

This dissertation has been
microfilmed exactly as received 66-11,785

BALE, Jr., John Thomas, 1929-
THE BELIEFS ABOUT SECONDARY SCHOOL
BUSINESS EDUCATION HELD BY FREDERICK
G. NICHOLS.

The University of Oklahoma, Ed.D., 1966
Education, general

University Microfilms, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan

Copyright By
JOHN THOMAS BALE, JR.
1966

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

THE BELIEFS ABOUT SECONDARY SCHOOL BUSINESS EDUCATION

HELD BY FREDERICK G. NICHOLS

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

BY

JOHN THOMAS BALE, JR.

Norman, Oklahoma

1966

THE BELIEFS ABOUT SECONDARY SCHOOL BUSINESS EDUCATION

HELD BY FREDERICK G. NICHOLS

APPROVED BY

Serald A. Foster
Anthony D. Lisi
Paul King
Raymond H. White

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many persons have provided encouragement and assistance to this writer in the preparation of this dissertation. The following named persons have been particularly helpful.

Special appreciation is extended to Dr. Gerald A. Porter who served as the writer's Major Professor. Dr. Porter encouraged, counseled, prodded, and exhorted the writer at appropriate times during the writing of this report. Many hours of Dr. Porter's time were unselfishly given in reading the original manuscript and in making recommendations on needed changes and improvements.

Dr. Anthony S. Lis, Dr. Raymond R. White and Dr. Paul Unger served on the writer's reading committee. All three members were instrumental in the early stages of this report in encouraging the writer to make such a study and in helping to formulate an idea of what content the report should consist. Appreciation is also extended to Drs. Lis, White, and Unger for their perusing the reading copy and making valuable suggestions and criticisms.

The members of the Business Department at Southeastern State College deserve acknowledgment for their tolerance of this writer during the writing of this report. Special thanks is extended to Dr. A. E. Shearer for authorizing that the writer be allowed advantageous scheduling arrangements.

Finally, the writer's family has contributed much to the preparation of this dissertation. Mike, 14, and Karen, 10, have had to restrain their natural boisterousness somewhat so the writer could concentrate and study. The writer's wife, Beverly, has served as reader, critic, typist, and "sounding board" throughout the preparation of this report. Her knowledge of the contents of this dissertation is probably equal by now to that of the writer.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. THE PROBLEM	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Delimitations.	2
Sources of Data.	2
Procedure.	3
II. BACKGROUND FOR THIS STUDY	4
Related Literature	4
Biographical Sketch.	7
Personal Data	7
Professional Data	9
III. NATURE AND PURPOSES OF BUSINESS EDUCATION	15
Definition of Business Education	15
Philosophy of Business Education	19
Objectives of Business Education	21
Junior-Period Objectives.	22
Senior-Period Objectives.	24
Business Education and General Education	28
Business Education and Vocational Education.	31
Business Education in the Secondary School	33
Business Education Beyond the Secondary School	40
Evening School.	41
In Service.	42
College and Junior College.	44
Independent Business School	46
IV. CONDITIONS NECESSARY FOR EFFECTIVE BUSINESS EDUCATION . . .	48
Organization of Business Education	48
Administration.	49
Supervision	53
Departmentalization	56
Guidance and Placement in Business Education	61

Personnel in Business Education.	72
The Business Student.	72
The Business Teacher.	74
Teacher Preparation in Business Education.	81
Work Experience.	86
Federal Aid.	91
Research	94
Accreditation.	111
Professional Associations.	113
V. INSTRUCTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS IN BUSINESS EDUCATION.	122
Curriculum in Business Education	122
Fundamental Concerns.	123
Specialization.	124
Articulation.	126
Core Curriculum	127
Subject Matter of Business Education	134
General Background Subjects	135
Background Business Subjects.	141
Economic geography	144
Business organization and management	144
Salesmanship	144
Advertising.	144
Economics.	145
Business law	145
Technical Subjects.	146
Typewriting.	149
Shorthand and transcription.	152
Bookkeeping.	156
Office practice.	157
Business arithmetic.	161
Business English	162
Distributive education	163
Methods of Teaching Business	174
Standards in Business Education.	179
VI. SUMMARY	184
Restatement of Problem	184
Results of This Investigation.	185
Resume of Nichols' Beliefs Concerning Business	
Education	185
Conclusion	194
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY.	196

THE BELIEFS ABOUT SECONDARY SCHOOL BUSINESS EDUCATION

HELD BY FREDERICK G. NICHOLS

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Business education in the public schools of the United States received little recognition until after the beginning of the twentieth century. After 1900, increased attention was given to business education as a course of study. The change in attitude held by educators came about because of pressures of business interests and in a large measure because of the work of Frederick George Nichols.

As business education's foremost pioneer, Nichols served as America's first city director of business education, as the first state supervisor, and as the first Federal representative of business education. His contributions as a thinker, speaker, teacher, writer, and leader to his chosen profession were widespread. Some recognition of his influence was formally made in 1953 when he received the first John Robert Gregg Award in Business Education.

Frederick George Nichols, who has been called the "father of modern business education," should be the object of a systematic, organized research study. This research report seeks to accomplish this task by concentrating on his numerous writings about business education.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to analyze selected writings of Frederick George Nichols so that his philosophy of business education in the secondary school could be made applicable to contemporary problems in business education. The investigation was designed to show how those beliefs reflected the times in which Nichols lived, how they anticipated the future, how they changed over the years, and how they correspond to contemporary business education thought.

Delimitations

This study was concerned with the philosophies and beliefs about secondary school business education of one man--Frederick George Nichols. Only those beliefs that could be either verified or substantiated from Nichols' own writings from 1900 to 1954, the year of his death, were considered.

Sources of Data

The data for this study were obtained wholly from library sources. Considerable literature written by Nichols was available for study on the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University campuses. Additional literature that was pertinent to the study was sought and secured from other libraries.

Nichols' books were analyzed, and his contributions to yearbooks and other miscellaneous periodicals were sought out and surveyed. Special emphasis was given to his writings in business education periodicals such as the Journal of Business Education, Business Education Forum, Modern Business Education, National Business Education Quarterly, American Business Education, and Business Education World.

Procedure

In completing this study, the following procedural steps were taken:

1. Background information about Nichols' life and work was gathered--primarily from the literature--to provide material for the biographical sketch which constitutes most of Chapter II.

2. A working bibliography of the writings of Frederick George Nichols was compiled. The Business Education Index, the Cumulative Book Index, the United States Catalog, bibliographies of related studies, and the Education Index were the major sources from which this compilation was drawn.

3. The literature was searched for information relating to a diversity of business education topics that included:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a. Academic education | m. Methodology |
| b. Accreditation | n. Personality traits |
| c. Administration and supervision | o. Personnel |
| d. Aims and objectives | p. Philosophy of Business Education |
| e. Articulation | q. Production standards |
| f. Associations | r. Research |
| g. Curriculum | s. Specialization |
| h. Departmentalization | t. Subject matter areas |
| i. Ethics | u. Teacher education |
| j. Federal aid | v. Testing and grading |
| k. Grouping and pupil selection | w. Vocational education |
| l. Guidance and placement | x. Work experience |

4. The diverse beliefs and thoughts of Nichols were brought together into a body of information that was appropriately classified and summarized. Finally, currently appropriate major ideas and supporting understandings were developed.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND FOR THIS STUDY

Related Literature

Nichols' influence in business education encompassed a period of over fifty years. As one might suspect, numerous articles and several major works have been devoted to him and his life. An extensive effort was made to peruse such references, and the more pertinent literature related to this study is discussed on the following pages.

Several articles and research efforts concerning Nichols were mostly biographical in nature. Fraide, in 1940, studied the lives of 36 business educators. Nichols was one of the leaders included in this study. She prepared biographical sketches of each person studied and reported on the various qualities and characteristics exhibited by these leaders.¹

In 1948, Parrott included, among 44 others, a two-page biographical outline on Nichols. She sought to determine what factors of a biographical nature tended to identify one as a leader in business education.²

¹Carmen Fraide, "Biographical Sketches of Selected Leaders in Business Education," (Unpublished Master's dissertation, Department of Education, University of Southern California, 1941), pp. 94-98.

²Sara Cason Parrott, "A Biographical Analysis of Leaders in Business Education," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of Education, University of Tennessee, 1948), pp. 88-89.

After Nichols' death in 1954, Polishook reviewed many of Nichols' experiences and accomplishments. He particularly emphasized Nichols' role as a teacher.¹ In addition, a series of articles in The Delta Pi Epsilon Journal paid tribute to Nichols and evaluated somewhat his varied career. The first article gave a panoramic view of his career from his entry into high school until his death.² Lomax revealed how Nichols exerted leadership in business education at state and national levels.³ One of Nichols' students appropriately wrote the third article dealing with Nichols experience as a teacher.⁴ Fisk referred to and listed many of Nichols' numerous contributions to business education literature and research.⁵ The final article in The Delta Pi Epsilon Journal series attempted to show critically how Nichols reflected the times in which he lived so as to reveal ". . . to us how far we have come."⁶

Four other more formal studies concerning Nichols' impact on business education merit consideration. In 1939, Head wrote a master's thesis devoted to Nichols' philosophy of business education up to that

¹William M. Polishook, "Frederick George Nichols, March 18, 1878--June 1, 1954," The Journal of Business Education, XXX (October, 1954), pp. 7, 33-34.

