ranking in the top fifth of his class to become a candidate for departmental honors and his loss of the chief benefit of the program of major studies which was designed for the very men who seem to spurn its unique advantages. Moreover, the scores on recent national tests taken by the Class of 1955, and the results of the special "pilot examination" formulated by the School and College Study for Admission with Advanced Standing were not reassuring. To be sure, these criteria are all somewhat limited in themselves, and special conditions which no longer obtain may be adduced to account for some of them, yet their total results are disquieting. Cumulatively they confront the Committee with further cause for thoughtful investigation of our procedures and a searching reassessment of our objectives.

It may be said at the outset that the Committee has made no startling or new discoveries and found no academic El Dorado. Its evaluation has led it to reaffirm its faith in the conservative tradition in education whose roots are deep and firm but is in need of pruning and fertilization. The sum total of the recommendations and proposals involve no change of direction; rather, they call for a straightening and redefining of routes, for the closing of circuitous paths, and the removal of barriers. They recognize the validity of the objectives of the College and seek to recommend such measures as will implement them more effectively. The proposed departures from present practices and requirements have all been motivated by this general principle.

In its deliberations the Committee weighed carefully the leading counts advanced by those ready to indict the conservative tradition. Perhaps the criticism voiced most frequently

was that of inflexibility with its corollary of compulsion or coercion inherent in a curriculum which prescribes foundational courses and studies. Such prescription, it was submitted, often produces an unexciting program, especially in the first two years, instead of contributing to an invigorating, enlivening undergraduate intellectual life. Such a life, it was charged, depends upon freedom of choice; compulsion kills it. Coercion bred of requirements rather than interest in subject-matter becomes the motivating force. Instead of stimulating the cognitive qualities and spontaneity, such coercion was held to produce tame adaptation and lethargy. This criticism of the stultifying effects of inflexible requirements, however, will not stand up under close scrutiny.

Even in the comparatively prescribed curriculum of the first two years of basic courses, considerable freedom of choice exists for all students. Those with unusual gifts or those whose training and interests are exceptionally strong have an even greater range of choice. In the ancient languages, a wide variety of courses in Greek and Latin literature is open to them; in modern languages, such students may choose among offerings in French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Russian. In mathematics and sciences, freshmen may begin precisely at that level on which they are prepared to profit the most. Within the framework of the required course in English composition, special sections are proposed for those whose ability would not be fully stretched by the regular course.

Nor are the required courses themselves fairly charged as being inflexible in their scope or their methods. The elementary courses at Bowdoin are not static. In organization as well as in subject-matter they have been under constant critical self-appraisal, resulting in significant changes in structure and approach. The use of tape-recorders to increase the effectiveness of the training in speech, the adoption of panel discussions and general lectures in the required course in English composition, the heightening of the value of the conference method by various instructional devices, the greater emphasis upon

phonetics in the teaching of modern languages, a bold experiment in the classics whereby a special course and textbook were designed to develop from the outset an elementary reading knowledge of both Greek and Latin, the redesigning of the elementary courses in mathematics in light of differences in preparation, and the introduction of a course sequence to train those students whose primary interest is in the mathematics of statistics might be cited among other evidences of the re-vitalization of required courses.

The study of the Committee found no substantial support for the objection that introductory courses place too much emphasis upon "mere" memory work and upon the acquisition of numerous but "trivial" details, and that such courses tend to minimize or actually to discourage initiative and originality. To such criticism it must be repeated that first things *do* come first, that procedures must be learned, that historical perspectives must be achieved, and that a certain amount of "close work" is a necessary prelude to later synthesis and generalization. Here again is a reminder of the primacy of the teacher, and the teacher at Bowdoin may be counted upon to show the relevance of the seemingly unimportant detail to the larger issue. Teachers of introductory courses, our survey indicates, continue to put a high premium upon the creative imagination, upon perceptiveness, upon sensitivity, upon insight, but they are aware of the need of a solid groundwork on which to base them. In a world of mass communication which is too often "beamed" at a mass mind avid for opinion rather than fact, for the over-simplified rather than the considered analysis, it becomes the duty of the College to avoid weakening the power to learn by seeming to make being taught too beguilingly easy.

The Committee was ready to recommend measures which deviate from current practices whenever such practices had hardened into inflexible prescription. Thus, in the interest of greater flexibility in the curriculum of the first two years, the Committee recommended the abandonment of the long-cherished classics-mathematics option for freshmen. At the same

time, however, it moved to strengthen the position of Latin and Greek by stipulating that students entering college with not more than two units of accepted credit in either subject be allowed to take *Classics 1* and either of its sequel courses with full college credit. Although students would be no longer required to study either classics or mathematics, the importance of mathematics in many broad areas is emphasized by its proposed position in the Division of Mathematics and the Sciences where, along with a laboratory science, it may be offered to satisfy the four-semester requirement in this field. Its importance is further underscored by the freshman option of a choice between mathematics and a laboratory science.

In recommending a change from the present awkward seven-unit requirement in foreign languages, the Committee has not countenanced any diminution of the importance traditionally accorded to foreign languages in a Bowdoin education. Here again the Committee's action was motivated by the conviction that when past and present rules fail to attain a desired objective, an intelligent application of the conservative principle demands that such rules be modified in the interest of realizing primary goals. In this instance the desired goal is the achievement of control of a foreign language. The Committee held as an operating principle that it is better to devote more time to one foreign language than to divide that time in working through the rudiments of two or more languages. Curricular requirements were set to achieve for the maximum number of students the desired proficiency. The requirements recommended of two years of college French or German or the attainment of an advanced level in French, German, Spanish, Latin or Greek seem best calculated to approach this goal. Added flexibility is gained by the stipulation that a classical language at an advanced level may be substituted for a modern language. The surrender of the presently enforced prescription of either French or German is also recommended on the grounds of greater scope and flexibility. In proposing that the satisfactory completion of literature or advanced conversation

courses in Spanish will also meet the language requirements for the degree, the Committee further implements its desire that the Bowdoin curriculum should be made flexible enough to accommodate the gifted student at that level of instruction where he may receive the greatest challenge to his skill and talent.

The same fundamental principle — implicit in the imaginative administration of the conservative tradition — has resulted in proposals which will enable a freshman to elect a second foreign language, ancient or modern, or to choose any course open to him in mathematics, the sciences, or the social studies. The principle also provides opportunities for freshmen whose skill and interests fit them for advanced work in English in lieu of the required course in composition.

Throughout the discussions in all the committees contributing to this Report there was a constant desire, sometimes explicitly expressed, but more often implicit in the recommendations proposed: "I wish to do better what I am doing now." In seeking to make possible at least an approach to the fulfillment of this desire, the Committee recommends a series of measures affecting every phase of our life as a college community. Such, at a structural level, are the recommendations that sections in certain courses (notably in English, foreign languages, mathematics, and psychology) be smaller or of more workable size. Not unrelated to this consideration is the size of the College itself. Although the Committee recognizes the inevitability of normal growth, it is convinced that any expansion of size unaccompanied by a corresponding increase in resources will mean a dilution of the quality of instruction, a debasing of standards, and a weakening of the living conditions detrimental to the ideal of a small residential college.

Qualitatively our present requirements seem to the Committee to be below reasonable expectations. Accordingly it is recommended that the present qualitative standards be further strengthened by introducing one for freshmen, by requir-

ing that each student, during his first two semesters at Bowdoin, must secure a minimum of two grades of C- or higher to be permitted to remain in college, and by stiffening the present "C Rule" for sophomores by requiring the attainment of at least eight semester grades of C- or higher for the privilege of remaining in college.

Other departures from present practice are also directed at reducing the gap between the achievement of the goals and values implicit in our commitment as a college of liberal arts and our actual accompishment. The recommendation that a substantial amount of writing be required as an integral part of all courses is such a proposal. Another is the recommendation that oral reports be required and criticized in courses which lend themselves to this form of presentation of material. Still another is the stipulation that additional time for oral and aural drill be made available in the elementary and intermediate courses in modern foreign languages. These proposed changes are, for the most part, matters of detail; they expedite the attainment of large goals and cherished values rather than challenge their validity. If they seem to call undue attention to weaknesses and inconsistencies in our present methods, at least they identify and attempt to remedy our shortcomings.

Even in the major program in which Bowdoin was among the pioneers and about whose general objectives there is complete agreement, the Committee found some discrepancies between the avowed intent and the actual achievement. Accordingly it proposed the institution of "the major course" in addition to those otherwise required for graduation. This recommendation of "course status" for major work should help to produce greater uniformity in the amount of written work and in the number of seminars than that which has obtained among the various departments. It should also do much to emphasize the importance of the major work by reserving a stated time for meetings of the major groups, and by enabling departments to issue regular "warnings" for delinquents.

Uniformity and the recommendation of certain *minima* as requirements were not urged at the expense of departmental initiative or flexibility. Natural differences in methods will remain, and departmental autonomy is essentially preserved. The recommendations, however, go far beyond present practices and procedures. They encourage reading for honors by offering students of exceptional promise release from a varying number of regular courses; they present attractive possibilities for majors in music, the fine arts, and letters to undertake special creative projects; they make the attainment of special distinction in a major subject a prerequisite for the award of the degree *summa cum laude* and *magna cum laude;* and they add to the attractiveness of the work of the last two years by permitting major programs involving more than one department.

As the ensuing sections of this Report will reveal, the recommendations of the Committee were not limited to the curriculum. The patient scrutiny of faculty attitudes to their own and related affairs, the complex factors attendant upon the recruitment of the best obtainable student body, and the multifarious activities which comprise student life with their strong possibilities for contributing to or resisting the distinctive function of the College — all these areas were considered painstakingly even though the problems peculiar to them do not permit the concreteness of recommendations possible elsewhere in this Self Study. The proposals which have emerged from deliberations upon these topics, however, are consistent with those arrived at in more restricted fields. Invariably they accept the validity only of those elements in the conservative tradition which have proved effective in helping to achieve the values which the tradition seeks to enhance: an education tending to help each student to become a more *understanding, wise,* and *effective* member of society. In soliciting the counsel of its colleagues in the Faculty upon the wisdom of its various proposals, the Committee makes grateful acknowledgement that these proposals come ultimately from the Faculty itself.

THE CURRICULUM

I.

THE CURRICULUM: THE FIRST TWO YEARS

In a tradition emphasizing the classroom and what is taught there, it is inevitable that the curriculum should remain the bulwark of those values which the conservative position seeks to conserve and to transmit. The Governing Boards and the Faculty have developed a four-year program falling into two well-defined stages — each with its own requirements and objectives — leading to the degree of Bachelor of Arts. The first of these stages, designed to provide breadth of education, is based upon the principle of distribution by requiring, in the freshman and sophomore years, training in certain basic skills and introductory courses in a number of important fields of learning. The second stage, motivated by the principle of concentration, is planned to offer, in the upperclass years, an opportunity to attain a mastery of some one significant field.

On the wisdom of laying broad, substantial foundations in the first two years and devoting the junior and senior years to specialization, culminating in a comprehensive examination, there is almost unanimous agreement. Differences of opinion arise, not over the general principle governing distribution and concentration, but over details: which courses are basic? how many areas of human experience should a student be required to study? how much of his time should be devoted to these subjects? It is precisely at these points that we strike the solid rock upon which the conservative tradition in education at Bowdoin rests.

Mindful of the commitment of the College to train men to become effective, the Committee is unanimous in reaffirming as basic a superior mastery of the techniques of written and oral composition. Not only is such a mastery essential to all

college work because it is indispensable in the acquisition and communication of learning, but it is also more than likely to be the measure of a student's success in his later business or professional career and of his influence upon society.

Evidence of the central importance of reading, writing, and speaking poured in upon the Committee from all sides: the testimony of the alumni and undergraduate questionnaires, the experience of colleagues in every department of instruction, and the explicit or implicit recommendations of the subcommittees primarily concerned with other problems. No one was disposed to question the premise that a graduate of a college of liberal arts, whatever his field of special interest, should be trained to speak with high competence, to read with critical intelligence, and to write with precision, maturity, and power. The obligation to provide such training in oral and written composition accounts for the present requirement of *English 1-2* (written composition) and *English 3-4* (oral composition), constituting four hours of class work each week for all freshmen, and the further stipulation that the use of acceptable English in all courses must be achieved before a student will be recommended for the degree of Bachelor of Arts.

Impressed by evidence that less and less writing is being required in many secondary schools, that only a minority of our successful candidates for admission are able to speak and to write effectively, and that the need of more mature writing is felt in all courses, the Committee recognizes the utility of the present required courses in written and oral composition. It approves their emphasis upon orderly, precise, and interesting expression; the comprehension of mature and complex literature; and the value of solid content, logical structure, and skillful oral presentation. The chief concern of the Committee is not with the aims of these courses, but with the adoption of measures designed to increase the likelihood that these goals can be achieved with reasonable success.