²Fred C. Archer, "The Frederick G. Nichols Story, Part I," The Delta Pi Epsilon Journal, III (July, 1961), pp. 1-8.

³Paul S. Lomax, "The Frederick G. Nichols Story, Part II: Leadership at the Federal and State Levels," The Delta Pi Epsilon Journal, IV (November, 1961), pp. 16-22.

⁴William M. Polishook, "The Frederick G. Nichols Story, Part III: A Profile of the Teacher," The Delta Pi Epsilon Journal, IV (February, 1962), pp. 25-32.

⁵McKee Fisk, "The Frederick G. Nichols Story, Part IV: His Writings and Research," The Delta Pi Epsilon Journal, IV (May, 1962), pp. 12-22.

⁶Herbert A. Tonne, "The Frederick G. Nichols Story, Part V: An Image of His Times," The Delta Pi Epsilon Journal, IV (July, 1962), pp. 19-24.

time.¹ Reed, in 1941, attempted to ascertain the philosophic views of certain business educators concerning the aims and curricula of business education. Nichols' views, along with those of 9 others, were frequently cited on these two topics throughout the study.² Another master's thesis written by Eberhart at San Francisco State College dealt with Nichols' influence on business education. In that study, biographical data were listed in outline form. A thirty-page section was devoted to Nichols' educational philosophy. Also, an excellent bibliography of Nichols' writings up to 1951 was included.³

In a more recent dissertation, Anderson reported on Nichols' contributions to business education. Nichols' contributions were assessed under the headings of "The Early Years," "The Harvard Years," "The Later Years," and "General Work."⁴ Having reviewed the more important related literature that served as a background for this study, it was found that the emphasis in this study differs from these writings in that the philosophy which emanates from the life of Nichols can be made applicable as a guideline for contemporary business education.

¹Rena Head, "Frederick G. Nichols' Philosophy of Secondary Commercial Education," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of Business Education, Oklahoma State University, 1939), pp. 1-118.

²William David Keith Reid, "Philosophic Views of Leaders in Business Education Concerning Aims and Curricula," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of Education, University of Southern California, 1941), pp. 1-105.

³R. F. Eberhart "The Influence of Frederick G. Nichols On Business Education," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of Education, San Francisco State College, 1951), pp. 1-91.

⁴Roy E. Anderson, "Contributions of Frederick G. Nichols to the Field of Business Education," (Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, School of Education, Stanford University, 1963), pp. 1-289.

Biographical Sketch

This writer feels that one will be able to appreciate better the various beliefs of Nichols that are set forth in this study if he has some knowledge about Nichols' personal and professional history. No attempt will be made to provide a complete biography as more detailed and comprehensive information of this nature may be obtained by interested persons from the studies mentioned in the preceding section.

Personal Data

Frederick George Nichols was born in Avon, New York, to George William and Ella (Fitzpatrick) Nichols on March 18, 1878. In 1899, he married Bessie L. Winans. In 1900, a daughter was born to the Nichols. This proved to be the Nichols only child. She died at the age of 12. Nichols' wife, Bessie Nichols, died in November, 1951. In 1952, Nichols married the former Mable Evarts of Rochester. Frederick G. Nichols died of a heart attack on June 1, 1954.

Of Nichols' personal life, it has been reported that he found time to participate in various forms of recreational and creative activity. Nichols enjoyed playing contract bridge, and he and Mrs. Nichols frequently entertained friends at the Nichols' residence. He was also very much interested in politics and sports. As to politics, it is said he could see only the side he chose to espouse. In sports, Nichols played baseball as a youth and was a particularly avid fan of the Boston Red Sox baseball team.¹

¹Polishook, The Journal of Business Education, XXX (October, 1954), pp. 7-34.

Nichols set high standards of character for those who would participate in either personal or business activity. He frequently noted the need for ethical instruction in all classes to counteract what he considered to be evil practices in business and society. One example of his stand on such matters is revealed in a statement he prepared for the Journal of Business Education.

There can be no doubt about the fact that a desire to get something for nothing is spreading rapidly among our people. Beano games sponsored by churches are beyond my comprehension. That some members of legislative bodies should propose to finance government through lotteries is not surprising, since all kinds of people are elected to legislatures, but that such a proposal should come so near meeting with success in many legislative halls is cause for most serious thinking on the part of those who believe that gambling is one of the most serious social evils that we have to face.¹

As has been inferred previously, Nichols was not one to "sit on the fence" about either politics, sports, or social practice. If he had views on a subject, and he usually did, he was not reticent about making such views known. This same carefully studied, almost dogmatic attitude towards a particular point will also be recognized later as Nichols' beliefs about business education are presented. Nichols was aware of his tendency to be somewhat abrupt, critical, and frank in appraising subjects of interest to him. He said that ". . . I have been a severe critic of what I believe to be bad in business education. . . I have never feared to call a spade a spade."²

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, More Power to You, Prof. Selby," The Journal of Business Education, XVII (May, 1942), p. 9.

²F. G. Nichols, "Professor Nichols Receives Gregg Award," The Business Teacher, XXI (March, 1954), p. 30.

Professional Data

In reviewing Nichols professional experiences, it seems well to look at his formal education accomplishments. After receiving his early educational instruction in a country schoolhouse, Nichols attended Avon (N.Y.) High School for two years starting in 1894. As a result of his accidentally receiving a private business school catalog, Nichols decided not to return to high school. Instead, he enrolled in the Rochester Business University. He left this private business school before completing his course of study to accept employment as a bookkeeper in a brewery. Due to family objections, this job lasted one week, and Nichols returned to the farm for the rest of that spring and summer. In the fall, Nichols enrolled at Genesee Wesleyan Seminary where he pursued a general curriculum. After graduating from this institution, Nichols returned to Rochester Business University and completed requirements for graduation. The other formalized education preparation of Nichols consisted of reading law for 3 years in a Rochester, New York, law firm and attending a summer term at the University of Michigan Law School. In 1942, Harvard conferred upon Nichols the honorary degree of Master of Arts.¹

The above account of Nichols' formal educational background seems to be limited indeed for one who became a member of the faculty of Harvard University. However, Nichols brought with him to Harvard a rich background of actual experience in his field. Nichols' varied activities and experiences provided him with a type of self education that served him well as his career unfolded. He expressed concern in his lifetime that business students should also recognize that their formal education was

¹Archer, The Delta Pi Epsilon Journal, III (July, 1961), pp. 1-2.

primarily designed to help them benefit from lessons that they would encounter in life. Nichols appeared to have "practiced what he preached" in this respect as he certainly learned and profited from the lessons life presented to him.

Nichols held many different positions of employment and service during his career. He began teaching as an assistant at Rochester Business University. Thereafter, he taught at his alma mater, Genesee Wesleyan Seminary and headed business departments in Pittsburgh's Martin School and Schenectady's public secondary school. In addition to lecturing at various colleges from time to time, he taught professional business education courses from 1922 to 1944 in the Harvard University Education Department. In addition to teaching at Harvard, Nichols was on the doctorate committee, was secretary to the faculty, was chairman of the admissions committee of the Graduate School of Education, and was chairman of the scholarship committee.

Like much of anyone's experience, Nichols' teaching was viewed variously by those he taught. Most of his students agreed he worked hard at his teaching assignment and also expected a great deal from them. They report that he gave little time to student-teacher discourses. Rather, he spent most of his time lecturing and expected back on examinations what he had taught. Some reported that he was the best teacher that they ever knew.¹ It is said that other students ". . . could not take the presentation which was given to them."²

¹Polishook, The Delta Pi Epsilon Journal, IV (February, 1962), pp. 25-32.

²Tonne, The Delta Pi Epsilon Journal, IV (July, 1962), p. 21.

There were other positions of employment of an educational nature that Nichols held. He was the first city director of business education, the first State supervisor of business education, and the first assistant director of business education with the Federal Board for Vocational Education. After retiring from Harvard, Nichols served as director of research for Business Education Research Associates. He wrote a variety of reports about and for private business schools during his association with this agency.

While a teacher and administrator in the above positions, other duties of responsibility and honor were bestowed upon Nichols. He contributed much to professional business education associations. He served as president of the National Business Teacher-Training Institutions Association, of the National Council for Business Education of the Eastern Commercial Teachers Association, and of the Business Education Department of the National Education Association.

As a writer, Nichols' contributions to business education were voluminous. He wrote many letters, periodicals, bulletins, and books. Critics differ in their evaluation of the quality of his writing. Many commentators express high praise for his work. Several persons noted that his book, Commercial Education in the High School, was listed as one of the sixty best books in the field of education in 1933.¹ Another writer referred to the same book as ". . . primarily a diatribe against some of his pet peeves, . . ." ² All who have studied Nichols' writings, however,

¹Polishook, The Journal of Business Education, XXX (October, 1954), p. 33.

²Tonne, The Delta Pi Epsilon Journal, IV (July, 1962), p. 21.

seem to agree that they were numerous, challenging, critical, and usually interesting. Nichols' column in The Journal of Business Education was probably his most popular contribution. Under the title of "Criticism, Comment and Challenge," Nichols expounded for almost a quarter of a century upon the current issues and problems that were confronting business educators in his day. Except for several short layoffs, Nichols wrote his monthly Criticism, Comment and Challenge column from 1932 to 1954. Ten years after he began the CCC Column, Nichols restated its objective as follows:

Seriously, I undertook this task, for it really is one, in the belief that good, in many forms, might come from a somewhat critical appraisal of some of the articles, bulletins, leaflets, speeches, yearbooks, etc., that often seem superficial and misleading to say the least. This is a thankless task. Perhaps it is an unnecessary one.

.
But believe me when I say that there is never a trace of ill will behind my criticisms. If you who read this page, especially my younger readers, are stimulated to think your way through problems touched upon, my efforts in your behalf will not have been in vain.¹

One source reported that Nichols served either as author or co-author for 26 books, that he was consulting editor on 27 other books, and that he either wrote or edited more than 50 bulletins that pertained to business education. This same source noted that Nichols wrote over 400 articles for various magazines, yearbooks, proceedings, and symposia.² He also contributed to the editing and writing of the currently termed National Business Entrance Tests and the NBEA Typewriting Tests. Many of his writings dealt with research that he had either conducted or reviewed.

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, A Decade," The Journal of Business Education, XVIII (November, 1942), p. 9.

²Fisk, The Delta Pi Epsilon Journal, IV (May, 1962), pp. 14-16.

Despite the fact that Nichols was forceful and seemed to want his own way, there appeared to be an humble side to him also. He recognized that the times "had been good" to him and that others had been instrumental in helping him to achieve his success. In acknowledging his honor of being the first to receive the John Robert Gregg Award, Nichols said:

No man or woman can accomplish much in any field of endeavor unaided by his associates directly and by his contemporaries indirectly. Nor is it fair to attribute to any man or woman credit for achievements that only competent teamwork could bring about.

.....
 Surely I have been luckier than others, in that I have had unusual opportunities for service in the leadership positions that I have held. But, as must all men who devote their lives to any worthwhile field of service, I feel that I have accomplished little in comparison with my hopes at the outset of my career.¹

As one can perceive from this abbreviated, biographical sketch, Nichols' activities and accomplishments were not only numerous but also varied. He was, at various times, a researcher, a teacher, an administrator, a lecturer, an editor, an author, a consultant, and a critic. A wealth of experience backed up his statements and writings. To some, he was a "gadfly" and an "irritant." To others, he was an inspirational leader to be admired, followed, and emulated. To some, he was able to exert influence on business education primarily because the times in which he lived represented a period of pioneer development in business education. Others were convinced Nichols would have been equally influential regardless of the times in which he lived. But regardless of one's viewpoint as to why Nichols was effective, he was influential. The remainder of this report presents in an informal way Nichols' beliefs about business education.

¹Nichols, The Business Teacher, XXXI (March, 1954), pp. 9, 30.

His conception about the various facets of this area of education are discussed. In the final chapter, Nichols beliefs are summarized in outline form so as to aid in evaluating their past and present applicability and to enhance their usability.

CHAPTER III

NATURE AND PURPOSES OF BUSINESS EDUCATION

During the time that Nichols was writing about education and business education, 1900 to 1954, many important developments and changes were taking place in the nation and in the world. During this period, the Seven Cardinal Principles of Education were presented; the Smith-Hughes Federal Vocational Act was passed; vocational education became firmly established alongside traditional academic subjects; mental discipline as an objective of education became suspect; big business came into its own; and the nation and the world fought two catastrophic world wars and suffered through a severe economic depression. These happenings depict to some extent the nature of the times in which Nichols lived, worked, and developed his philosophies and objectives about his chosen field of work--business education. Also, these happenings necessarily influenced the manner in which Nichols viewed business education. His views on the nature of business education and its purposes will be presented in this chapter.

Definition of Business Education

A definition of business education must be general enough to include fundamental principles and concepts that will abide in spite of social and economic changes. It must consider the dynamic nature of

social and economic conditions and so avoid particularities as to aims, content, and method. It must, however, be specific enough to be of help in the implementation of programs of business preparation to meet the needs of individuals. Nichols believed that he provided for both generality and specificity when he defined business education as follows:

Commercial [business] education is a type of training which, while playing its part in the achievement of the general aims of education on any given level, has for its primary objective the preparation of people to enter upon a business career, or having entered upon such a career, to render more efficient service therein and to advance from their present levels of employment to higher levels.¹

At the time Nichols formulated the above definition, 1933, the educational climate was relatively favorable to growth in business education. There was widespread recognition of individual differences, of the need for more than single academic and single vocational curriculums, and of the need for motivation to promote effective school performance. The increased complexity of business required schools to offer instruction in knowledges and skills previously learned on the job. The increased enrollments in public schools, resulting in a more heterogeneous school population, required more extensive public school programs. Nichols believed business education could help solve these existing problems.

Nichols viewed business education as a comprehensive term covering:

. . . incomplete as well as complete commercial training programs; extension or 'pusher' types of training as well as preparatory types; part-time as well as full-time courses; training on the job as well as in school, essential background training as well as occupational skill training.²

¹F. G. Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1933), p. 51.

²Ibid., p. 45.

He did not restrict business education to any one school or age level, but included preparation from the junior high school grades through university graduate level.

From the earliest secondary school grades to the university graduate level, business education is an important type of training.

.....
 In its simpler forms it should play a part in early educational guidance in the junior high school.¹

There are educators today who argue that business education begins in the home at a very early age, is extended in elementary and secondary schools, and continues throughout life. Nichols agreed that business education is never terminated. He believed much learning about business was gained during employment and in various other ways throughout an individual's life.² However, he referred to formal business education below the secondary school level as follows: "There is no type of business education as such that is appropriate for elementary schools."³

The term "business education" is properly applied to the whole field of business preparation, but needs qualification when reference is made to only a part of the field. Certain schools, such as the evening school, the continuation school, the opportunity school, and so forth, can give a limited amount of business education, but cannot be held responsible for all phases of it.⁴ In other words, business education encompasses almost any kind of business preparation; but all of the values claimed for it are not achieved by all kinds of business education groups.

¹Ibid., pp. 53-54.

²Ibid., p. 48.

³F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, No Such Thing as Vocational Education," The Journal of Business Education, VIII (March, 1933), p. 18.

⁴Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, p. 55.

Business education was also considered by Nichols to be comprehensive to the extent that he did not view it as either a single subject or as a group of subjects offered as a curriculum such as stenography or bookkeeping. It includes all of these types of education and more. It is a program of studies that cuts across all the major subject fields.¹ Business education may include so-called "general education" when it can contribute to the preparation of one for a business occupation. Although it isolates one vocational field, business education is not confined either to the development of occupational skills or to the provision of general business knowledge. It represents a complete program of study to be chosen by students on an elective basis.²

It is apparent that Nichols believed that business education should contribute to the general education of all students, should prepare many of them for certain initial jobs, should aid in increasing occupational efficiency, and should help one gain promotions to higher levels of employment. For a particular subject to be business education at any of the levels referred to, however, one would need to determine why an individual was taking a particular subject. If his reason for taking the subject was to aid him in getting a business job or in aiding him in his present job, it would be classed as business education whether it was a foreign language or bookkeeping. For a particular student, therefore, all subjects taken by him above the elementary school level could be considered as

¹F. G. Nichols, "Outlook For Commercial Education," National Education Association Proceedings, LX (1922), p. 1311.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Statistics," The Journal of Business Education, XV (February, 1940), p. 9.

business education since the reason for taking a subject determines whether or not it falls into a particular category. There can be no business education when subjects are considered independently of specific situations.¹

Nichols was quick to agree that business education is not all that it should be in meeting the demands of our rapidly changing social order. He seemed to recognize readily what those in business education could and should do to insure that business education meet the challenges before it.

If it [business education] is to become more responsive to the needs of society, the individual, and the economic service called business, its sponsors must ponder its problems well; teachers of commercial subjects must think in terms of the field as a whole and not solely in terms of the particular subjects with which they are concerned; and students in commercial teacher-training institutions must not be allowed to become subject specialists who are without understanding of the larger aspects of the field for which they are preparing.²

Philosophy of Business Education

Nichols was asked in 1936 to express what he considered to be a "sound philosophy of business education." He said his philosophy was a ". . . common-sense view of business education."³ Many of the statements he presented at that time are still applicable today.

Nichols believed that business education is an essential part of any complete educational program. He believed that there is need to provide both vocational preparation and consumer education through business

¹Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, p. 52.

²Ibid., p. ix.

³F. G. Nichols, "What is a Sound Philosophy of Business Education?" Business Education World, XVI (February, 1936), p. 443.

courses, that students enrolled in vocational business programs should possess suitable characteristics, and that teacher-training institutions should select trainees carefully and lead the way in promoting better business education. He also maintained that business education should be based on clearly defined objectives, that instructional materials and methods should keep pace with objectives, and that the results of instruction should be efficiently measured and evaluated.

It was in 1936 that Nichols wrote most concisely and specifically about his overall philosophy of business education. His major beliefs in this regard were stated in 10 short paragraphs as follows:

Business education is an essential part of any complete program of . . . education.

The consumer's needs, as well as those of the producer, must be considered.

The interests of neither consumer nor producer will be conserved by attempting to make a single curriculum suffice for both.

There must be a clear recognition of the fact that those who are accepted for vocational business training must possess certain aptitudes, interests, and abilities, and that those who are not potentially trainable for, and placeable in, commercial jobs should be denied entrance into specifically vocational-training programs of study.

There must be recognition of the need for a more careful selection of teacher-training students to the end that more teachers may become available who are capable of seeing to it that business education keeps pace with economic, social, and civic developments;

Teacher-training institutions must cease to follow demand when it takes the wrong direction. They should step outside the vicious cycle . . . and straighten it out into a line of progress toward better types of business education.