Improvement in Written and Oral English

In recommending the maintenance of the present require-

ment of *English 1-2* and *English 3-4* in the freshman curriculum, the Committee does not cherish the illusion that it has solved the vexed problem of achieving a desired competence for all students in reading, writing, and speaking. Although there will always be a disparity between objectives and accomplishment, the Committee believes this gap can be reduced by the adoption of several measures.

The first of these concerns the structure of the classes in written composition. The only way to enhance the effectiveness of training in writing is to provide more opportunity for the practice of writing itself; for detailed, close, and sympathetic correction of frequent short papers and longer essays; and for regularly scheduled conferences with the authors. A necessary condition for this kind of training is that the sections in freshman composition be kept sufficiently small to permit the instructor to assign frequent themes, to correct and return them promptly, and to confer with his students at stated intervals. The present teaching load of an instructor exclusively engaged in teaching *English 1-2* is three sections containing at least twenty-five men in each class: a minimum of seventy-five students. The Committee recommends that the sections in *English 1-2* be limited to twenty students in each class.

The same necessity for smaller classes obtains in the required course in speech. Improvement in the speech habits of a student is directly dependent upon the number of times he has opportunity to speak before a class and to profit by the criticism of his instructor and his audience. By limiting the size of each section to twelve students, the teacher will have sufficient time to hear short talks by virtually every member of the class once a week, and to offer suggestions for improvement. Such considerations led the Committee to recommend that the sections in the required course in speech be limited to twelve men in each class.

Indispensable as these recommendations are to the raising of standards in spoken and written English, they are not sufficient in themselves to achieve the high competence in the

use of language which should be the touchstone of a liberally educated man and an effective member of society. The Committee is convinced that the responsibility of requiring frequent practice in writing and speaking rests, not with the Department of English alone, but with the entire Faculty. The lack of such requirement and the failure to accept such responsibility have wide implications. The depressing results may be seen in the relatively small number of students who become candidates for honors in their major fields because many of them are deterred by the prospect of writing an "honors essay," in the pitifully few students who submit written work for the many prize competitions, in the glacial slowness with which undergraduates write "junior major papers," and in the clumsiness of the papers submitted. Further and hardly less painful evidence was adduced by members of the Faculty who have seen the awkward, self-conscious, and more than occasionally illiterate drafts of letters of application for graduate scholarships or business positions written by harassed undergraduates compelled for the first time since their freshman year to write a sustained piece of prose. Many alumni reported on their questionnaires that they would have welcomed more opportunity for practice in speaking as part of their undergraduate courses.

In light of such evidence, the Committee recommends that the amount of writing and speaking be increased in all courses, that frequent short papers and oral reports be required and criticized for their form as well as their content in all courses which lend themselves to these disciplines, that the evaluation of such reports, papers, and oral discussions in classes and conferences be reflected in the student's grade, and that all departments offering major programs require and evaluate a substantial amount of writing as an integral part of their programs. The Faculty is urged to report to the instructor in Remedial English the name of any student whose work is below standard in the rudimentary skills of clear expression.

Such an enterprise, as in many others in the work of the

College, demands a sense of community, a surrender of claims to vested interests for the benefit of the total college program, an acceptance of group responsibility for the attainment of the objectives of the College, and a strong and cheerful allegiance to our high commitment as teachers of the liberal arts and sciences. Nothing less than this sense of dedication will restore the arts of acceptable writing and speaking to their central position as the media of intercourse in all subject matters and as basic elements of every area of instruction. Indeed the Committee makes bold to say that if Bowdoin is to heighten or even to maintain her effectiveness as a college of liberal arts, the expectation that her graduates are more than likely to be notably literate and articulate must be firmly established.

The Foreign Languages

The importance that Bowdoin has accorded the study of foreign languages is another evidence of her conservative tradition, especially at a time when such study has been one of the principal victims of drastic changes in American school curricula. That the conservative tradition is notable for its defense of the foreign languages and literatures is clearly shown by our own requirements. Study of two foreign languages (one of them French or German) was required of all Bowdoin graduates from 1915 to 1931. From 1931 to 1942 both French and German were required and, since 1942, a reading knowledge of either French or German has continued to be one of our requirements for the degree. Further evidence of our conservative position is to be found in the present quantitative requirement of seven units of language study (ancient or modern), and in our bold insistence — in which we seem to stand alone among men's colleges of liberal arts in the United States — upon French or German as essential for all our graduates.

As was true with respect to training in written and spoken English, there is no question about the value of instruction in foreign languages or their relevance to the objectives of a liberal education. The case for required study of foreign lan-

guages is a compelling one. Proficiency in another language enables a student *to be more effective* in the use of his own language, and for some it may become an instrument of daily use and a key to important material not available in English. It increases his understanding by giving him opportunity to gain a sympathetic knowledge of the culture of a foreign country through its books or by direct communication with its people. And it adds to his mental stature through the student's disciplined response to the subtleties of thought or the syntactical complexities of literature in a foreign language, sharpening his appreciation of accuracy, and demonstrating the characteristics of structure and vocabulary in his own and other languages.

General agreement upon the validity of these claims, however, does not represent an uncritical endorsement of traditional teaching methods or a complacent satisfaction with the present level of proficiency attained by undergraduates in foreign languages. There was sharp dissatisfaction upon a number of counts:

(1) The present seven-unit quantitative requirement does not prevent a rather important proportion of our students from breaking off their study of an advanced course in language after completing only one semester, a truncation which results in a loss to the student both in his command of the language and his knowledge of its literature.

(2) The effect of the present restriction of the modern foreign language requirement to French and German places obstacles in the path of those freshmen whose secondary-school training in Spanish is sufficiently strong to enable them to continue this language at an advanced level in their first year at college.

(3) The limited time available, i.e., three class meetings each week, is insufficient for the attainment of the level of proficiency expected of the student who begins his study of language in college. In many colleges of liberal arts (Amherst, Wesleyan, and Yale are examples) five, six, and seven hours each week are devoted to classroom study of the rudiments of a foreign language.

(4) The present requirements rarely carry a student to the point where he can profit by the promised benefits: a knowledge of the literature of a foreign language, or the power to speak it competently.

These objections did not persuade the Committee either to challenge the validity of the requirement in foreign languages or to bestow grudgingly the precious "house-room" needed to accommodate it within the limited confines of the freshman-sophomore curriculum. The chief problem confronting the Committee was so to fashion our requirements as to assure for the largest possible number of our students an experience with foreign language and literature at the highest possible level. In welcoming the changes in structure and method which should bring this goal within practicable reach, there is an instance of the way in which the conservative tradition may proceed positively by insisting upon the value of the subject matter requirement, yet by adopting such measures to realize the desired objectives.

The unifying principle in the discussions of the Committee was a conviction that time devoted to training in language skills finds its justification at the point where a student's competence in a foreign language and literature enables him to understand the life and culture of another people. The ideal would be a stipulation that a student take a course in the literature of a foreign language or a course in advanced conversation. Confronted by the realities of secondary-school training and the dimensions of the college curriculum, yet eager to have students attain a reasonable command of a foreign language, the Committee recommends that completion of two years of French or two years of German in college, or completion of a literature or advanced conversation course in French, German or Spanish will meet the requirements for the degree. The foreign language requirement may also be met by a study of the ancient languages, by completion of a year-course in either Latin or Greek at a third-year college level. Students desiring to study both an ancient and a modern foreign language in their freshman year will be enabled to elect these

languages. Since, whenever feasible, the student will continue in college the study of the language begun in secondary school, the adoption of this requirement should bring a greater number of our students closer to the ideal — hoped for but rarely realized — of an enrichening experience in foreign literature, ancient or modern, or the ability to speak a foreign language with competence.

As a further means to that end, the provision of additional time for oral and aural training is imperative if Bowdoin is to maintain her enviable distinction in language study. Such training in the elementary and secondary courses in language, while not entailing preparation by the student outside of class, will make possible extensive drills in pronunciation and speech patterns which are indispensable for a substantial proficiency in language. The Committee, therefore, recommends that to the present three-hour elementary courses in modern language there should be added two hours of aural and oral drill without required preparation but with obligatory attendance. In the second-year or intermediate courses, one hour added to the present time allotment will be an effective aid in reducing the disparity — a source of grave concern to teachers of language — between the weekly hours available and the level of proficiency expected of the student at the end of his second-year work. In both elementary and intermediate courses in language the sections should be of workable size.

The Committee has looked carefully at the present restriction of the modern foreign language requirement to French and German. This restriction, in which Bowdoin is unique among her sister colleges, has been based upon a conviction of the cultural superiority of French and German as well as their usefulness to the considerable number of our students who proceed to graduate school. The value of French and German as embodiments of influential cultures was not disputed by the Committee, but it is felt that those freshmen whose secondary-school training in Spanish is strong enough to enable them to continue their study in this language at an intermediate or an

advanced level in college should be granted this privilege. By means of a careful screening of such men (a placement test is recommended), it will be possible for properly qualified students to reach a higher level of linguistic competence and literary experience than that attainable if they were compelled to begin the study of French or German in college. Moreover, the advantage of continuing in college the study of the language begun in secondary school will not only meet the objections of those schoolmen who regard our present insistence upon either French or German as a roadblock in the path of their students, but it will also be in thorough accord with our own philosophy of achievement in language.

These proposals to change our requirements and this new provision for the achievement of our linguistic goals seem to the Committee to liberalize our present requirements without weakening them. They help to assure a desirable continuity and achievement in language study; they offer some easement in a crowded curriculum by shortening the two-year requirement for those able to complete a course in French, German or Spanish literature or a course in advanced conversation in one of these languages in freshman year; they put a premium upon sound linguistic training in secondary school without penalizing candidates for admission from schools offering superior courses in Spanish; they enable the gifted student in language to be advanced to the course where he will receive the most reward for his skill and talent; and, in conjunction with the provision for more aural and oral drill, they make possible a degree of skill gained by two years of study in one foreign language in college which should prove satisfactory to teacher and student, especially in conversational proficiency.

Changes are recommended in the curricular requirements for language, but there has been no diminution of the importance accorded to foreign languages in the education of Bowdoin students. The first principle consistently applied by the Committee is that of achievement in a foreign language. To this principle there have been sacrifices of earlier Bowdoin

practice: a double language is no longer required; French or German is no longer prescribed for every student; a classical language at an advanced level may be substituted for a modern language. Such sacrifices, however, are justified by the fact that unless language study leads to control of a language it results in frustration. The Committee concludes that in terms of lasting satisfaction and utility it is better to devote more time to one foreign language than to divide one's time in working through the rudiments of two or more. Yet provision has been made in the freshman year for the student with special interests, training, and need to carry two languages if he wishes to do so. Bowdoin's traditionally wide range of language offerings is maintained for election at any phase of the curriculum.

The problems of effective instruction in foreign languages cannot be solved by curricular adjustments alone. Nor are they the exclusive responsibility of the departments primarily concerned. Closer coordination is needed among all departments engaged in the common enterprise of educating the Bowdoin student. An experience in a foreign language should not end when a requirement, however satisfactory, has been met. Other departments ought to direct their students to important material and sources in a foreign language. A series of representative foreign films should be presented annually; foreign newspapers should be available in the library; the faculty of the language departments should be called upon by other departments in the furthering of special projects. It is essential that training in language (and in other subjects as well) not be compartmentalized. Above all, there should be a lively allegiance to and a strong sense of responsibility for all the purposes served by the various requirements for the degree.

Mathematics and the Sciences

The freshman-sophomore curriculum is designed to teach basic skills in foundational subjects and to acquaint students with the main outlines of a number of important areas of

knowledge. Attainment of both these aims may be furthered by the completion of the proposed requirement of four semesters in that broad division of the curriculum entitled "Mathematics and the Sciences." It is also proposed that at least two of these semesters be devoted to the study of laboratory science: biology, chemistry or physics. The other two semesters present opportunities for the study of astronomy, mathematics, and psychology*, or for additional work in laboratory sciences.

This requirement has been planned to accomplish several objectives essential to a liberal education. It introduces the student, early in his college course, to the rigorous laboratory disciplines in the logic and method of systematic scientific investigation, or to the study of the nature of reasoning implicit in mathematical procedures and theories. It teaches the student how to be "literate" in a scientific world by training him how to read concise scientific literature with understanding. It aids him to express his thoughts, orally and in writing, in precise language and with vigor and economy of thought. It furnishes him with a groundwork fundamental to the professions, to more intensive study in the natural sciences, and to many opportunities in business and in the fields of the social studies.

Believing that all freshmen — whether or not they plan to major in science or to enter one of the scientific professions — should study either a laboratory science or mathematics because of their importance to further progress in learning, the Committee recommends that freshmen be given an option of electing a two-semester laboratory course in biology, chemistry or physics or two semesters of study in mathematics.