Objectives should be redefined in the light of modern developments in education, industry, and commerce to insure that truly functioning types of business training, if any, shall be given in our public-school programs.

Instructional materials and methods must keep pace with objectives if desired results are to be achieved.

Results of instruction must be measured more efficiently and convincingly through the use of new testing devices, careful placement of graduates, and follow-up work to determine the degree of success achieved and the shortcomings which are revealed in their work on the job.

Finally, as commercial educators, we must abandon the practice of seeking alibis for our failures, confess weaknesses as they are revealed to us, or discovered by us, and address ourselves to the task of placing our work on a level where alibis will no longer be needed.¹

Objectives of Business Education

Unless one knows where he is going, his search for a suitable destination is sure to be aimless and inefficient. Likewise, a field of education without obtainable objectives cannot make satisfactory progress or perform its functions in an optimum manner. Nichols, numerous times, wrote about the need for business education organization and instruction to be based on sound, stated objectives.

No education can be effective without definitely determined objectives, hence it is important that the objectives of commercial education in a secondary school be established before proceeding to set up a program of business training for such a school. Those who teach commercial subjects, or participate in the organization, administration, or supervision of them, should determine upon definite objectives and proceed to teach so as to achieve them.²

Nichols believed that business education objectives should insure that consumer education be provided for all students and that vocational or producer education be available for selected qualified students.³ He also maintained that objectives of business education should be dual in nature--vocational and prevocational. Objectives should be determined for both prevocational and vocational periods. According to Nichols, grades 7, 8, and 9 or grades 9 and 10, depending on a school's organization plan, constitute the prevocational or "junior period." For secondary

¹F. G. Nichols, "What is a Sound Philosophy of Business Education?" The Business Education World, XVI (June, 1936), p. 766.

²Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, p. 194.

³Nichols, The Business Education World, XVI (February, 1936), p. 219.

schools, grades 10, 11, and 12 or grades 11 and 12 make up the vocational or "senior period,"¹

Certain objectives are applicable to both periods. The major objectives of the prevocational period will be mentioned first. Then, in addition to citing the vocational-period objectives, the manner in which the objectives of the two periods overlap will be discussed.

Junior-Period Objectives

The prevocational or junior-period objectives of business education should be consumer rather than producer oriented. Business education should:

1. Provide try-out and exploratory experiences through some basic consumer-education course for all students. Students should come to better understand their aptitudes, interests, and abilities. This understanding will be useful when making later vocational and educational choices.²

2. Develop skills and understandings necessary to economic living through a basic consumer business education course for all students. These skills and understandings can be further developed for those students who choose to take courses primarily designed to lay a foundation for further study in business.³

Consumer education, according to Nichols, consists of more than economic education.

¹Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, p. 219.

²F. G. Nichols, "Desirable Outcomes of Teaching Business Subjects," National Business Education Outlook, Third Yearbook of the National Commercial Teachers Federation, (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Ann Arbor Press, 1937), p. 19.

³Ibid.

Some, but not all, consumer education is economic: that which is designed to make one economically efficient--able to play his proper part in the economic life of his community both as a worker and as a voter on issues which concern the economic life of the community. This aspect of consumer education is further divisible into two parts, the first having to do with one's social obligations and problems and the other with one's personal economic problems. . . . It is this latter kind of economic education which may be properly called consumer business education . . .¹

In other words, consumer business education is economic education that emphasizes personal economic problems.

Nichols believed that at both levels, junior and senior, business education should aid as much as possible in the achievement of the following commonly stated nonvocational objectives of education: health, worthy home membership, civic education, command of fundamental processes, worthy use of leisure, and ethical character.² The second objective of the junior period, consumer business education for all, is particularly suited to furthering the non-vocational aims just cited. Nichols believed that economic education is important to the achievement of all other objectives of education.

. . . it should be apparent to all that no phase of human life is, or can be, wholly divorced from considerations of economic possibility and expediency. In spite of anything we can do about it, we live economic lives, and the richness or leanness of our lives will depend in no small measure on our individual economic self-sufficiency, which, in turn, depends on our knowledge of, and ability to put into practice, sound economic principles.

Hence the one great need of every individual is economic education in the truest sense . . .³

¹F. G. Nichols, "Business Education--Clerical and Distributive," Forty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I (Bloomington: Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1943), p. 227.

²Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, p. 240.

³Nichols, The Business Education World, XVI (February, 1936), p. 445.

Nichols did not believe that business educators were alone responsible for achieving the nonvocational objectives previously listed. Those objectives are the responsibility of all teachers. Neither did he believe that they alone were responsible for providing all of the consumer education needs of students. He did believe that business teachers, more than other teachers, have the background necessary for developing and teaching courses designed to prepare students for sound economic living.¹

Nichols wrote harshly of business educators who claimed that their vocational business education courses were sufficient to meet the consumer education needs of students. He admitted that consumer education values could emanate from vocational courses. But, to use these courses solely to provide students with needed consumer education would subvert both vocational- and consumer-education objectives. Neither objective would be adequately met. Also, the students who did not take vocational business courses would not receive any desired consumer education from this source.²

3. Prepare a foundation for the further study of business by selected students through courses like beginning typewriting and economic geography.³

Senior-Period Objectives

The senior period of business education in which vocational objectives become especially important, is still concerned with consumer

¹Ibid., pp. 446-47.

²Ibid.

³Nichols, National Business Education Outlook, pp. 18-19.

education. Nichols, in 1933, listed three objectives of the senior business education period. Each objective will be listed and discussed in the order that Nichols presented them.

Objective No. 1. To make the largest possible contribution toward the achievement of the six non-vocational aims of secondary education which usually are stated as follows:

- a. Health
- b. Command of fundamental processes
- c. Worthy home membership
- d. Civic education
- e. Worthy use of leisure
- f. Ethical character¹

As in the junior period, business education in the senior-period should contribute to the non-vocational objectives of education by helping students acquire background general education and develop social understanding. In addition to expecting teachers of all subjects to contribute to each student's consumer education, Nichols advocated that some advanced consumer business education course be provided at this level for all students. Such a course should develop a student's efficiency in handling personal economic problems of adult life and thus contribute greatly to the attainment of the above nonvocational objectives.² Certain skill courses can also contribute to the consumer education of some students. Nichols said that "short unit courses in such skill subjects as typewriting and shorthand may be organized for those who want these subjects for personal use."³ He did not advocate that schools attempt to satisfy both personal-use and vocational objectives in the same skill course.

¹Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, p. 240.

²Nichols, National Business Education Outlook, pp. 18-20.

³Nichols, The Business Education World, XVI (February, 1936), p. 447.

Nichols believed that skill courses and social-business subjects should also contribute to the development of social understanding. The economic activity of business is a social service of great importance. The idea that "he profits most who serves best" should be grasped and understood by business students. Students should be aided in developing right social attitudes and habits of thought and action. In addition to social betterment resulting from such social intelligence, students will be helped to discharge better their responsibilities as citizens.¹

Objective No. 2. To develop occupational intelligence to the highest possible degree having in mind business organization, management, service, and employments.²

This objective is designed for students who should be pursuing a program designed to prepare them for business occupations. In other words, it is primarily a vocational business education objective. It seems fitting to note, at this point, what Nichols said about vocational objectives.

. . . real vocational education should not be offered earlier than the eleventh year of the secondary school period; that only those who clearly are potentially trainable for and placeable in clerical or store positions should be permitted to enroll for vocational business training; that only those who clearly are potentially promotable should be encouraged to prepare definitely for office work.

Vocational objectives should be definite and expressed in terms of real jobs such as can be obtained at the conclusion of training. Each vocational commercial pupil should devote a limited amount of time to specific preparation for employment, but should not pursue a program made up wholly, or even largely, of skill subjects.³

Nichols believed that vocational business students, by taking "basic business" or "social-business" subjects like business law and

¹Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, pp. 222-23.

²Ibid., p. 240.

³F. G. Nichols, "Vocational Objectives of Secondary Commercial Education," National Business Education Quarterly, I (March, 1933), p. 24.

principles of business, should acquire background business information about business organization and management that will assure them a greater degree of occupational competency. From these subjects, students should also learn about the different business occupations and their various levels; and, they should be better prepared for subsequent promotional opportunities.¹

Objective No. 3. To develop the kind and degree of vocational skill required for successful functioning in a recognized initial contact-job.²

Courses designed to develop vocational skill should be reserved for the senior or vocational period. Vocational skill necessary to meet at least minimal office standards for entrance into a definite business occupation should be developed. Such preparation should serve as a foundation for future study and growth in business education institutions as well as on the job. Adequate preparation for initial employment and subsequent advancement to higher levels of employment should be underlying aims of vocational business education.

Business education based on the aforementioned objectives should, according to Nichols, insure that the product of business education programs be:

A skillful worker, loyal to an employer's interests, faithful to his own personality, keenly responsive to the needs and rights of his social group, and broadminded enough to envision the whole world as within the range of his influence. . .³

In other words, the student will have the necessary skills and occupational intelligence to be an efficient producer and he will possess

¹Nichols, National Business Education Outlook, pp. 18-20.

²Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, p. 240.

³Ibid., p. 6.

the necessary general education background and social understanding to function wisely in his role as consumer and citizen. Business education should contribute to the general education of all students and to the vocational education of some students.

Business Education and General Education

Almost since formal education began, there have been educators and others who have advocated that a not clearly defined general education is the means by which students become better-rounded personalities, become prepared for life, and become more competent citizens. They would deny that vocational subjects are capable of achieving these values. Yet, they are unable to define this nebulous kind of education in terms with which even its advocates can agree.

The reason for this problem, according to Nichols as recently as 1951, is that ". . . there is no such educational entity as general education."¹ General education for one person may not be general education for another person; it varies with the individual. The universally accepted principle that individual differences in ability, interest, and aptitude exist requires differing educational programs to "prepare for life" the heterogeneous student population.

For some high school students the best and only effective, general education is that which is heavily loaded with vocational education in the modern acceptation of that term. For others nonvocational practical arts is the best source of general education. For still others a program shot through with fine arts is needed to carry responsibility for their general education.²

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, General Education," The Journal of Business Education, XXVI (March, 1951), p. 289.

²Ibid.

An educational program without vocational aspects cannot achieve the desired results claimed for general education. Without a suitable vocation, how can one be a successful and happy citizen in an economy where earning-a-living is a desired and necessary purpose? Nichols did not believe it could be done. He believed it was absurd to expect to develop well-rounded personalities without taking into consideration the time they spend in their vocations--where they have most of their contacts with other people and where the need is revealed to them that clear thinking on civic matters is important.

Although Nichols asserted that general education could not be defined without considering a particular individual, this assertion did not keep him from agreeing that there were certain knowledges that should be learned by everyone and that these knowledges should be classified as general education. Even about business education, for example, he wrote:

. . . The kind of "business" education needed by everyone is better described as general education. . .¹

That part of business education which contributes to one's ability to manage his personal economic affairs more efficiently is "general" education.²

Business education of this general type should not, according to Nichols, be confused by attempts to departmentalize it and call it business education. It is just education.

In addition to general education needed by everyone, each student would still have certain individual educational needs that would be

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Education for Business Today," The Journal of Business Education, XXIII (October, 1947), p. 9.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, General Education or Vocational Education or What?" The Journal of Business Education, XXII (June, 1947), p. 9.

considered general education for him. For vocational business students, for example, courses properly called business education would be general education for them. Such business education will, for these students, be just one of the many kinds of education needed to produce the all-around, happy, and successful citizen.¹

In earlier writings, Nichols described general education in somewhat less restrictive terms. He used general education as a term to identify all education that was not vocational education.

There is no non-vocational business education in the high school, for as soon as any type of education ceases to have vocational significance it becomes general education. Commercial law, business economics, business organization, etc., as they should be taught to vocational commercial pupils are quite as much vocational education as are shorthand, typewriting, and bookkeeping. These subjects or aspects of any of them, taught to students who have not chosen to prepare for business activity are "general education" . . .²

Nichols' description of general education seemed to evolve from that of being all education other than vocational education, to that of being an education that all pupils should acquire and, finally to that of being any education that contributes to the development of an all-around citizen. The latter view is the one he wrote about in his later years. He agreed that education may be defined as anything that prepares a person to live successfully and happily as an individual and as a member of society. Such a definition can be applied to general education, however, only if vocational education is included as one of the means used to achieve the desired goals of the total educational pattern.³

¹Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XXVI (March, 1951), pp. 289, 292.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Business Education by Proxy," The Journal of Business Education, VIII (March, 1933), p. 18.

³Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XXVI (March, 1951), p. 289.

Business Education and Vocational Education

Nichols did not visualize business education apart from the larger field of vocational education, but as a cooperative, working part of the whole. As a result, he was able to define vocational education as follows:

The general term "vocational education" is understood to include any type of training that has for its primary objective the preparation of people to engage in any gainful occupation that is of value to society, to increase the efficiency and promotional potentialities of those already employed in such occupations, or to increase the worker's understanding of the social implications of economic activities.¹

That part of business education which prepares for occupations in the business field is vocational education. . .²

From the time Nichols began writing about business education, he stressed the vocational importance of this field.

. . . The social-economic and civic aims of commercial education are the common aims of all secondary education. However, commercial education must stand or fall, not on the achievement of these aims as its primary function, but on its effectiveness as preparation for the lower levels of business employment and reasonably certain advancement to positions on the higher levels of business organization.³

Whatever else it may be, commercial education is vocational education. Its chief distinction lies in this fact. Its future depends upon a frank recognition of its true vocational implications. I assert this point of view dogmatically.⁴

Many other business educators, then and now, have not shared Nichols concern about the vocational aspects of business education. At

¹Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, p. 43.

²Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XXII (June, 1947), p. 9.

³F. G. Nichols, "Pre-employment Business Training A Challenge to Educators," Business Education in a Changing Social and Economic Order, Seventh Yearbook of the Eastern Commercial Teachers Association (Philadelphia, Pa.: Eastern Commercial Teachers Association, 1934), p. 71.

⁴F. G. Nichols, "Some Readjustments in Vocational Business Education," Modern Business Education, II (January, 1936), p. 7.

the time business education was seeking to be recognized in the secondary schools, most business educators claimed sound academic and cultural values for this area of education. Having gained academic respectability, many business educators were reluctant to relinquish any of this prestige despite the relatively new acceptance and recognition of vocational education as an acceptable objective of secondary education.

Vocational education, according to Nichols, must be concerned with more than in-school preparation for occupational life. To this extent, Nichols anticipated and advocated present "manpower" programs. During periods of unemployment, he believed that training should be given to the unemployed to improve their present skills or to teach them new ones. He maintained that emergency vocational education in our economy is always needed because of the occupational upsets that are an inherent result of a restless, dynamic, inventive nation such as ours.¹

Nichols blamed business educators for the fact that business education is not often recognized as vocational education. He believed their tendency to prefer to identify business education as academic and cultural caused business education to lose ground in the vocational movement. For example, in matters involving vocational education, until recent times, business educators were ignored. They were not included in discussing and planning legislative programs; as a result, business education was almost entirely excluded from the provisions of the 1917 Smith-Hughes Act. It was not until passage of the Vocational Act of 1963 that there was substantial recognition of what Nichols advocated early in the 1900's--that business education was one of the vocational education areas worthy of support.

¹Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, p. 94.

Nichols advocated early that there should be cooperation between business education and the other vocational areas. He noted that vocational education was indebted to business education. It was the early private business school training of many citizens and the fact that business education was being offered in the public schools that helped pave the way for the recognition of vocational preparation in secondary education. He noted that business education was also indebted to vocational education, among other things, for the fact that no secondary education program omitting vocational education could very long be considered complete.¹ He believed that the principles underlying all of the vocational areas, including business, were the same although the details of their application admittedly differed in regard to certain aims, ideals, and methods.

Inasmuch as all areas of vocational education owe much to one another and have mutual interests, Nichols concluded that the very highest and intelligent cooperation should exist among them and that each vocational department should contribute to the success of the other. He believed that the unification of all fields of vocational education was the first and most important step that could be taken by vocational educators.²

Business Education In The Secondary School

With the realization that in the broadest sense the term, business education, includes all types of business preparation, a logical

¹Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, pp. 75-87.

²Ibid., pp. 88-95.

next step would be to examine some of its parts. As was noted earlier, Nichols divided secondary school business education into a junior period and a senior period. He believed the junior period should be concerned almost exclusively with prevocational objectives. Whereas, while contributing to all of the secondary-school objectives, business education in the senior period or high school period should particularly emphasize vocational preparation. High school business education comprises one of the important areas in this field, and Nichols had much to say about it. In fact, a majority of his writings were about high school business education. He believed that other levels of business education must build on the principles set by the high school.

After all it is in the high school that correct principles of commercial education can be worked out to best advantage. Once these principles are established, their application to other types of schools will be easy.¹

Nichols defined high school education as follows:

This term covers that part of business education which is appropriate for boys and girls between the ages of fourteen and twenty, which may be given in all-day secondary schools, which has for its primary purposes the preparation of boys and girls for socially useful and personally satisfactory living, and more particularly for entrance into commercial employment with reasonable prospects of succeeding in their work by reason of the possession of (a) social intelligence and right social attitudes; (b) an initial occupational skill; (c) a reasonable amount of occupational intelligence; (d) a fund of usable general knowledge of sound principles of business; (e) a proper attitude toward a life work; (f) high ethical standards in accordance with which their business careers are to be developed; and (g) supporting general education of varying but substantial amounts.²

I prefer to think of high school commercial education as an integrated program of training in which so-called "general" and "vocational"

¹Nichols, National Education Association Proceedings and Addresses, p. 1306.

²Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, pp. 55-56.

types of training are blended in such a way as to insure the graduation of an integrated personality that is socially, morally, intellectually, and economically or vocationally sound.¹

By studying the above quotations, one realizes that Nichols believed high school business education needed to be concerned with more than the development of skills. He wrote extensively about the need for developing individuals who possessed right social attitudes and social intelligence. He contended that high school business education had an obligation to achieve this end, and his argument went something like this.

Because business education owes its being to the existing social order, it has an obligation to do what it can to preserve and add to the social progress already made and to elevate the whole, of which it is a part. This means that more than just skill and business knowledge should emerge from the teaching of business subjects. Right social attitudes and social intelligence should result and should include the development of right attitudes toward civic problems and the need for participating in the solution of such problems; of an understanding of economic laws in accordance with which business must be carried on and of how these laws work for good or ill to mankind; of an awareness of the consumer's role in our society and of his need to use wisely the financial rewards he receives from his role as producer; and of resourcefulness on the part of pupils in seeking personal and socially beneficial uses of their leisure time. Social intelligence and right attitudes will not occur incidentally. They will result only if conscious and continual effort is made by every teacher of every subject in a school system.