Students with strong scientific interests will doubtless elect both laboratory science and mathematics in their freshman year. Others, especially those looking forward to careers in the social studies, will find that the option offers training in

*In accordance with Committee recommendations geology is now included in the Division of Mathematics and the Sciences.

techniques which are indispensable in many fields of study. Ideally, the student should proceed from his basic study under this option to further work in this division of the curriculum. He may do this either by advanced study in mathematics or laboratory science, by electing a second introductory course in laboratory science, or by taking astronomy or psychology, thus widening his scientific horizon and diversifying his interests. Since the first two years of the Bowdoin curriculum should complete the student's basic preparation as well as introduce him to various fields of human inquiry, the requirement in the Division of Mathematics and the Sciences should be satisfied by the end of his sophomore year. In some instances, however, the work in laboratory science may be begun in junior year.

The four-semester requirement is grounded upon the assumption that science deserves an important place in the curriculum of a college of liberal arts. It serves equally to implement all the objectives of the College; it deepens one's *understanding* of the world in which he lives by acquainting him with the broad, basic knowledge of natural phenomena which modify his life; it helps in making him *wiser* by heightening his respect for "the hard precision of scientific measurement," by training him to think analytically, and to make relevant use of the knowledge he has acquired; and it teaches him to be more *effective* by making him more competent in an age of scientific achievement.

The Social Studies

The group of subjects described as the social studies (economics, government, history, philosophy, and sociology) offers further opportunities in the first two years of the curriculum to gain an initial understanding of important areas of knowledge. Some acquaintance with these disciplines is essential as a means of understanding the interrelation of man and society or as a way of gaining an accurate knowledge of contemporary society and its historical background. The problem presented to the Committee by this broad field does not arise

out of any disposition to question its relevance to the chief aims of the College, but from the difficulty of requiring of the student as wide a distribution as possible in order that the student may broaden his intellectual horizon by exploring various subjects before determining where his dominant interests lie. This goal is at least partially achieved by the Committee's recommendation that four semesters in the social studies be required for the degree. Another provision, in the interests of diversity, stipulates that not more than two semesters in any one subject may be counted toward the satisfaction of this requirement. While some measure of breadth is assured inasmuch as the four semesters may be devoted to courses in at least two of the five social studies departments, this distribution clearly offers little expectation that a student will gain a comprehensive or an integrated view of the field.

Yet for students who are not planning to concentrate in this division of the curriculum or for those who elect only the minimum offerings, the requirement presents opportunities for experience in at least two foundational subjects which should provide valuable perspective or background for courses in other major fields. The requirement also furnishes significant points of departure for freshmen by enabling them to elect an introductory course in government or history or philosophy or sociology. The teaching methods employed in each of these courses, involving lectures, conferences, discussions, and wide collateral readings and reports, are designed to accustom freshmen to the procedures of college work. At the present time, the majority of freshmen electing a social study take either *Government 1-2* or *History 1-2.* Both courses have long occupied important places in the first-year program and serve as admirable introductions, not only to the social studies, but to the humanities and other disciplines. The minority who do elect the introductory courses in philosophy and sociology do so with profit. The opportunity to begin the study of these subjects or to elect a second foreign language, ancient or modern, or to choose any open course in mathematics, the sciences,

or the social studies adds to the scope, variety, and vitality of the pattern of studies in the first year of college work.

The Humanities

The courses grouped under the generous label of "The Humanities" constitute another important region of learning peculiarly close to the heart of a college of liberal arts. Here are encountered the means of comprehension and enjoyment of the fine arts, of philosophy, of imaginative letters in the widest extension of the term. In this division of studies are enlisted the united efforts and interests of teachers of ancient and modern art, of the literatures of Greece and Rome, of the great documents in the literatures of England, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Russia, and the United States, of music, and of religion. In a word, the humanities comprise those subjects whose province is the imaginative perception of truth. Their central place in our curriculum rests upon the premise that the degree of Bachelor of Arts should not merely open the door for specialized, professional training, but should be the mark of a liberally educated man, "at home in all lands and all ages," and "carrying the keys of the world's library in his pocket."

The distribution requirements in other areas set forth earlier in this Report offer a reasonable opportunity for the student to attain a useable command of at least one foreign language, and the power to speak and to write his own with persuasiveness and precision; a knowledge of the material universe as revealed through the sciences; an acquaintance with the nature of reasoning as demonstrated in mathematical procedures and theories; and an understanding of the relation of man and society.

The courses in the humanities supplement and enrich these other attainments by keeping fresh the language and ways of the imagination, by illuminating states of mind and feeling, motivations and sympathies. They serve to remind the student

that the methods of scientific investigation, great as are their triumphs, and the routine and ritual of facts, however serviceable, do not constitute the only ways of apprehending experience, nor are they the sole and final tests of action. The depth and breadth of a student's experiences in these studies are the measures of difference between a more or less vocational or pre-professional training and a truly liberal education. If the catalogue statement in "Bowdoin: a Liberal College" is to correspond with the realities of our requirements, then these requirements must not only make "the dreamer encounter the stubbornness of facts," and "the aesthete appreciate the hard precision of scientific measurement," but "the practical man" must also be made to realize that "men are moved by visions . . . and the materialist must glimpse the insight and delight offered by the fine arts."

Since we are concerned here with the masterpieces of art and literature drawing men together "into that unity of the imagination which is man's crown and heart," it is of first importance that the subject matter of the humanities should affect all our students. Perhaps nowhere else among the present and proposed distribution requirements is the disparity between the ideal aim and the actual accomplishment so poignantly apparent. Nowhere else is there so insistent a reminder that "art is long and time is fleeting."

The Committee's recommendation that four semesters of study in the humanities be required for the degree, despite the limitations in breadth imposed by the exigencies of time, does possess solid virtues. Two of the four semesters required must be in the literature of the language in which it was written: English, French, German, Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, or Russian. The other two semesters of the four-semester requirement may be in art, classics in translation, music, philosophy, religion, or in literature in another language. Students entering college with sufficient proficiency in a foreign language, ancient or modern, to enable them to elect a course in the literature of that language will begin

their study of the humanities in the first year of their college work.

The insistence that two semesters be devoted to "the literature of the language in which it was written" raises a question about the value of courses in literature in translation. In agreeing that such courses should not count in the satisfaction of the first part of this requirement, the Committee intends no disparagement of the benefits to be gained by reading great books in translation. It is aware, of course, of the tenet of modern criticism which holds the translation of poetry to be a theoretical impossibility. "No two words are precise equivalents," wrote Jowett, the Victorian translator, "just as no two leaves of the forest are exactly similar." Yet it is equally tenable that a successful translation not only constitutes a new work of art of intrinsic interest, but also is an interpretation of the original work on which it was based. To those who are troubled about the propriety of reading Homer or Sophocles or Horace in English, it may be replied that the knowledge required to read them in Greek or Latin would — for an overwhelming number of students — simply postpone their reading indefinitely.

In its preoccupation with the problems of the first two years of the curriculum, and in its recommendations that as many as eighteen semester-courses in the humanities, the sciences, and the social studies be required for the degree, the Committee has not forgotten that a program of studies does not exist in a vacuum. Curricular requirements constitute a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for education. An additional condition is to be found in the motivation of the students. In a college whose size and comparative geographical isolation tend to exaggerate the importance of "student life," it would be a mistake to assume that the only significant things that happen in college take place in the classroom and the laboratory. These factors have rarely been absent from the considerations of the Committee, and far-reaching problems will receive attention in the later section of this Report de-

voted to "Student Life." Such problems, however, serve but to reaffirm a cardinal point in the creed of the conservative tradition: the primacy of vital and thoughtful teaching. By direction and indirection, the teacher must continue to strive to make "college life" relevant to the primary reason for the existence of the College.

II.

The Curriculum: The Second Two Years

In the second two years the student completes his distribution requirements, carries out his major program, and has considerable opportunity for the free election of courses. As freshman and sophomore he has presumably acquired the tools of modern literacy, and he has increased his skill in their use. In them he has been introduced to several of the great fields of knowledge, including an introduction to the possibilities of the laboratory, and he has had a close look under scholarly direction at one field of literature. He has developed through constant practice his ability to write and to speak, and he has sharpened his powers of analysis by experience in various subjects under no less various instructors. The foundation thus laid, the student is in a position to develop his interests. Hence the greater freedom of the last two years with its most important freedom, the choice of a major subject and the freedom to pursue it. This experience gives the student an opportunity to develop:

> (1) By adding depth to his knowledge so that he may know, not only something about a great many things, but also much about some one thing; with this intensification should come quickening interest;
> (2) By training him to coordinate what he knows and to relate one thing to another so that he may begin to see knowledge as a whole and not as isolated bits of information;
> (3) By requiring him to organize and to present what he knows so that he can communicate it effectively.

To some extent at least the first two years depend upon discipline. The requirements for the most part are laid down

for the student. The last two years depend upon interest. Here the student must be prepared to make broad choices on his own responsibility. Hence there should be as much flexibility as possible, both in the areas open to him, and in the ways of developing and exploiting the area of interest after it has been chosen.

This opportunity in the present and proposed curriculum is shared by all who continue their Bowdoin education beyond their sophomore year. All students elect a major; and, aside from the special provision made for some of the departments of science, all students participate in the major work of their departments and take the comprehensive examination. There are thus no "pass" students. Strong arguments have been advanced for the inauguration of a double program, one path leading to the degree with honors, the other leading to the "pass" degree. In such a system the major work and the comprehensive examinations would be planned for, and taken only by, candidates for honors; the others would proceed to their "pass" degrees by satisfying the regular course requirements. The proposals for such a double path to the degree have always been rejected on the grounds that the major program plays a central part in the effort of the College to achieve its over-all objective, and that all upperclassmen are entitled to its benefits. For the especially able students, ample opportunity to develop their talents is offered by the flexible provisions for honors projects in addition to their regular participation in the work of the major program.

This Bowdoin program is the most significant and dramatic offer within the gift of the College. It makes *every* student the beneficiary of all its resources of inspiration and intellect. It puts at his disposal the exciting advantages of individual tutorial conferences with those of his teachers who are authorities in the field of the student's special interest. It offers him opportunities for independent investigation, reading, and study, and the chance to test the soundness of his conclusions by subjecting them to the criticism of his fellow students and

the rigorous scrutiny of his teachers. It confers the privilege of charting his own intellectual course and of learning the lessons to be gained from recognizing false starts and of starting anew. It makes the student responsible, not merely for the data learned in courses, but for the relevant facts in a single integrated field. It presents opportunity for the logical ordering of materials learned over a two-year study, their formulation in major essays, and their effective articulation in a comprehensive written and oral examination. In many distinguished American colleges, the opportunity for gaining these valuable disciplines is restricted to one segment of the student body — the candidates for honors. At Bowdoin it is open to every student as the climax of his education as an undergraduate.

The Choice of a Major Field

The advisory role of the Faculty is at no point more important than in the choice of a major subject. This is one of the most delicate and difficult aspects of student-faculty relations. If the small college is to realize its unique potentialities, the Faculty must assume the burdens and responsibilities implicit in that relationship. Of the various decisions that go with the choice of a major field, the most important is the choice of the major field itself. Here the departmental conferences held for sophomores following the Spring Recess should be used to determine where the student's dominant interests reside, his likelihood of success in the field of his choice, and the ways in which his interest might be developed. The department should have the right to refuse to accept as candidates those who cannot satisfy the department of their ability to do the required work. The fact that many students take the first course in the field of their chief interest in their sophomore year, and are thus prevented from completing the introductory course by the time they seek approval of their major field, makes the absolute requirement of minimum performance in previous courses impracticable. Other prospective majors may have failed to obtain a requisite grade but have

shown enough promise of improvement to persuade a department to allow the attempt to be made. It should be within the discretion of the department to determine whether such men should be accepted.

Once the choice of a major field has been approved, the advisory function of the Faculty is important in guiding the student to plan an intelligently integrated program. The choice of a minor should not be casual or haphazard. The minor should be chosen with regard to the intellectual objective of the student. The courses comprising the minor might supplement the major field, as mathematics supplements physics; or economics, government; or philosophy, literature; or they should assist in the achievement of a definite purpose, as a minor in education would support the program of a prospective teacher in the public schools. On the other hand, the courses in the minor field may contribute to a planned program of broadening interests; for example, a student majoring in science might wish to diversify his interests by choosing art or music. Whatever the purpose, it should be a conscious and intelligent one, and the adviser should recognize its validity before approving it. A survey of current practice shows that most students choose their minor in fields supplementing their major interests.

Inter-departmental Majors

An important recommendation is the Committee's vote to encourage the development of major programs involving more than one department. Such inter-departmental majors should not only achieve all the objectives outlined for the usual departmental major programs, but should go beyond them since they will demand an even greater skill in the organization, coordination, and presentation of material.

The purpose of the inter-departmental major is to achieve both depth and flexibility. This precludes programs limited to combining elementary courses in several departments. An inter-departmental major has its justification in the fact that it

permits the student to go further than he would in the ordinary departmental major program. It would require as background the introductory courses in all or most of the departments concerned, and hence it is likely to appeal only to very superior students, or at least to those with exceptional intellectual motivation. For those relatively few students, it would vastly increase the flexibility and attractiveness of their last two years' work in college, and it would enable Faculty as well as students to disregard the somewhat artificial departmental boundaries.

Programs involving work in more than one department would be submitted for approval by the faculty members concerned to the Curriculum and Educational Policy Committee after approval by their own departments. Such programs would be listed in the college catalogue and would be under the supervision of a director appointed by the President. The director's relation to the other participants in the program would resemble that of a departmental chairman to the members of his department. The director would have the same responsibilities in relation to the program that a departmental chairman would have in relation to similar work in a department.

The Committee felt that occasionally individual students with professional or cultural objectives of a special sort might desire to undertake special major programs outside the scope of the existing departmental or inter-departmental programs. It was agreed that it would be well to permit such programs if the faculty members could be found to implement them, and if the students were of unusual promise. Accordingly it was proposed that such programs might be undertaken if they were recommended by the departments concerned and approved by the Curriculum and Educational Policy Committee. Such programs would be peculiar to the students concerned, and it was anticipated that they would occur rather infrequently.

The Committee furthur stipulated that a major program once chosen by the student and approved should be continued; it should not be changed lightly or for trivial reasons, or merely

because the student had neglected or fallen behind in the work assigned. It is anticipated that the fuller development of the major program, the prompt and uniform beginning of major work in the junior year, and the stepped-up character of the requirements should make a casual change in a major subject less and less likely. However, valid reasons for changes do exist. Since a shift in personal or professional objectives might reasonably call for a change in the major field, a change is permitted with the consent of the departments concerned and of the Recording Committee. Here again is a place where the department should take seriously its advisory capacity. Consent should not be given automatically. Reasons for the change should be ascertained, their validity assessed, and the feasibility of the new program established.

The Basic Course Requirement

The basic course requirement is left at six semester courses within the major department. This minimum is retained in the interest of flexibility and with confidence in departmental responsibility. Just as the first two years are hedged about with requirements, so the last two years are left free, insofar as is compatible with the objectives of the major system. The responsibility for the major rests with the departments. It is their responsibility to see that their students obtain a proper balance in their course offerings.

Departments can easily guard against "too thin" a major program because the six-course requirement is merely a minimum. Any department is free to require more courses, and many of them do so. It may also set up prerequisites either for the major as a whole, or for particular courses which may be offered. It may limit the courses which may be offered to certain specific ones. Actual practice indicates that in most cases Bowdoin students do take significantly more than the minimum number of courses required in their major fields. The supplementary or supporting courses in the minor field and the work done as part of the major program itself also provide ways of

deepening the student's experience and contributing to his grasp of his major subject.

The opposite danger of thinness is that of "over-majoring" or of excessive specialization. This tendency might be controlled by a rule placing an upper limit on the number of courses a student may take in a single department, but such legislation seems somewhat arbitrary and is certainly inflexible. Reliance must be placed again upon departmental responsibility and the department's recognition of the needs of the individual student. Stronger curbs were not believed to be desirable.

The Major Course

The constitution of the major work as a course in those departments giving a comprehensive examination is a recommendation which was reached only after a long discussion. Such a "major course," however, would not conform to the ordinary pattern of three meetings a week for each semester, but would be especially designed for the purpose it is to serve.

Behind this decision was the desire of the Committee to give the major work a "course status" commensurate with its important place in the instructional program. Such status, it was felt, would give the department a more easily exercised control of the student. This control is emphasized by the provision that a department may give a warning in its major course, and the warnings so issued will be equivalent in their effect to those given in regular courses. Another advantage of course status for major work is the strong likelihood that it will tend to produce more uniformity in what is required among the departments, not so much in the type of work as in the amount and in the degree of difficulty. The objections that to convert the major work into a course is merely a matter of bookkeeping, that the work of the major does not resemble a course in its organization, that to denominate major work with the title of a course is to suggest repressive and inhibitive connotations, and that it seems like a complicated extension of our

requirements for the degree — such criticisms were carefully considered and finally rejected by the Committee.

Perhaps the chief reason underlying the decision was the need of establishing certain *minima* as requirements that would tend to equalize the work among the various departments. The Committee intends that these should be definitely regarded as *minima,* and that each department should be free to develop its work as fully as the time, resources, and ability of the members of the department and the caliber of its students permit. It was recognized that the type of work might vary greatly from department to department, and it was hoped that as much flexibility as possible would be preserved. To these ends it was stipulated that (1) at least four seminars or conferences shall be held by each department in each semester of the last two years of a student's work, and (2) that the major course shall include a substantial amount of written work.

In making these two provisions, the Committee was aware of the fact that some departments have few major students, as few as one or two in each major group; while others may have as many as twenty or more in each class. In these circumstances it is natural that methods should differ widely. Some departments may meet their major students in sessions attended by the whole group, others may prefer a succession of smaller conferences, and others may meet their students individually. However the meetings are conducted, the Committee believes that *quantitatively* these meetings should not fall below the standard set. With respect to the requirement of a substantial amount of written work to be an integral part of the major course, the Committee is recognizing the principle enunciated throughout this Report, a principle which holds that one of the duties of a college of liberal arts is to train its students to express themselves clearly, logically and persuasively. The Committee also believes that the assignment of written work is essential to the attainment of the objectives of the major system. Only by constant attempts to express themselves and by rigorous scrutiny of their efforts by members

of the Faculty will students learn how to organize and formulate what they know and so be able to communicate their knowledge to others.

Since course status for major work is a recognition of its important place in the instructional program, such status should be accompanied by according major meetings a suitable spot on the college calendar. As the calendar has become more and more crowded with the increasing complexity of college activities, it has been growing more and more difficult for departments to find a period when major meetings could be scheduled without serious conflicts. The Committee recommends that an evening be reserved each month for major meetings, this date to be free from all other college engagements.*

The major examination has always been the climax of the major program. Its purpose is two-fold: it is not only an examination, it is also an instrument of instruction. It demonstrates what is expected in terms of depth, it teaches coordination, and it gives opportunity for the organization and presentation of material studied over a considerable period of time. As an instrument of instruction, however, much of its value is lost when it comes only once and at the very end of the program. For that reason, the Committee commends the practice of some departments which hold trial examinations at the end of junior year.

The original rules governing the major program as adopted by the Faculty in 1921 contained an option of counting extra courses in lieu of the comprehensive examination. As the major system evolved, only the departments of science have continued to use this alternative, and recently only the Departments of Mathematics, Chemistry and Physics have employed the extra-courses option. This option is retained because the sequential nature of the work in these departments makes each course in itself a review and an extension of the work in the previous courses. The advanced courses are usu-

*The Faculty recommended two evenings each month.

ally made up of small groups of students working closely with members of the department. These advanced courses are often devoted to doing the same kind of teaching done by other departments in their major work. The laboratory work in chemistry and physics, for example, brings faculty and students into close individual contact with each other. The programs of the Departments of Mathematics and Chemistry are notable for contributing significantly to the general objectives of the major program by supplementing the extra courses taken in lieu of the comprehensive examination. Students majoring in mathematics are required to prepare themselves in the history of their subject and to take an examination on it. The Department of Chemistry conducts a series of seminars with student papers on topics of interest to the major group as a whole.

Nevertheless, students in these departments may and sometimes do take the comprehensive examination. In that event, such students should be given the benefit of major work equivalent to that offered in the major course. Since the decision to take the comprehensive examination in the sciences may not come until the beginning of senior year, the department shall during this year require such equivalent work, even though the special conditions compel this work to be accelerated.

The Honors Program

The more deeply the student explores the possibilities of his major field, the more clearly he is likely to see his knowledge as an integrated whole rather than a collection of scattered items. And the more he gives it a form and expression of his own, the more nearly he comes to realize the purposes of the major system. Honors work is intended to provide the student with a fuller opportunity to achieve all these purposes than is possible in the regular major work. The core of the honors program is the special project in which the honors candidate is expected to show initiative, originality and high attainment. In carrying such a project to a successful conclusion,

the student needs and deserves the help of his faculty adviser or advisers.

Opportunities for work of this character should be open to all who are capable of pursuing it with advantage. A student who has attained honor grades in his major courses is assumed to be able to profit from such opportunities. There are exceptions, of course, but the achievement of honor grades is a workable rule to follow. Important factors in the success of any such project include an active imagination, a genuine interest in, and enthusiasm for, what one is doing, and strong intellectual motivation. These qualities, in whole or in part, may be possessed by a student who for one reason or another may not have done work of honor grade by the beginning, or even by the end of junior year. A department which feels it has such a student may accept him as a candidate for honors on the condition that he must, of course, eventually satisfy all the requirements.

The honors project may take the form of a paper, essay or thesis. In the sciences it may constitute a laboratory problem. After careful consideration, the Committee decided that the scope should be broadened to include "creative" projects: e.g., musical compositions, painting, sculpture, plays, and novels. These are all *creative* in the usual sense of the term, but the Committee was less certain about projects such as piano, organ and clarinet recitals. It was pointed out that these are creative only in the sense that an actor's interpretation of a role is creative. It was eloquently argued, however, that such projects entail the study, interpretation, application, and evaluation of works of art, and that a Mozart recital should be as acceptable as, for example, a critical study of John Donne. It was agreed that the additional work done for the major with honors "may be a project in music, the fine arts, or letters, and shall be accompanied, whenever appropriate, by a supplementary written explanation." In these projects as in the others, the plan would need to be perfected as early as possible, and should involve as much effort as those of more

conventional character. The Committee believes it is wise to warn against the confusion of work for honors with extra-curricular activity.

Here again the Faculty has a great responsibility. It must see that the projects are wisely chosen, that they are chosen in time, that they are faithfully carried out, and that the final production is worthy of the award accorded it. This responsibility involves close and continuous supervision which must, moreover, be given without thwarting the initiative and the originality of the student. If the projects are to be worth doing, they must not be done hastily. Preferably they should be started when the candidate for honors is accepted "during the junior year." The Committee believes strongly that the plan for additional work must be presented by the student and approved by the department no later than December the first of the candidate's senior year. It also stipulated, both as a reward and as a warning, that written work accepted as fulfilling the requirements for honors be deposited in the College Library. To provide time for the effective completion of such projects, it was decided that the additional work should count as one of the courses of the final semester.

Fearing that these provisions for honors work might not be sufficiently flexible in certain cases, the Committee voted to recommend the restoration of the rule whereby, with some safeguards, a senior might be excused from all courses to work on his major project during his last semester. Such a rule was in force for a period of about eight years before the outbreak of the second World War, and during this time the privilege was granted to fewer than thirty men. In urging the restoration of the rule, the Committee recommends that it be made more flexible in two ways: (1) the courses from which the student is to be excused could be allocated, when it seems wise so to allocate them, in the last three semesters, and (2) a student might, under this rule, be excused from one to four semester courses in order to work on his honors project. All the original safeguards of the old regulations should be re-

tained. Again a special premium is placed upon careful planning by Faculty and students. Whether or not a department should require the full six regular courses deemed to be the minimum for satisfying the major, in addition to the special project, is left within its discretion.

The award of honors serves as both incentive and reward. For those who are beginning their work, it is an incentive; for those who have completed their work successfully, it is a reward. It should therefore reflect the standard of values which the College endorses. Honors in a major subject represents accomplishment in that important but limited part of a student's college work. The *degree with distinction,* on the other hand, is based upon a student's total performance. It must reflect an over-all high level of attainment; it must also reflect success in meeting the particular challenge of the last two years.

III.

The Curriculum: Some Considerations

In formulating a pattern of curricular requirements to provide the student with training in basic skills, to offer him an acquaintance with several important areas of learning, and to help him gain a reasonable mastery of a single, integrated field, the Committee knows that it is fatuous to believe that any set of requirements or any curriculum will result in a complete education from Accounting to Zymology. The ideal curriculum which would encompass all the "essential" or "desirable" courses is as much of a delusion as the likelihood of being able to concoct an elixir of life that would be necessary for those hardy enough to embark upon such a program.

The Committee is also aware that our present and proposed curricula do not cover all important areas and subjects. It is also conscious of the possibility that it may appear to have merely wasted its efforts in redecorating the cabins of a superannuated and rudderless ship. Is the Bowdoin curriculum, des-

pite all its conservative virtues and its recommended changes, only an anachronism of doubtful adequacy in the twentieth century?

Where in our course offerings, it may be asked, is there any opportunity for undergraduates to study anthropology, the shaping of cultural traditions that have produced civilizations and human behavior outside the framework of western Europe? The East, together with Russia, confronts us with one of the most important cultural problems our civilization is called upon to face. Our own hemisphere, with the increase in importance of the relationships of the United States to Canada and to Latin America, offers no less significant areas for consideration. Yet, our critics may be disposed to ask, where does our catalogue indicate regularly instituted courses devoted to Chinese civilization, to the development of modern China, Japan, Russia, or the Western Hemisphere? Other gaps such as those in geography and geology — the reinstitution of the courses in geology is a recommendation of the present Committee — have been filled only occasionally and temporarily. Instead of a cluster of courses concerned with the history of Russia, we can point only to a "bracketed" course in Russian history.