¹F. G. Nichols, "Pre-Employment Training for Office Work--A Challenge to Employers," Office Management Series, Bulletin 65, (1934), p. 19.

Like the term, business education, the high school phase is meant to be more than a subject, a group of subjects, a curriculum, or a series of curriculums. It is meant to refer to all subjects and activities that make up the program for any individual's business preparation--this would include appropriate academic studies. Nichols did not claim that this type of business education fully equipped individuals for business, but he did advocate that it should prepare them for initial business employment. He also believed that high school business education should be designed to meet the needs of students who drop out of school before graduation as well as those who go on to graduate.¹

Nichols, at various times, chided both businessmen and business educators for the fact that high school, as well as other, business education students were not prepared to perform competently in an initial business position. He criticized businessmen for hiring and accepting "trainable" employees instead of demanding that workers be occupationally competent. The practice of hiring people "to train" rather than "to work," according to Nichols, causes business to spend needlessly large sums of money on in-service training.² Sound pre-employment preparation in schools offering business education will eliminate the need for much of this costly in-service education. Nichols asserted that the employer was partly responsible for insuring adequate pre-employment preparation of business students.

Pre-employment training is not the responsibility of educators alone. It is one which must be shared by employers if it is to be discharged satisfactorily to all who have a stake in it.

.....

¹Ibid., pp. 53-55.

²F. G. Nichols, "Are You Hiring People to Train--Or to Work?" NOMA Forum, XXIV (August, 1949), pp. 5-8.

Employers must have a part in the development of programs of preliminary training for those whose education will continue under their more immediate supervision. Unless they cooperate intelligently and energetically with educators in this enterprise, pre-employment training will remain, as it now seems to be, more or less futile . . . On the assumption that little in the way of pre-employment training can be expected from the public schools, they have organized their own training schools and proceeded too often to duplicate the mistakes of the public schools in the training of their office help. This uncoordinated duplication of effort is wasteful and unproductive. . .¹

Nichols maintained that schools offering pre-employment business education could prepare individuals to be occupationally competent if businessmen would classify office jobs for which preparation is desired, determine employment standards for these jobs, inform the schools of such standards, and hire only persons who meet these standards.²

There isn't a reason in the world why pre-employment training cannot and should not be depended upon for 90% of what is produced in . . . in-service classes But as long as employers fail to demand this kind of training, so long will many schools fail to give it, and so long will employers have to provide it.³

In addition to criticizing employers for not aiding pre-employment business preparation and for not hiring qualified business education graduates, Nichols believed business educators were failing in their responsibility. He insisted they should actively seek out the advice of businessmen on the kinds of jobs that needed to be filled and on the elements of those jobs that should be the basis of pre-employment preparation.

The high school business education to which Nichols referred, to be adequately achieved, should be given in either large comprehensive high schools or "commercial high schools." Nichols foresaw the need for area

¹Nichols, Office Management Series, pp. 20-21.

²Ibid., pp. 24-25.

³Nichols, NOMA Forum, XXIV (August, 1949), pp. 8-9.

vocational schools in which vocational business education could be offered. He neither expected nor advocated that the small high school try substantially to duplicate large high school or "commercial" high school business education.

Nichols disapproved of some of the activities of the commercial (technical) high schools of his day. Instead of maintaining the distinctive character for which they were founded, Nichols thought they were trying, in the main, to copy or emulate the comprehensive high school. Instead of leading the way toward better business preparation, he believed they stressed too much the college preparatory and general education objectives of the comprehensive high school. The role he perceived for the commercial high school could well be considered appropriate, in many respects, for business departments of functioning and planned vocational schools.

There are many difficulties in the way of perfecting a program of commercial education in the comprehensive high school. But the separate "high school of commerce" should be free of most of these difficulties. The latter type of school should lead the way in business education. Objectives should be clearly defined. Homogeneity of pupils should be assured. The conflicting demands of colleges and of business should not set up an interference with an orderly procedure in meeting the needs of commerce pupils. Alleged academic prejudices and traditions should not hamper the administrator of such schools. Curricular readjustments should be made easily from time to time to insure that business training may be kept fully abreast of progressive business management. Part-time business experience should be possible without causing undue friction. Traditional "office practice" or "business practice" courses of the bookish sort should give way to actual job contacts in such schools. The presence of many boys should lead to special provisions for meeting their peculiar needs. It should be possible to secure teachers who are especially well-qualified for their work. Graduates of such schools should be sought in preference to graduates of other types of schools. Their success as trainers of boys and girls for business and life in general should be such as to lead to the establishment of many high schools of commerce in the larger cities. In short, the high school of commerce should be away out front in the field of business training, pointing the way for less fortunate types of schools.¹

¹Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, pp. 441-42.

Although the large high school and the commercial high school could and should offer business education necessary to satisfy Nichols' high school business education definition, the small high school should not. Nichols claimed that it is not possible to equalize educational opportunity in business education between the one-business-teacher school and the large high school.

To claim otherwise is to belittle the job being done in the large schools. Such belittling can be done to a certain extent, but not to the extent that would be necessary to equalize programs in the two schools.¹

Nichols insisted that a foundation of fundamental principles and simple skills should precede vocational preparation in business education. Typewriting technique, for instance, must be developed before vocational typewriting can be taught. Such prevocational principles and skills should be the main business education objectives of the small high school.

Most schools of small size should be content with laying this groundwork of basic principles and elemental skills and leave the more complicated and expensive vocational training to larger schools which are, or could be, equipped to handle it as it should be handled.²

Nichols would not deny qualified high school students in any high school the opportunity to pursue vocational business education. In smaller school situations, he would simply postpone vocational education to post-high school preparation or transfer students at public expense to schools where competent instruction could be given. In the long run, he maintained that such action would be less expensive than hiring personnel and buying equipment to try to imitate large school vocational preparation.

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, The Small High School," The Journal of Business Education, XVIII (May, 1943), p. 9.

²F. G. Nichols, "Facing the Facts in Business Education on the Secondary School Level," Education, LX (January, 1940), p. 262.

He did concede that in the senior year a unit of business training could well be organized to prepare some small high school students for rural and semi-rural business occupations.¹ However, it was in the large high schools where Nichols declared serious business education should be offered. He listed the following reasons why:

In the first place, large high schools are located in urban centers where large numbers of students are likely to be interested in business training in preparation for mercantile pursuits of the sort for which programs of commercial education have been organized. In the second place, only a relatively large high school can hope to organize and conduct successfully a complete business training program. In the third place, it is more difficult to secure the right kind of cooperative experience for commercial students in rural communities. Without cooperative experience it is very difficult to give a truly functioning type of commercial training from a vocational point of view. In the fourth place, adequate business training in the high school requires a degree of departmentalization that cannot be brought about in the small high school. In the fifth place, it is not likely that the single commercial teacher in a small school will be adequately prepared to teach more than a small segment of the program deemed essential in the preparation of boys and girls for office and store occupations.²

Business Education Beyond The Secondary School

Business education at the post-high school level takes many forms. It includes evening school, independent business school, in-service, junior college, correspondence school, technical school, college undergraduate, and graduate-school business education. Although most of Nichols' writings were about secondary school business education, he did occasionally write about its other phases. As Director of Research for

¹F. G. Nichols, "Commercial Education in the Small High School" Problems of the Business Teacher, Eighth Yearbook of the Eastern Commercial Teachers Association, (Philadelphia, Pa.: Eastern Commercial Teachers Association, 1955), pp. 321-22.

²Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, p. 483.

Business Education Research Associates, Inc., from 1949 to 1951, Nichols was responsible for preparing the BERA Reports and various and diverse service bulletins about independent business schools. This discussion of Nichols' views on business education beyond the secondary school is limited. Only his beliefs about the place of certain segments in the overall business education framework and the extent to which he thought each segment was performing its role are presented.

Evening School

Evening-school business education offered in public schools should be primarily designed to extend skills and knowledges of employed or experienced unemployed workers. Nichols believed that courses should be designed either to upgrade or to refresh present skills. This extension education should primarily help office and store workers progress in their chosen vocations, not prepare them for entirely new jobs. The evening school should supplement the work of the day school, not duplicate it. Nichols did not believe that evening-school programs effectively extend occupational preparation. He insisted that much evening-school business education is preparatory and unneeded. He argued that much of it is useless since it merely duplicates day-school instruction for which different objectives exist.

. . . Generally speaking, preparatory courses are not suited to evening-school instruction. . . .

In the field of business alone are evening courses almost wholly preparatory--duplicates of the day-school courses.¹

The result is that while extension training is the type most needed and most appropriate for employed people, preparatory training for

¹Nichols, Forty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, p. 222.

new jobs is the kind given in most evening-school business departments. . . .

No school for employed people which offers day-school preparatory courses, uses day-school texts, adopts day-school teaching methods, and employs only teachers who have been trained for and are experienced in day-school work can hope to meet extension-training needs of workers except by accident.¹

"This is the weakest type of business education in our schools, public and private. Almost a dead loss in most cases."² Nichols made the foregoing statement in reference to evening-school business education. He did, however, have some ideas on what could be done to improve the situation.