To such criticism one might answer that a small college is currently unable, even in the basic subjects and disciplines, to live up fully to the commitments of a college of liberal arts. Is it not the better part of wisdom, before annexing new territories, to consolidate our gains? Is not the primary obligation the devotion of full energy to those subjects whose values are most applicable to the needs of most men in the western world rather than the teaching of all possible skills and the "covering" of all areas? Bowdoin is a college of liberal arts and sciences dedicated to the creation in our students of a life-long concern for humane and scientific truth. In this enterprise we must depend upon the resourcefulness of our Faculty to see to it that this concern is achieved within the framework of their courses. The continuing emphasis at Bowdoin upon the central importance of the teacher is justified by the confident expectation that his teaching and his courses will be constantly adapted to the changing needs of the times.

The charge that our present curriculum does not correspond to the realities of twentieth-century life is more easily made than supported. To those who lament the lack of a Department of Russian Studies, it might be pointed out that within the scope of its regular courses, the Department of Government and Legal Studies (to cite but one example) offers semester courses emphasizing the theory and practice of government in Soviet Russia, leading problems in world politics, and international relations in which Russian policies are considered in their effects on the stability and instability of the modern world. Moreover, it is not without significance that Bowdoin is one of a comparatively few colleges of liberal arts in which there is regular instruction in Russian.

The wise use to which the College has devoted the Tallman Lecture Fund since its inauguration in 1928 has also enriched and broadened the curriculum from year to year. A succession of distinguished scholars from this country and abroad have offered courses in such diverse fields as classical archaeology, Latin American relations, Canadian history, Chinese civilization, Oriental philosophy, Indian culture and history, and geography and geopolitics. To these offerings should be added the impact of the series of biennial Institutes which have brought to the campus authorities on a wide variety of subjects for public lectures and round-table conferences.

A curriculum must be considered in relation to the function of the institution of which it is a part. Bowdoin is an undergraduate college, not a university. Its obligation is not the impossible one of "covering" all areas and subjects, but of establishing fundamental processes and determining strategic points of departure. A college of liberal arts cannot hope to make of its students men of complete or universal learning, but it can imbue them with the spirit of learning by setting basic intellectual processes to work, by encouraging the achieve-

ment of intellectual poise and objectivity, and by nurturing "the patient courage to pursue remote ends by choice rather than compulsion." Its curriculum must be limited to fundamental studies that combat illiteracy and provincialism, that nourish the mind, and that train the student to meet competently and wisely the problems of all thinking men. Our present endowment is not adequate to meet all the current demands upon it, such as the need of the College Library for a sufficient appropriation for books and periodicals. The addition of new departments at the present time would subject our general funds to further strains, but the Committee would welcome when resources are available the development of the curriculum in subjects not at present included among our offerings. Bowdoin's wisest course, in the opinion of the Committee, is not to spread herself thin or to resort to the familiar dodge of pasting bright new labels on old academic bottles. Such practices seem repugnant, not only to the conservative tradition in education, but also to Bowdoin's tradition of intellectual honesty and self-respect as an institution of sound learning.

COLLEGE AFFAIRS

I.

Admissions

The curriculum and the conservative tradition in education do not exist in a vacuum. The context in which they operate is the student body, and its selection is a matter of primary concern in any college. A satisfactory student body is a necessary condition for its success. What makes a satisfactory candidate for admission? What boys can best profit from what the College offers?

Criteria for Admission

The College recognizes the primacy of the classroom and of the subjects taught there. The possession of intellectual capacity is therefore the first requirement. Yet intellectual

capacity is not by itself enough. The College maintains a curriculum designed for the ends it seeks to achieve. The candidate must be prepared by previous training to take advantage of what he finds in the classroom. Even ability and preparation are insufficient, however, if the candidate is not interested in what he encounters at the College. If he lacks stamina, if he is without fixed intellectual purpose, and if he is unsympathetic with the objectives of a college of liberal arts he is not likely to become a satisfactory student. Finally, the enterprise on which he will spend four years is a community enterprise. It can reach its full fruition only if all students recognize their responsibility to the group effort, in the classroom, in daily living, and in the various activities that supplement the classroom experience. The problem is to obtain each year an entering class made up of able, well-prepared, properly motivated, socially oriented boys, or at least to find boys who will develop those qualities in the Bowdoin environment.

The present "Requirements for Admission" seem satisfactory. Those which relate to subject matter are aimed at securing adequate preparation. They are insisted upon partly because certain subjects have a continuity with those that will be studied in college, and partly because certain subjects are fundamental to the liberal arts. The minimum of eleven year-units of required work in English, mathematics, language, and history should not be reduced.

Diversification

It is frequently said that a wider geographical distribution in the undergraduate body would be desirable. One may well ask, *why?* Two replies are usually given. The first is that by the simple expedient of increasing the area from which we draw our student body, we would improve the quality of the freshman class. We might thus replace mediocre or poor candidates for admission by good or excellent ones. Such a reply is valid only if in practice such a replacement could be made. If such boys are available as candidates, are our re-

sources sufficient to enable us to reach them? The second reply is a different one. The College is a community, and the members of the community contribute to the common task, and learn from each other, not only in the classroom, but in the dormitory, across the dining-room table, in the Union, and in the fraternity-house lounge. They will learn more if more is offered. A highly diverse group can offer more than a group cut to one pattern. A striking illustration of this truth has been the contribution of the foreign students who have come to our campus in increasing numbers, especially since the inauguration of the Bowdoin Plan. To a lesser degree, so runs the argument, a similar value is to be gained by wider geographical distribution within the United States. Geographical diversity within the United States may well be, however, a deceptive concept. In these days of extreme population mobility, the suburban, prep-school-trained, upper-middle-class boy is likely to be cut pretty much from the same cloth, whether he comes from Falmouth Foreside, Newton, Westchester County, Shaker Heights or Oak Park. The argument is really one for diversity rather than for mere geographical distribution. This diversity, moreover, is more likely to be found by selecting boys so as to obtain a socio-economic spread, rather than by choosing them from different states. This problem is closely tied up with the financial assistance program. There are definite advantages to maintaining a diversified student body and, whenever feasible, efforts should be made to widen the diversification.

The argument that the quality of the student body can be improved by going afield is of a different sort. It is valid only if such an improvement is in fact possible. It is possible only if such better candidates are available through the effort it is feasible and possible for Bowdoin to make.

Two factors must be considered in any discussion of the problem. One is Bowdoin's history, and the other is her location. Bowdoin has always drawn a large part of her student body from the State of Maine. In 1904 there were 243 Maine

boys enrolled in an undergraduate college of 280 (eighty-six per cent); in 1954 there were 222 Maine boys in a college of 783 (twenty-eight per cent). The change in the absolute number is small, although the number relative to the total enrollment has dropped sharply. Bowdoin today in terms of students is much more a Maine college than Wesleyan is a Connecticut one, or than either Amherst or Williams is a Massachusetts one, or than Swarthmore is a Pennsylvania one, or than Oberlin is an Ohio one, or for that matter, than Bates is a Maine one. In general for these Maine students, Bowdoin was their first choice. The greater number of them came from public high schools; they appear to have been strongly motivated; and their academic performance has been very good in relation to that of the whole student body. The second factor which must be considered is that of Bowdoin's location. Maine is geographically somewhat isolated. Travelwise, she is at the end of the line. To the people between Boston and Washington, Bowdoin seems farther away than it actually is. The subfreshman from Ohio or Illinois before he gets to Brunswick must almost literally drive by a dozen colleges any one of which might also appeal to a boy attracted by Bowdoin. This factor, partly geographical, partly psychological, and partly financial, makes more difficult any campaign of the Admissions Office to recruit students beyond the Hudson.

Any attempt to increase the geographical distribution means that if you take more candidates from new areas, you take fewer from old ones. Although the main source of students for Bowdoin is likely to remain where it is at present, in Maine, the rest of New England, and the middle Atlantic states, and although the problem is essentially the better exploitation of those regions, it is nevertheless foresighted to make an effort to cultivate other areas. We would like as much social, economic, and geographical diversification as is practicable. Our primary concern, however, must be to get the best freshman class possible.

Financial Assistance

In any discussion of admissions one comes soon to the question of scholarships for freshmen. The use of the phrase creates an initial confusion. Scholarships for freshmen seem to be set apart, and often the ensuing discussion proceeds as if such scholarships were in a special class. It should be stressed that they are part of the same program as that which provides "scholarships for sophomores," or for juniors, or for seniors. The whole financial assistance program must be considered as a unit. The total program must be geared to the central purpose of the College which is to provide a liberal arts education at Bowdoin for the best qualified student body obtainable. As we have seen, other things being reasonably equal, a diversified student body is likely to provide a richer and more rewarding experience for its members. Such a student body would be representative of all economic and social groups. A financial assistance program makes possible such diversification by lowering the financial barrier which otherwise would exclude members of those social and economic groups lacking the necessary financial resources.

Since the purpose of the whole program is to obtain the best possible student body by providing help for deserving and able boys who would otherwise be unable to attend, the amount of the scholarship should be related to the need of the applicant. If it consciously exceeds this need, then some other principle must govern the award. Since the purpose is to have the best qualified student body possible, the program must be aimed not only at *obtaining,* but also at *maintaining* such a group. Hence it must be directed at sophomores, juniors and seniors, as well as at freshmen. Various factors may conceivably reduce a student's need in the years that follow his first year. However, the holder of a first-year scholarship should know that if his need continues and his performance meets the standard set, he can be assured of continued equivalent help through his four years in college. The program of scholarships for freshmen must be kept in proper proportion to the total financial

assistance program so that boys of all classes of similar needs and attainments can be sure of equivalent help. The need of the College for additional scholarships is pressing and acute. In accordance with the principles stated above, any increase in such funds should include an increase in the amount available for scholarships for freshmen.

The financial assistance available to properly qualified students includes not only scholarships, but also loans and on-campus employment. The various employers — the Library, Union, the departments of instruction, the activities — should preserve their freedom to select those who will work for them, but they should be mindful of, even though not finally governed by, the need of those available for employment. The loan funds may help in important ways those who may experience short-term financial need but who are not eligible for scholarship assistance. Nevertheless, all three programs do bear on the problem of financial assistance to those who need it. There should be adequate liaison among those in charge of these programs.

The Administration of Admissions

The Faculty is responsible for the intellectual life of the College. Its own success is largely dependent upon the quality of the student body. It must therefore keep a lively and informed interest in the admissions policy of the College. Admissions policy, as distinct from admissions administration, is the responsibility of the Faculty. The close tie between the administrative officers and the members of the Faculty enables the latter to review constantly the application of admissions policy. Both the Director of Admissions and the Assistant Director are members of the Faculty, and the latter is also a classroom teacher. Faculty members are not trained to take part in the actual procedure of the Admissions Office, and it would probably be wasteful and inefficient to attempt to train them to do so.

The successful administration of the policy depends upon the

Admissions Office itself. An effective admissions officer needs to know colleges and their needs, hopes, and problems; he must know both private and public secondary schools and understand in both of them the problems of the school administrator, the teacher, and the pupils; and finally, he needs to know the admissions problems peculiar to his own institution. Given a prospective student, an admissions officer needs to be able to give a sound estimate as to how well he will do in and out of the classroom. He has to be able to fashion his answer from the material available to him: the school record, the comments of principal and teachers, the test scores, and the impressions gained from a personal interview. This ability requires training, experience, intuition, expertness and understanding.

The whole College can make some contribution to obtaining a satisfactory freshman class, but the primary responsibility must be that of the Admissions Office. The Faculty, besides having the responsibility for the formulation of policy, can do much to develop cordial school-college relations. It should not remain aloof from the meetings of teachers' associations, especially from teachers' groups in its own subject-matter fields. It should be receptive to requests from schools to supply college teachers to give talks to student assemblies or at graduation exercises, and for help with projects like the annual Science Fair. The reputation of the Faculty is one of the assets of the College in the recruitment of students as well as in other ways.

The College can itself cultivate good relations with the schools. It should continue to maintain helpful, cooperative, unpatronizing relations with them. Through such enterprises as the One-Act Play Contest, the Debating Forum, the Science Fair, and various athletic events, it can bring secondary-school teachers and students to the college campus. The College can make a special effort to continue to play its part in the training of secondary-school teachers. It will thus have an opportunity to continue to stress the importance in such training of subject-matter preparation.

The most immediate, direct, and effective contact with prospective students is the undergraduate body. It is an agency for both persuasion and information which operates naturally and spontaneously without planning or direction. An undergraduate body which is enthusiastic about its college inevitably carries that enthusiasm back to its home towns and to its preparatory or high schools. It does this without being told to. A planned use of this resource may well be both wise and practicable. On the campus for both formal and informal occasions the undergraduates give generous and indispensable assistance to the College in the role of host.

The alumni are Bowdoin's largest, most widespread, most interested, and most influential points of contact with the off-campus world. The alumni carry Bowdoin's reputation with them and their training at Bowdoin is judged by their accomplishments. They represent a resource that cannot be neglected by the College in its effort to secure the best possible student body. Much of their influence is spontaneous and without guidance. Increasingly colleges are organizing and directing this interest. Bowdoin does not desire the extensive paraphernalia which some other colleges have developed. Our own Admissions Office is effectively proceeding in a way compatible with our traditions. It is giving astute consideration to our needs in each area and to the alumni available to help us. There is possible danger in a hasty and overorganized approach. Any plan for the use of the alumni must recognize the fact that for them the job is an avocation. They are not all equally interested, they are not all equally suited to the work, and they are not all equally needed. If they are to carry their work past the first stage of simply arousing interest in Bowdoin in a prospective student, they must be carefully informed; *trained* is not too strong a word. This is not in any way to disparage alumni activities or to minimize alumni interest in, and desire to help their College. Even members of the Faculty who live in daily contact with the College are not pre-

pared for this sort of work without special training and experience, and without special aptitude.

Nevertheless, there is need for a more organized and complete approach to the problem on the part of the alumni along the lines which the Admissions Office is developing and which its officers have described so well in their pamphlet, *Bowdoin Alumni and Bowdoin Admissions.* They should be encouraged to strengthen and to expand the program which they have set up.

Although faculty responsibility cannot end when policy is set, and although alumni and undergraduates have much that is valuable to contribute to solving the admissions problem, it cannot be too strongly emphasized that the administration of admissions policy is the primary responsibility of the Admissions Office. An informed, efficient, and alert admissions office is the best assurance of a satisfactory solution to admissions problems.

Summary

The recommendations regarding admissions which have just been discussed do not point toward significant departure from present practices. They do, however, constitute a staunch reassertion of fundamental principles that may be lost sight of in the routine of daily tasks. These principles which provide the framework for a valid admissions policy are: faculty responsibility for the formulation of admissions policy; Admissions Office responsibility for the administration of that policy; the effective use of all the resources available to the College in its search for the best obtainable student body; the gearing of scholarships for freshmen to the central purpose of the College; and the maintenance of the primary emphasis on the quality of the student body. Details may change with circumstances, but the fundamentals must remain.

II.

The Size of the College

The Committee found the question of the size of the College appearing in the discussion of almost every problem it considered. A limited size for each section is required for increased effectiveness in the courses in composition and speech. More hours per week of classroom instruction in sections of workable size are required in elementary and intermediate courses in language. With the College of the present size the successful implementation of these objectives would require additional members of the Faculty. A larger College would increase this problem. A more effective major system with better major meetings, increased emphasis on written work, and more candidates for honors are all essential to improved instruction. Even a student body of our present size will admittedly tax our present resources. The Committee found the personnel of the Admissions Office adequate for its present task, but the recruiting and processing of a larger freshman class would require an increased staff. These and many other factors show how crucial is the problem of size.

Confronted with this situation the Committee could find little comfort in surveying past experience. Since 1900 the Bowdoin enrollment has increased at an average rate of about ten a year. During World War I the fluctuation was moderate, and during World War II it was drastic and spectacular, but each time when the crisis was past the rate of increase returned to the previous pattern. Every sign indicates that in the coming decade a constantly larger number will be seeking admission to our colleges. There is no reason to believe that Bowdoin will not be confronted with a share of this increased demand.

The Committee felt that the problem should be met squarely. Leaving other considerations aside for the moment, the Committee looked at the single matter of living conditions and found that the College was not meeting what seems to be

its present minimum obligation. A small residential college of liberal arts is not fulfilling its most elementary promise if it cannot provide adequate living facilities for its students. This requires satisfactory dining and housing accommodations. The present dining facilities are satisfactory. The problem of housing is more troublesome. Bowdoin depends on the fraternity houses as an integral part of the over-all college housing. The various forces which constantly push them toward overcrowding need to be watched and vigorously resisted lest both academic effectiveness and safety be imperilled. The expectation is that those who do not live in fraternity houses may if they wish live in the dormitories. This expectation is not being realized since at present nearly one hundred men are compelled to live off campus whether they wish to or not. Even at its present size the College will not discharge its duty to the undergraduate body until it builds enough dormitories to accommodate that portion of the student body which cannot be housed in chapter houses. The Committee recommends that the College take steps to meet this obligation.

Growth would present problems in every facet of college activity similar to those we now face in housing. Any expansion in size which is not accompanied by a corresponding increase in resources is incompatible with the maintenance of existing standards of instruction and with the provision for living conditions consonant with the ideal of a small college. On the purely physical side is the failure already noted to provide dormitory rooms required by the present student body, but the College also suffers from inadequate stack space in the Library, and the lack of additional indoor facilities for physical education and athletics. Any increase in size would soon tax the library study space and even the present admirable classroom, laboratory, and conference-room facilities. On the academic side, any increase in size with the resulting increase in enrollments in elementary courses could be met only by an increase in the size of the Faculty if existing standards of instruction are to be maintained. Inevitably, unless there were

an even further increase in faculty personnel, teaching burdens would become heavier and the quality of the supervision of major and honors work would suffer. Even with the most enthusiastic and devoted cooperation of the Faculty, the implementation of the recommendations of this Committee will require added resources if they are to be carried out and their objective of improved instruction is to be achieved. Therefore, the Committee strongly recommends that, in the absence of added resources sufficient to maintain the quality of education envisaged in this Report, no increase in the size of the entering class be permitted, and that every effort be made to improve the quality of the student body in the College at its present size.

III.

Student Life

The problem of the College is not only to get the best freshman class obtainable. That is only the beginning. Its greater task is to fashion the men who come to it into the best student body possible. The College to which the freshmen come must be one that stretches and develops their abilities, continues and widens their preparation, preserves and uses their motivation, and gives them a sense of belonging to a community concerned with matters which they recognize to be of the highest importance. In this task the primary instrument of the College is the classroom. There the student must find inspiration and challenge. In the small residential college of liberal arts the classroom operates in an environment where much depends on the social and extracurricular organization and activity of the undergraduates. The students live in small groups, they know each other and their faculty well, and they are organized in countless activities. In this closely-knit community it is important that the prevailing attitude shall be one that encourages and enhances the central purpose of the College. It is with this life outside the classroom that we are here concerned.

In considering how *student life* can be made to contribute to this central purpose the Committee soon found the subject so extensive and complex that it was compelled to redefine its task. In dealing with the curriculum the Committee has presented certain definite recommendations for faculty action. In the field of *student life* it was found more valuable to regard the mission of the Committee as exploratory. It defined and plotted sensitive areas, indicating for some the lines along which future conduct might be charted, while leaving others largely untouched. It was able to carry its investigations on a few of the trouble spots to the point where it could make fruitful and significant recommendations. The Faculty needs as a symbol of its awareness of the problem, and as an instrument to deal with it, a continuing Faculty Committee on Student Life and Activities.*

The Committee blocked out four major areas for consideration. It consciously elected to explore one of these, the fraternity, more intensively than the others, and in its considerations it arrived at specific recommendations. All four of the areas are recommended to the College as meriting extensive consideration by the proper authorities: (1) the fraternity; (2) extracurricular activities; (3) class attendance; and (4) orientation and counselling. Above all these problems, and pervading and conditioning them, is the force of student attitudes.

Student Attitudes

The student attitude towards the central purpose of the College is surely one of the most important and complex areas of investigation explored by the Committee. The quality and character of the College is to be judged by its effect on the students. The spirit the students bring to their intellectual experience as well as their reactions to the community enterprise are all important. The success of the College depends on the creation and maintenance of a high standard of individual excellence which will not tolerate mediocrity. The hope

*The President has appointed such a committee.

is to extend the student to the full limit of his abilities and to prevent a waste of time and effort.

Many students not only give high promise but high performance as well. At the other end of the scale there are some poorly motivated, poorly prepared, and improperly oriented individuals, who do not profit adequately from the type of education offered at Bowdoin. In between the extremes is the largest portion of the student body. It includes men of considerable or even great ability and promise who have not been roused to their best efforts. Their purpose in acquiring a degree in liberal arts is vague and uninspired. They appear to be content with a minimum standard of academic performance. They want a college degree but approach the goal without zeal. On the whole, the group is often more interested in the prestige offered by the extracurricular or social activities of the College than in the intellectual life.

At the moment there is considerable dissatisfaction with the intellectual interests and efforts of the student body. The kind of intellectual toughness required in our contemporary civilization is often lacking. This is almost wholly due to the failure of the College to win the allegiance of this middle group. Its members have the potentiality of bringing to the College the dominant campus attitude desired.

Fraternities

The basic living-unit at the College is the fraternity, which dominates the social and extracurricular life of the campus. This has been true for a long period, but has been emphasized in the last twenty-five years as the proportion of fraternity members has increased. The bulk of the undergraduates (over ninety-three per cent of the present student body belongs to the twelve chapters) are pledged before they have been on campus for a week. Moreover, they dine in their chapter houses for their four years of residence, and most will occupy rooms there as upperclassmen. The fraternity is also the unit for student government, for intramural contests of all sorts, and for dances and house parties.

The Committee gave to the fraternity the careful scrutiny that its importance on the Bowdoin campus demands. It was not at all complacent in its examination, but rather, was highly critical. It considered questions raised on the national as well as the local level, looked carefully at action taken elsewhere, and considered suggestions as drastic as outright abolition. In the end it accepted the fraternities as "built into" the very fabric of the institution, but insisted that every effort must be made to strengthen the contribution of the various Bowdoin chapters to the basic purpose of the College. As a closely organized living-unit, the fraternity tends to accelerate any development and to intensify any attitude, whether good or bad, wholesome or unwholesome. The Committee strove to insure the likelihood of the fraternity's functioning for the good of the College. To that end the Committee had definite recommendations to make.

Discrimination: The fraternities are and always have been selective in their membership. Each tends to choose as neophytes those whose values correspond in a general way to the values held by the selecting group. This phenomenon is inherent in the system. It becomes vicious only when there is an *a priori* barrier against any group or groups on the basis of race or creed. Such a barrier is contrary to the whole purpose of a college of liberal arts; it is opposed to the tradition of scholarship; it is inimical to the spirit of democratic institutions; it contradicts the premises upon which our way of life is founded. It is a denial by individuals in their dealings with each other of that equal protection which our constitution requires of the government in its dealings with all persons whomsoever. The College is unequivocal in its condemnation of such barriers. Anyone accepted for admission to the College should be eligible for selection as a member by any group within the College.

One Bowdoin fraternity has given up its national affiliation in a dispute on this issue, even though its national constitution contains no overt discriminatory clause. The College should

unequivocally support any chapter which decides to take such a step. Three fraternities on the campus are known to have discriminatory clauses in their national constitutions, and in each instance, members of these chapters are not sympathetic with them. They are continuing to work within their own groups for the abolition of these clauses, and at least one has supplied national leadership in the movement. As long as our local chapters seek earnestly to remove the restrictive clauses they should be supported and encouraged by the College; any other attitude would forfeit their claim to a place on the Bowdoin campus. The Committee recommended that each fraternity having a discriminatory clause based on color, race, or creed should report annually to the Faculty on its efforts to ease or eliminate discriminatory clauses at both the local and national level.* Meanwhile, the College should constantly review the efforts made and if it finds that they lack sincerity or consistency or results it should take drastic action. In no circumstances should a fraternity with such a clause be allowed to establish a chapter at Bowdoin.

There remains the fact that some fraternities without restrictive clauses never in actual practice take persons of certain races, colors, or creeds. In the long run this may be as stultifying to the realization of the purposes of the College as formal discrimination.

Pledging and Initiation: There is a belief, strongly held and eloquently urged, that all freshmen should live and dine together and that fraternity rushing should be deferred to the end of the freshman or the beginning of the sophomore year. This problem is closely related to that of the size of the College. A proposal to expand the College would demand resources not currently in sight. The Committee therefore based its consideration upon the continuation of freshman pledging.

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*The Faculty recommended that each fraternity report annually on its efforts to ease or eliminate discriminatory practices.

The present system of pledging, admittedly helter-skelter, does produce positive results. It prevents selection according to types, it has kept the various chapters fairly even in strength and reputation, and it gets most boys who wish to join one into a fraternity which they find acceptable and often congenial. No other system has proved to possess comparable virtues, and therefore it should be continued. At the same time, the freshman orientation period should be organized so that it will emphasize the college rather than the fraternity.