There can be a satisfactory program of business education only where a full-time director of business education is employed to organize programs of business training for day and evening schools; to coordinate the work of each type of school with that of other types; to integrate the various offerings in a comprehensive program of studies; to make local surveys of training needs; to determine which of these needs can best be met by the offerings of each type of school; to sell the city's training program to those most likely to profit by enrolling in various types of schools for it; and to follow up those who take courses to see whether or not functional training really has been given.³

Succinctly, evening-school business education in the public schools should be carefully planned, be based on pre-determined needs and objectives, and be primarily designed to extend skills and knowledges of experienced business employees.

In Service

Nichols insisted that in-service business education given by businesses should be limited mainly to vestibule, remedial, and advancement

¹F. G. Nichols, "Commercial Education: Principles, Practices, and Trends," Objectives and Problems of Vocational Education, E. A. Lee, Editor (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1938), pp. 451-52.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Evening School Business Education?" The Journal of Business Education, XXII (June, 1947), p. 9.

³Nichols, Objectives and Problems of Business Education, p. 452.

education. He suggested that business should lessen the need for preparatory and remedial business education by first hiring recruits who ". . . possess a reasonable degree of occupational competence; . . ."1 If new employees are occupationally competent, they will need only a brief "vestibule" kind of in-service training, which Nichols described as: ". . . training as would need be given a competent, experienced worker to acquaint him with any special requirements of the new office, . . ."2

In-service or on-the-job business education, other than that of a vestibule nature, should be given only for the purpose of preparing employees for advancement or to improve the quality and quantity of production by correcting employee deficiencies. Concerning in-service, advancement business education, Nichols wrote:

In-service training for advancement, by its very nature, must have specific goals and be given to those who can profit from it. If it is for unspecified goals and for unselected workers it can produce no better result than is achieved by pre-employment training of similar character in so many schools and colleges of whose product complaint is so freely made. . . . So I would urge that advancement training must be purposeful training, given to potentially promotable people who have what it takes to complete it satisfactorily.³

Remedial, in-service business education can be justifiably given, according to Nichols, for the purpose of raising the productivity of business employees. To improve the quantity and quality of production, Nichols maintained that careful study must first be made of the defects that are adversely affecting production. Merely helping clerical workers increase their typewriting straight-copy speeds is not apt to increase production noticeably. In determining what should be emphasized in in-service

¹Nichols, NOMA Forum, XXIV (August, 1949), p. 6.

²Ibid. ³Ibid., p. 7.

instruction designed to improve production, Nichols contended that all of the motions and procedures necessary for efficiently performing a particular occupation should be evaluated and assessed. For instance, certain motions like selecting and inserting paper with carbons need to be performed rapidly and efficiently. For production to be increased as a result of remedial in-service education, all possible defects must be considered, evaluated, and remedied.¹

Nichols limited the role of in-service business education by business to that of vestibule, remedial, and advancement because he believed that business education given in public and private schools was generally superior. Consequently, where business education of a certain type was available separate from business, Nichols advocated that these services should be utilized. Nichols summarized his views about in-service education for business as follows:

. . . Let me confess that schools do not always do the kind and quality of training job they are equipped and staffed to do, largely because they are not encouraged to do it.

But at their best they do a better job than is done by in-service trainers with whose work I am familiar.

At their worst they still at least match the worst of in-service training.

Each training agency needs the wholehearted cooperation of the other. The two working together can do an infinitely better job than either can do alone, . . .²

College and Junior College

Nichols wrote little about junior college and senior college business education. He did, however, indicate that much of the business education of secondary schools needed to be upgraded to these schools so as to conform to educational conditions and employment practice. Although

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., p. 9.

one of the following quotations comes from an article written in depression times when jobs were scarce, Nichols continued thereafter to advocate the upgrading of much of vocational business education to post-high school educational institutions.

. . . The advent of junior colleges has tended to hasten desirable upgrading of business training on the secondary-school level.¹

Mechanization of office work, social security laws, employee liability laws, plentiful supply of available mature workers, recognition of need for more formal education, broadened program of courses on the secondary-school level, . . . will conspire to advance the initial employment age for commercial workers.²

Because business desires mature workers, for the reasons noted above, Nichols held that secondary schools should consider providing sound prevocational and background business education and upgrade much of the vocational business education to post-high school levels. Such background preparation would allow high school graduates to move readily into public and private colleges for preparation for high-level business positions. This means that collegiate educational institutions should do more than take ". . . over the inadequate program in the next lower school. . ." ³ They should prepare students for more advanced and demanding positions.

Although the Vocational Education Act of 1963 is giving new impetus to vocational business education in the high school, much of the vocational business education suitable particularly for men and boys has been upgraded to schools catering to high school graduates. To this

¹Nichols, Objectives and Problems of Vocational Education, p. 428.

²Nichols, Forty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, pp. 218-19.

³Ibid., p. 218.

extent Nichols was apparently correct in his beliefs and recommendations. Only time will tell how far upgrading will progress in schools that offer business education.

In brief, it was Nichols' view that junior and senior college business education should take over some of the vocational education being taught in the secondary schools. In addition, the colleges should exercise their unique qualifications to prepare the more mature students for advanced and challenging careers in teaching, business, and industry.

Independent Business School

Most of the printed comments concerning independent or private business schools attributed to Nichols are found in the publications of the Business Education Research Associates, Inc. He perceived a varied role for the private business schools. He exhorted and challenged this group to stay abreast of changing business practice and to offer preparatory and extension business education based on sound objectives.

Concerning their varied role, he wrote:

Such schools really are opportunity schools for all competent people who can afford to devote some time to further study of business, but who are not interested in college degrees or junior-college diplomas.¹

Nichols noted that private business schools are subject to inertia and resist change like other educational institutions. However, he contended that most of them do perform valuable and worthy service.

By far the largest number of private business schools are still what they were years ago--places where shorthand, typing, bookkeeping, and supporting subjects can be pursued for indefinite periods of time. Some of these schools do good work; some do not. Some enjoy the confidence of their local communities; others do not. . . .

¹Nichols, Objectives and Problems of Vocational Education, p. 461.

It should be said that proprietors of and teachers in the best of these private schools are entitled to and surely have the respect of their contemporaries in the public schools. . . .¹

In this chapter, Nichols' beliefs on what business education is have been discussed. His views on what business education should try to accomplish, on how business education relates to general and vocational education, and on the different levels of business education and their importance to the total pattern have been presented. Although this chapter is relatively long, no summary is given here. The contents of this chapter, along with that of chapters 4 and 5, are concisely summarized in the concluding chapter. Chapter IV will be concerned with the conditions necessary for business education to play its proper role in the total framework of education.

¹Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

CONDITIONS NECESSARY FOR EFFECTIVE BUSINESS EDUCATION

Business realizes that efficient, effective production results when the factors affecting production are coordinated in logical, meaningful ways. Much effort is exerted to establish the most favorable conditions possible for achieving desired goals. Business education, too, can best achieve its aims when the environment in which it functions adequately provides certain important conditions. This chapter will be concerned with relating what Nichols believed about some of the conditions that are necessary for sound business education. The first condition to be considered will be Organization of Business Education.

Organization of Business Education

Nichols' concern about the organization of business education is evident in his writings. He believed that administration of business education in secondary schools is primarily the function of superintendents and principals and that, to be effective, administration should insure that business education is kept up-to-date with changes that occur in business and education. Nichols viewed supervision of business education, often inefficiently attempted by high school principals, as a function to be performed by an individual with special educational and occupational qualifications. He believed that departmental organization on the basis

of subjects can be justified only when a high degree of cooperation exists among the various departments. These three facets of organization--administration, supervision, and departmentalization--will be discussed in the following pages.

Administration

According to Nichols, administrators should give direction and purpose to business education by establishing the general educational climate necessary for it to function and grow properly. In providing a suitable educational climate for business education, it is essential that there be efficient organization and competent administration:

. . . To see that it /business education/ is responsive to changing conditions in education and in business; to see that its objectives are in line with present-day needs; to see that its instructional materials and methods are both economical and efficient; to ensure a teaching staff fully trained to meet the requirements of their positions; to determine scientifically the kind, quality, and quantity of equipment needed and to procure it with the least possible expenditure of tax money; to prevent the costly and almost wholly unsatisfactory transplanting of day-school programs of training into evening and part-time schools; to develop types of training which are appropriate to the needs of evening and other special school pupils; to interest business men in preemployment training problems, thus establishing a type of cooperative effort without which commercial education cannot be what it ought to be; to train teachers in service; to place pupils at the conclusion of their training; and to follow them up long enough to appraise the training that they have received in terms of occupational requirements. . .¹

Nichols maintained that administrators, in general, lack the preparation necessary to deal effectively with other than academic school work. Consequently, he indicated in 1950 that administration of business education was being neglected.

¹F. G. Nichols, "Needed Economics in Business Education," Junior-Senior High School Clearing House, VIII (December, 1933), p. 211.

. . . I am not satisfied with the administration of business education.

Educational management largely ignores this field. No supervisor or director is appointed and held responsible for its steady improvement. Almost no administrator has had business training. But all such have had usual academic training. They should be able to administer an academic program, but not a commercial one. They are equally ignorant in some other fields, but in those fields they see to it that there are qualified supervisors in whom they can rely for advice and assistance.¹

Nichols believed that administrators who do not have understanding of business education cannot be released from their responsibility for the results of business education in their schools. In the following paraphrased list, he pointed out certain practices and conditions, due to faulty administration, that existed in business education programs that were harmful to students and wasteful in terms of public expenditures. He contended administrators should be held responsible for:

1. allowing the business department to become the "dumping ground" for students who do not fit the college preparatory mold;
2. failing to provide training in business and office occupations for other than bookkeepers, typists, or stenographers;
3. putting vocational and non-vocational students in the same classes;
4. failing to furnish adequate business and office education equipment;
5. not encouraging business students to take background business education courses necessary for later promotion to better positions;
6. not providing all students with economic education essential to the development of useful, self-sufficient citizens;
7. failing to assist graduates in making social and occupational adjustments by providing placement and follow-up programs;
8. not hiring qualified people and providing the necessary time to properly supervise business education activities;

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, A Taxpayer Takes a Look at the Administration of Business Education," The Journal of Business Education, XXV (February, 1950), p. 9.