The initiation of freshmen has always been preceded by a period of "hazing." It includes a variety of activities. The more formal requirements, with their emphasis on learning college and fraternity rules and history, serve a recognized purpose. Some of the tasks set, such as community work projects and duties around the fraternity house and grounds, may be constructive. Nevertheless "hazing" all too often is time-consuming just when the freshman needs all his time in order to obtain a promising start in his new academic environment; it takes attention from fundamentals and concentrates it on trivia; it seems to the sensitive to insult or degrade the dignity of the individual; and it may produce states of anxiety more disturbing than physical punishment. In sum it gravely interferes with college work. Such interference is intolerable. A freshman needs a good start and he needs to form the right habits of work at the very beginning of his college career. The Committee feels strongly that in these activities the wheat can be winnowed from the chaff, and that the fraternities can and must be brought to make this distinction. To facilitate that end, and in order to minimize interference with their academic work, the initiation of freshmen should be postponed to the first month of the second semester.* The privilege of initiation should not be extended to a student on academic probation. Such a rule will assist the fraternity leadership, and will emphasize the essential purpose of the College.

*The proposal regarding deferment of initiations to the second semester was not endorsed by the Faculty. Certain changes in the present procedure were approved.

Those who have followed hazing and initiation patterns the country over for the last quarter of a century readily recognize the improvement which has taken place. Recent changes at Bowdoin have been encouraging. The Administrative Committee should continue to work with the fraternities in the direction of eliminating the undesirable effects of hazing.

Living Conditions: As was noted in the discussion of size, the small residential college of liberal arts has a special responsibility for the provision of satisfactory living facilities for its students. It has already been noted that at Bowdoin the fraternity is "built into" the very fabric of the College. The College depends on the fraternities to a very considerable extent for its housing and dining accommodations. At present close to forty per cent of the students live in the fraternity houses, and close to ninety per cent dine there. The College has, therefore, a peculiar responsibility in this matter, a responsibility which it is often difficult to implement, and the discharge of which requires a high degree of tact.

The Committee made a series of recommendations which were transmitted directly to those especially concerned. The Faculty itself should have an increased awareness of the College's responsibility in this area and it should take steps to keep itself informed. Certain practical measures for regular inspection are already being taken. Possibly they need to be increased. The Committee would like to see a thorough study made of the factors of health and safety associated with the kitchens and dining rooms.

The Independents: In the very nature of things, a fraternity system involves a certain number of students who will not be affiliated with fraternities. These are known as "The Independents." Some of these independent spirits will not want to join; some men will not be asked. With only seven per cent of the present student body not members of a fraternity, the number is exceptionally small. The Committee feels that total pledging should be encouraged so that all Bowdoin undergraduates will receive invitations to join fraternities, but

it does not believe it likely that this goal will ever be achieved. It certainly does not believe it wise to require it.

The Committee does not feel that the interests of the Independents would be served by establishing a more formal organization. The College has, however, a peculiar responsibility for their well-being. Social facilities, conditions, and opportunities should be made as nearly equal as possible to those enjoyed by the fraternity men. Every effort should continue to be made to utilize fully the social facilities of the Moulton Union to the best advantage of the Independents. In the college program, consideration should be given to additional social quarters and facilities for them.

Extracurricular Activities

Any consideration of extracurricular activities must start with a recognition of the primacy of the classroom, but the classroom is set in a context which may enhance and enrich classroom experience. The student lives under conditions which enable him to learn the lessons of group living, he has ample opportunity for contact with his fellows and with his teachers, and he is offered a wide variety of activities to develop his talents and to widen his experience. Many activities — for example those concerned with music, the drama, debating and the student publications — contribute directly to furthering classroom interests. Others are less closely related to them. Still extracurricular activities are an important instructional device in the College as it exists today.

Both classroom and extra-class activities flourish in a properly motivated college community. Some of the criticism against the extra-class activities has developed because this fundamental premise had been lost sight of. Absences from class in order to participate in other activities have occurred to the point where classwork is often seriously disorganized. Individual students give time and energy to a particular enterprise to an extent which gravely harms their college career and may even jeopardize them. On the other hand, some ac-

tivities suffer from the failure of students to support them adequately. The student who fails in the classroom because he does not realize that it deserves his best efforts, often fails in activities outside the classroom for the same reason.

Much can be gained from effective faculty-student understanding and cooperation. In matters of common concern the two should work closely together. Maximum student consultation by faculty committees should be encouraged. The Faculty should work with the Dean and with the students to achieve such consultation.

Class Attendance

Excessive cutting of classes by undergraduates is a reflection of a standard of values inconsistent with the whole tradition of the College. It is a rejection of the classroom as the chief instrument in the accomplishment of the purposes of the College. The testimony of the students themselves supports the truth of this conclusion. In their report to the Committee, they noted: "The problem of cutting is a growing problem at Bowdoin. . . . Spending class time more usefully on something else seemed to be by far the greatest motive for cutting." In his able report, a study of student attitudes submitted as an honors project in sociology, Mr. David Starkweather discusses the reasons given by undergraduates for cutting classes and finds them to be "the ones that would be given by students who simply do not place high enough value or esteem on what they get out of attending a class."

The Committee recognizes cutting as a symptom rather than a cause. If the whole student body possessed the attitude which we covet toward the work of the College, the problem would disappear. Once more we face the fact that rules do not create attitudes. However, while we are trying to determine the factors which contribute to the present unwholesome attitude toward class attendance, we believe that there are possibilities of strengthening our present system or replacing it. The Committee developed and submitted to the Dean a use-

ful working paper which could serve as a basis for the establishment of a code of rules.

Orientation and Counselling

The field of counselling, orientation, and guidance has developed tremendously in the past few decades. Relatively few colleges have been able to keep abreast of the movement, to study its potentialities, and to apply its findings to the best interests of their student bodies. This vital and complex area was emphasized by the Committee as one needing future study.

A proposal which grew out of the discussion and which the Committee found interesting was one for the "institution of a more effective college-centered orientation period which would focus upon promoting the adjustment of the students to college life and upon developing healthy academic attitudes."

Continued Study of Student Life

The problems arising out of the life of the students are so complex, so constantly changing, and so important to the College that a continued study of them is imperative. Several areas of vital significance were outlined by the Committee, but left largely unexplored. One such was the delicate problem of social regulations. It is a sphere where the College has a large responsibility to the parents of undergraduates and to the community, but it is also a sphere where best results are obtained when overt regulations can be held to a minimum. The Committee is fully aware of the problems, made more acute by the change in *mores* which was accelerated by the war, of which drinking is one. Failure to make specific recommendations on such matters is not to be regarded as complacent approval of current practice or a sign that these do not deserve careful study and perhaps drastic modification. There is need for more careful consideration than the Committee was able to give in the limited time at its disposal. Other problems arise from the increased mobility of the student body which has changed greatly the pattern of the social life of the College. Another subject blocked out for future study is ath-

letics. It ties in closely with many questions which the Committee did consider. Still another is the religious life of the undergraduates. The Committee gave to the consideration of student life more time than was devoted to any one matter by any of the other sub-committees. It has made significant and valuable recommendations. Its most important recommendation, however, is that the continuing nature of the problem be recognized by the establishment of a permanent Faculty Committee on Student Life and Activities.

IV.

Faculty Affairs

Since the importance of the classroom and the quality of the teaching that takes place there are cherished articles in the creed of the conservative tradition, it should occasion no surprise that a sub-committee was entrusted with the task of considering the problems of the Faculty and of teaching methods. Moreover, its candid discussions were refreshingly free from those large and empty verbalizations about Education and Educators which a weary public has come to regard as standard practice in talks about this subject. Instead, emphasis was placed where emphasis belongs: upon the individual teacher, upon his problems and teaching methods, upon his relationship with the student, and upon the community of his colleagues in which he lives and has his being.

The primacy of the teacher in the Bowdoin tradition is a matter of record. It has continued to be a constant element in the history of the College from 1802, when our first teacher-president summoned his students by rapping on their doors with his cane in Massachusetts Hall, to the present day, when our own teacher-president meets them in his Cleaveland Hall laboratory. It is confirmed by a wise policy which encourages administrative officers to teach: a president who conducts a course in physical chemistry, a dean who lectures on European history, an admissions officer who teaches English composition. It is embodied memorably in President Hyde's "Offer of the

College," and in his zealous efforts, noted approvingly by the editor of the New York *Herald-Tribune,* to "catch his Faculty young, warm and strong when it takes ripe judgment to discern rare promise." It is reflected in President Sills' definition of a college as consisting "of the teachers and the taught." When asked to express in a single sentence or two his considered opinion of Bowdoin's most critical problem after the second World War, he replied: ". . . far more important than the curriculum, or courses, or new subjects, is the quality of the teaching. In so many post-war plans the teacher is the forgotten man. We do not intend to forget him at Bowdoin."

Mindful of this tradition and conscious of the fact that it is dealing with an area of long-run and flexible policy, the Committee has been unable to achieve the concreteness possible in the recommendations made in other sections of this Report. Yet it has looked steadily and intently at scores of specific artifacts upon which an improvement of the quality of our teaching personnel and the effectiveness of their teaching methods depend. The adequacy of Bowdoin salaries and of the present system of appointment, promotion, and tenure; the value of research, publication, and scholarly activity; the weight of the teaching burden, the size of the classes, and the extent of committee assignments and responsibilities; and the means of evaluating teaching ability and scholarly promise — these are only a sampling of the topics which engaged the attention of the Committee.

Beyond and above these, but informing all points of the discussions are those more intangible but no less important factors of prestige and *ambiance* which enable a college to attract promising young scholar-teachers from graduate schools and sister institutions, and to keep their tone high by stimulating their scholarly activity after they become members of our Faculty. Here we encounter whole congeries of mental and emotional attitudes, of responses and impulses, of convictions and loyalties which, although they are rarely susceptible of description in annual catalogues, go far to determine the quality

of the academic climate. They may be said, indeed, to measure the difference between a merely good college and a distinguished college, between instruction of adequate professional competence and the great teaching which should make of the college years a profoundly transforming experience for the student.

So close was the Committee's scrutiny and so searching were the questions it asked, that it is a source of cheer and good hope that it found "no evidence that the Bowdoin Faculty is not devoted to its work and does not possess on the whole the competence to carry it to a fruitful end." Equally inspiriting is the Committee's insistence — along with its emphasis upon the need of reasonable working conditions, and upon the high professional standards and intellectual distinction of the Faculty — upon the importance of a passionate belief in the significance of the subject matter each teacher professes, and his ability to generate an excitement in connection with it in the classroom. In addition to these essential conditions, the Committee also recognizes that there must also be a lively readiness of each faculty member to identify himself generously with the larger purposes served by the curriculum of which his own special discipline is but a single part, and a willingness to go beyond the strictly professional obligation he owes to his subject to enlist in what is nothing less than a common enterprise to realize a common goal. Such enlistment entails a sympathetic understanding of his colleagues' problems in other departments of instruction and of those of the various officers of administration. In a small college we are all members one of another. Few problems arising in the manifold activities of a closely-knit college community are not basically educational problems affecting the work of each of its members. In a word, the teacher in such a community has responsibilities which transcend his own subject and department. He must not only love *what* he teaches, but *whom* he teaches, and *where* he teaches.

There is room in such a commitment for wide differences of opinion; colleges thrive on and are invigorated by the kind

of wholesome discontent which often may be a prelude to achievement. The creation of "His Majesty's loyal opposition" is as essential to the welfare of the academic community as it is to the health of the body politic. Such divergencies and opposition, however, if they are to be salutary in either college or state, must be accompanied by so unified an allegiance to the abiding principles of our common objectives and ideals that we can afford to disagree over the best ways to achieve them. Although such allegiance may not transform the academic grove to the Garden of Eden, it is an indispensable condition of the effective functioning of a college of the liberal arts.

Time and time again in its critical survey of the problems of the Faculty and of teaching methods, the Committee found itself chiefly concerned, not with challenging underlying principles, but with their more effective implementation within the framework of existing agencies.

There was unanimous recognition of the need of a salary scale at Bowdoin comparable to those in the best small institutions of higher learning if we are to recruit and retain an able faculty. Indeed there is a clear need for further improvement even in institutions now having the highest salary scales. Education is too important to be entrusted to underpaid individuals. Yet the size of the salary to be received immediately and that to be achieved ultimately is not the only approach to better appointments and better teaching.

The comparative geographic isolation of Brunswick and the limited size of the various departments of instruction combine to increase the obligation of members of the Bowdoin Faculty to be each others' scholarly colleagues to an exceptional degree. In making appointments, one consideration should be the extent to which faculty members should stimulate each other and make contributions to the whole life of the academic community. Excessive "in-breeding" either from Bowdoin or from one or two graduate schools, and tame adaptability or mere facility in "fitting in" to established patterns are not likely to

produce those qualities which make for that bracing diversity of points of view so necessary to maintain the intellectual stamina and liveliness of faculty life. New appointments assume an importance that transcends the departments in which they are engaged to teach because the reputation of the College as a whole depends upon the reputation of the Faculty. Individuals considering appointment are often influenced by the eminence or at least by the more-than-local regard in which members of the Faculty are held. Such reputation is more than a departmental strength; it is a corporate asset.

Until recently, the vital business of appointments as well as promotions relied upon departmental initiative, presidential cooperation, and consultation with the "permanent" Faculty of senior professors. Now that this group has become too large to permit frank and open discussions of delicate matters of personnel, and since appointments have an important impact upon more than departmental interests, the Committee welcomes the functioning of the Advisory Committee of the Faculty. The representative character of the members of this influential body is made more certain by virtue of their election by the permanent Faculty itself, by the provision that members serve for "staggered" terms, and are not eligible to succeed themselves. Although its effectiveness will depend upon the degree of responsibility entrusted to it, and the extent to which it solicits the opinions of younger colleagues about the promise of those being considered for promotion, the recent activities of the Advisory Committee give heartening reassurance of its efficiency. Along with the newly inaugurated policy of appointed chairmen of departments, the function of the Advisory Committee should permit a more effective and more tactful handling of problems of the various departments.

The importance of making the best possible appointments is related directly to the problems attending promotion. President Hyde's remark that "the man who is dead at fifty is simply the man who was not intellectually alive at twenty-five" is apposite here. Although the College has no legally instituted

system of promotion, the administration has given its tacit approval to the expectation that instructors may normally serve in rank for no more than four years, and assistant professors for no more than six. According to the College By-Laws there is no tenure *without limit of term* for faculty members at Bowdoin, but by long-honored custom, promotion from the rank of assistant professor to that of associate professor may be considered to indicate, under the usual restrictions, a permanent appointment although not necessarily further advancement in rank. Associate professors may normally expect to serve in rank for a period of six years to be eligible for promotion to a full professorship. The Committee regrets the absence of statutory permanent tenure after a proper probationary period as is the general policy of academic institutions.

Statutory permanent tenure is an important means of preserving academic freedom. Assurances of permanent tenure constitute a part of the professor's income, psychic as well as actual. Bowdoin does not have on its academic statutes any assurance of permanence for those appointed to the highest ranks of associate and full professor; on the contrary, appointments are placed upon a three-year recurring basis. This arrangement is in marked contrast to arrangements in many institutions, Harvard for example, where appointments to the senior grades are "without term." While in practice the appointments to the ranks of associate and full professor have worked out to "permanent" tenure, the President, Dean, and departmental chairmen negotiating with individuals whom the College seeks to appoint to its Faculty are handicapped by being unable to give positive assurance of permanence. On this vital point they are compelled to act by inference or indirection, methods which, in certain circumstances, might turn out to be not only embarrassing but dangerous for the administrator and the College. As the College in the next few years seeks to assemble a stronger and more competent faculty, it may find that it cannot enlist many of the men it desires without substituting in the case of tried teachers and true

scholars, for the present ambiguous understandings, an explicit commitment to appointments without term.

Of this structure providing for advancement in rank the Committee has asked two questions: (1) Does it coincide with actual experience? and (2) Is it adequately implemented? On both counts there is an expression of some doubt. A young instructor, even though his appointment is obviously a temporary one, may become a member of the Bowdoin Faculty, not by virtue of his peculiar fitness but through the reluctance of the chairman of his department to go through the painful ordeal of dismissing a personable and adequate junior colleague, of his unwillingness to face the trying task of searching for a replacement. Moreover, it follows as the night the day, that the longer such a teacher remains, the more difficult will become the duty of reminding him that there is no "place" for him in the upper echelons, or the more likely it is that he will ultimately ascend the *gradus academicus* by default rather than by merit.

Although there is no safeguard against such instances of "backing into advancement" except by eternal vigilance and an awareness of what one is doing, an effectively implemented set of rules for promotion can do much to reduce the hazards. Here the Committee sees room for improvement both by providing for shortening the time spans in each rank for scholar-teachers of unusual promise and achievement, and by a more resolute enforcement of the tests for promotion and retention.

The tests universally adopted for advancement in rank are scholarly distinction in one's field and demonstrated teaching ability. Each of these criteria raises important questions and entails significant obligations on the part of the teacher and the College. Of the desirability of appointing promising young men whose scholarly activity will widen and deepen with the years, and whose powers as teachers will grow increasingly effective, there can, of course, be no question. Indeed, the role of scholarship in the small college of liberal arts is often misunderstood. Few would pretend that the results of much of

the currently specialized type of research can be brought into a classroom of undergraduates without arousing active irritation or aggressive indifference. Nor does the acquisition of the Ph.D. degree, which is so often required of the college teacher, indicate much about his teaching ability. Scholarly activity, however, is quite another matter and it is indispensable.

Bowdoin has never been committed to the premise that teaching is unimportant and productive research all-important, or that the number of doctors of philosophy in its Faculty is an index of its effectiveness as a college of liberal arts. In point of fact, virtually one-third of the teachers of full professorial rank listed in the current edition of the Bowdoin catalogue do not have the Ph.D. A Bowdoin appointment carries with it a devoted commitment to teaching as an art. It also entails an obligation to keep alive in one's subject by remaining abreast of the flood-tide of the conclusions of contemporary scholarship in one's field. It expects its Faculty to teach at peak efficiency by coming into contact with its peers, by measuring itself and its work by others who know and can criticize with authority. It suggests that the crystallization of a teacher's reading and thinking in published essays and books offers him a ready way of revealing his "quality" to those entrusted with appointment and promotion.

The importance of the Library in facilitating scholarly production and in enabling faculty members to keep aware of the most recent developments in their subjects is axiomatic. When Hubbard Hall was built in 1902, its ample stack-space, its provisions for study, and its resources for the purchase of books and periodicals gave Bowdoin an enviable position among the colleges of New England. The superiority of the Library often proved to be a compelling factor in inducing able men to accept appointments to our Faculty. This advantage no longer obtains at Bowdoin. The present stack-space is startlingly inadequate for the storage of books and for facilities for independent study. At present it is necessary to store twenty thousand volumes in the basement of the Chapel, and further de-

centralization of our collections will be required unless there is an early and substantial addition to the stack area of Hubbard Hall. Less apparent, but hardly less pressing, is the lack of adequate provisions for cubicles and studies for the use of students and faculty working upon scholarly projects. The encouragement to individual work given by the honors program, and the recognition of scholarly work as a criterion for advancement in faculty rank combine to make the long-planned addition to the structure of the Library an acute need. A sizable increase in library funds for books, periodicals, and binding is also of vital importance if the Library is to keep pace with the growth of the College. The usefulness of the Library has an impact upon every department of instruction and is a significant index of the stature of the entire College. Nothing less than the needed addition to Hubbard Hall and a substantial augmenting of our book funds is required if the values set forth in this Report are to be realized.

The College, in turn, might well explore further means of stimulating scholarship in its Faculty, means beyond the hospitality and encouragement it has customarily shown. The benefits of the system whereby the College is statutorily required to offer sabbatical leaves might be implemented by *requiring* promising teachers, prone to see objections to leaving Brunswick, to take sabbaticals regularly. Additions to our commendable Faculty Research Fund might well be "a need of the College," listed among others in the annual Report of the President. The present deficiency of such funds at Bowdoin was recently noted by the Reaccreditation Board of the New England Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. Since there are few ways of bringing the research of faculty members to the attention of others, perhaps the precedent of the lectures on the Tallman Foundation should be extended to give all faculty members the opportunity to show their colleagues and the whole college community what they are doing and how they are doing it. Alert members of the Faculty would welcome such opportunity to present work of their particular interest and

original hypotheses or conclusions drawn from their own study and research to their colleagues and students. The public lectures given last year under the aegis of the Student Curriculum committee which attracted large audiences of undergraduates as well as members of the Faculty may be a harbinger of the popular success of this proposal.

Although the College By-Law specifically authorizes sabbaticals for "professors," the administration has in practice been able to obtain them for competent men with significant projects in other ranks. Since sabbaticals are granted for the good of the College, they would probably always be confined to those with the presumption of permanent tenure. Yet assistant professors and instructors, beginning their scholarly careers, are in peculiar need of assistance. Fundamental here is the payment of such salaries as will enable younger men to avoid the necessity of teaching in summer school, or of doing private tutoring, or engaging in forms of summer employment less related to their professional careers. Junior members of the Faculty who can submit proposals of scholarly worth should also be eligible for leaves of absence financed at least in part by college funds. If the College is to insist upon scholarly work as a test of fitness, it should generously facilitate such work.

Scholarly achievement takes time; to be fruitful, that time must be uninterrupted. Since the Bowdoin teaching structure makes possible days free of classes, it should be so administered that promising scholar-teachers have these opportunities. From the point of view of scholarship during the college year, the average teaching load might not seem like an excessive burden. Nonetheless, the reduction of the load to one course or the classroom or conference hours to nine, a maximum prevalent in at least one of the state universities in New England, might well be adopted and lead to more than a proportionate increase in scholarly activities by the Faculty. Greater use of secretarial assistance or of laboratory assistants in greater numbers will also free faculty members from many routine administrative and pedagogical tasks.

Even the most cursory glance through the returned alumni questionnaires will reveal that the sons of the College like to regard great teaching as the chief distinction of their *alma mater.* That such distinction must be maintained is axiomatic; but the problem of testing teaching ability is a thorny one. On this subject the Committee wishes to avoid all dogmatism of definition. It is difficult to determine good teaching because it is difficult to measure the effects of teaching. Moreover, teaching methods are relative; what is good for one teacher is bad for another. The Committee believes that there is such a substantive thing as good or bad teaching, but that it has to be seen to be recognized. The testimony of the alumni questionnaires, representing generations of "the taught," reinforces this earth-bound generalization.

How is that good teaching to be recognized? Certainly not by personality traits revealed outside the classroom. Those who seem socially mousy often take fire before a class of undergraduates, while charming social companions have been known to inspire only sleep in a classroom. Student opinion is equally untrustworthy because such judgment is short-run judgment, and a course or a teacher often appears in quite a different light from the perspective of maturity. Upon this topic the alumni questionnaires are eloquent.

The solution of these dilemmas would seem to be the observation and evaluation of classroom performance by those responsible for appointments and promotions. No responsible group feels that this is an invasion of academic freedom. On the contrary, in the large introductory courses at Bowdoin, professors and instructors already sit in on each others' lectures. Since these are precisely the departments of instruction in which young instructors are most frequently engaged, they offer peculiar advantages to an inexperienced instructor seeking to learn the art of teaching in an environment of friendliness and freedom. Such advantages could be enhanced by a wider and more conscious utilization of methods now employed on our campus. Moreover, this could be achieved without encroachment on the freedom of the classroom and without resorting to

elaborate institutionalization. These natural and informal arrangements of visitation should be applied where they do not presently operate. To be wholly fair they should not be applied to instruction conducted in small groups where the presence of an outsider might prove awkward, and they would have to be frequent rather than occasional because one class exercise is not a broad enough base for judgment, and the "menacing" character of such evaluation evaporates if it becomes customary. The process here recommended would usually take place only during the probationary period.* Thus we may regard the four years of the instructor's rank as probationary. It is in these years that those concerned with promotion should appraise the promise and performance of individual teachers.

Although the Committee lacks the omniscience to prescribe correct methods of teaching, it believes that the conservative tradition in education implies a preference for and an emphasis upon active participation by students as individuals in their own learning process. Happily, the Bowdoin pattern strives toward this goal. There are few all-lecture courses. The most common format includes a combination of lectures and small conference groups. Recitations and laboratory work are the devices used in instruction in the languages and sciences; the "lecture-discussion," a teaching method with a wide spectrum of meaning, is also employed. Nearly all members of the Faculty wish that they might do more work with individual students: supervised papers or projects, reports, seminars. Nearly all wish that the groups they now teach might be smaller, notably in English, modern languages, mathematics, and psychology. They also prefer the possibility of creating special sections of students on the basis of superior ability and training. The goal of more personal instruction is usually expressed in the desire: "I wish to do better what I am doing now." The

*The proposal regarding classroom visitation was not endorsed by the Faculty. It recommended "close cooperation and mutual assistance."

attainment of this goal would seem to involve no change in the physical plant — with the palpable and grievous exception of Hubbard Hall — but an increase in personnel so that the work may be shared more effectively in the interest of the student. Realization of the ideal will also be brought closer if the College resolves to use the prospective increase in the number of candidates for admission as a means of exercising greater selectivity, of "playing the bulge for quality" rather than of enlarging the student body and further diluting the individualistic and personal character of our teaching methods.

The oft-repeated desire "to do better what I am doing now" is also echoed in many of the suggestions in this part of the Report on the validity of the conservative tradition in education at Bowdoin. Thus in considering ways to recruit an able Faculty, to test their fitness as scholars and teachers during their probationary period, to encourage their scholarly interests and — after their promise has been determined — to provide for them an invigorating intellectual environment in which they will enlist in support of the whole program of the College, the Committee recommends an intensification and an extension of those methods already in use. With its emphasis upon the primacy of "the teacher and the taught," the conservative tradition remains a sound tradition. It also remains a vital tradition in its eagerness to welcome whatever changes and improvements are needed to further the values it is dedicated to conserve.