9. attempting to offer vocational business education in schools too small to provide adequate training; and

10. failing to provide practical work experience for students preparing for business and office occupations.¹

While not absolving business educators from being, at least in part, responsible for the conditions referred to above, Nichols said that "responsibility for this situation rests squarely on the shoulders of school administrators. They alone can find and apply a remedy."²

To aid administrators in their efforts to provide service to business education, business educators should keep them informed about the demands and developments in this field. Nichols frequently expressed the idea that educators spend too much time writing and talking to themselves. He believed they should maintain contact (practice good public relations) with administrators, other individuals, and organizations outside business education to keep them aware of current business education problems and needs. Nichols referred to the need to keep in touch with others outside business education in the following quotation:

But principals, superintendents, academic teachers, college professors of education, school board members, college presidents neither read our literature nor attend our meetings--except occasionally as invited guests or speakers. We must quit talking to ourselves and begin carrying our message to those in a position to block progress or facilitate advancement in our field. . . . They are, or can be, interested in how our program articulates with others, what we can do to help solve the many perplexing problems with which school administrators are faced, how we can best handle the customary responsibilities of our department, whether or not we can take on new ones, what are the short-comings of our program as it stands and what we propose to do about them, and what educational management can do to help business

¹F. G. Nichols, "Poor School Administration Results in Futile Attempts to Give Business Training," Education, LVIII (December, 1937), pp. 192-98.

²Ibid., p. 198.

education achieve and hold its rightful place in our dual system of public and private education.¹

In an address given to a group of secondary school principals in 1939, Nichols outlined some positive suggestions to administrators for improving business education. These suggestions have contemporary value.

Squarely facing these facts and their implications should cause many schools to restrict their vocational offerings and limit registrations for them to qualified pupils, to quit hiding behind a smokescreen of personal utility when their vocational courses are attacked, to attempt to give courses whose personal utility is beyond question, to adopt some plan for segregating vocational and non-vocational business pupils in vocational classes, to try to organize courses which will meet the universal need for practical personal economic education and see that they are so placed in the program as to come within the reach of all, to offer only such courses as are justified by local conditions while looking elsewhere for courses to meet the vocational needs of the few who cannot be accommodated locally, to stress such basic courses in principles of business and elemental skills as will qualify those who should take advanced vocational work locally or elsewhere, and to provide for the needs of those who will devote their lives to local enterprises which require no high degree of technical skill but do require some knowledge of the principles in accordance with which small business, as well as large ones, must be run.²

Nichols was willing to concede that teachers, parents, businessmen, state departments of education, and the federal office of education help create, in various ways, unsatisfactory conditions in business education.³ However, since he held that administrators must necessarily bear the final responsibility for either success or failure of their overall school programs, the natural conclusion is that administrators who are not capable of supervising certain programs in their schools should employ subordinates who are.

¹F. G. Nichols, "Some Harmful Aspects of Business Education," Modern Business Education, VII (January, 1941), pp. 9, 10.

²Nichols, Education, LX (January, 1940), p. 263.

³Nichols, Forty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, p. 217.

Supervision

There are several levels at which supervision of business education can be effective. In addition to supervision within a particular school, Nichols advocated there should be state and city supervision.

At the state level, he proposed that a director be appointed to head a division of business education. This director should make certain that only properly prepared individuals supervise office and distributive occupational education.¹

At the city level, Nichols stated that: "No general educational administrator can be expected to supervise a field so complex and extensive as is commercial education; and yet no field needs competent direction more sorely."² He believed that administrators should seek assistance in supervising special fields like business, mathematics, home economics, music, and so forth when they lack understanding in these areas. Succinctly, of supervision at the city level, Nichols wrote that:

. . . In every city of fairly large size there should be a full-time competent director of commercial education; that such a director should be freed from regular teaching responsibilities; that he should be given reasonable clerical assistance; and that he should be held rigidly accountable for results in this field.³

For the city with only one high school, Nichols proposed:

In smaller cities where there is but a single high school and perhaps an evening school, the head of the commercial department should be freed from at least half of his teaching program and be given charge of the work in both schools.⁴

¹Nichols, Objectives and Problems of Business Education, pp. 440-41.

²Nichols, Junior-Senior High School Clearing House, VIII (December, 1933), p. 211.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

Although provision was made in the Smith-Hughes Act for studies and investigations to be made to aid the development of business education, Nichols did not believe that the United States Office of Education provided the services to this field that it either could or should. He asserted: "At the top the United States Office of Education has failed to provide the service badly needed. . ."¹ He believed that much assistance should come from this national office to aid in the development of better programs in business education.

Nichols was convinced that, where there is inadequate business education supervision, business teachers can obtain it if they desire to do so. He declared, ". . . supervision can be had whenever and wherever the commercial teachers. . . demand it."² He indicated that many business teachers do not want supervision that might cause them to have to change some present practice or condition.

To provide for proper supervision of business education is important, according to Nichols. But for supervision to be effective, he believed that the supervisor should be chosen very carefully and should be provided with sufficient time and adequate facilities for performing his supervisory duties. A supervisor should be capable of coordinating the activities of all levels of high school business education; of insuring that instructional materials, equipment, and methods are economical and efficient; of appraising and evaluating instruction given by teachers; of developing and appraising business education curriculum and

¹Nichols, Forty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, p. 228.

²F. G. Nichols, "The Status of Business Education," Business Education World, XXIV (October, 1943), p. 83.

objectives; and of conducting investigations to determine the effectiveness of business education programs.¹ In addition, a supervisor should be able to speak well, have a good personality, have adequate basic and professional education, and have business preparation and experience. Above all other qualities, however, a supervisor should be able to provide competent leadership. In emphasizing this latter ability, Nichols wrote:

It is my firm conviction that no man or woman should be appointed director or supervisor of business education on a permanent basis without first demonstrating through a trial period that he has the leadership qualities required and that he can furnish the leadership essential to progress in this field. Surely no one should be appointed to this job on the basis of seniority or degrees or advanced credits or personality or even good classroom results in one or two courses. This is a mighty important job; one that should be filled by a man or woman of proven leadership ability or be eliminated entirely.²

Effective school organization requires that administrators provide business education with an appropriate educational setting and that adequate, capable supervision then be supplied to insure that administrative policy is effectively and efficiently implemented. Nichols believed leadership should be provided for business education at the national level through the United States Office of Education. States should provide administrative and supervisory services for business education in their state departments of education. Large city administrators should appoint full-time directors or supervisors of business education to oversee all phases of business education. And, small city administrators should insure that a qualified business teacher's instructional load is reduced enough

¹Nichols, Junior-Senior High School Clearing House, VIII (December, 1933), p. 211.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Leadership Qualifications," The Journal of Business Education, XXVIII (January, 1953), p. 140.

to allow time for necessary supervision of business education. In other words, administrative and supervisory services are needed to give direction and purpose to business education at national, state, and local levels.

Departmentalization

Departmentalization along subject lines has been carried over from a time when faculty psychology was influencing educational thought and practice. Mathematics, for instance, was studied to make students logical. Science was taught to make pupils observing. Special departments were thought to be needed to nurture one's various mental faculties. Though the influence of faculty psychology waned and though most reasons for continuing departmentalization no longer apply, departmentalization has remained and has become even more firmly entrenched with the passage of time.

Departmentalization, to Nichols, was detrimental to effective school organization and instruction. He recognized that much good resulted from group action and that at times it was indispensable. But, he deplored the tendency of a group to substitute its own good for the common good. He believed that departmentalization in schools causes destructive, competitive pressures and selfish motives and actions that prevented a unity of purpose in setting and achieving educational goals.¹ As a result of departmentalization, groups of teachers attempt either to maintain or to improve their own power and prestige without regard for either other educational segments or the total educational situation.

Nichols noted that the problems caused by departmental specialization affected business, as well as other departments. For instance, he

¹Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, pp. 72-75.

wrote that even within ". . . the business department, we find sub-departments competing with one another . . ." ¹ Nichols gave several illustrations of competition that existed between subject-matter departments. He mentioned, for example, that there was harmful friction between the social studies department and the business department over who should teach economic geography and business economics and that business and English departments, in many cases, do not cooperate in providing business English for business students. ² Departmentalization also tends to set apart a particular department from the rest of the educational family. Each department writes and talks about its own problems but fails to consider either matters affecting other departments or education as a whole. Nichols recognized that business educators were guilty of isolating themselves from other educators when he stated:

. . . As business educators we are keenly alive to the many specialized problems that confront us, but as educators, without limit of special field, we are either unaware of, or totally indifferent towards, the many unspecialized problems that must be the concern of all educators if solutions are to be found. . . . We seldom, if ever, address ourselves to high school principals, guidance directors, or teachers in other fields whose work touches our own at many points. . . . In short, we talk and write to ourselves, to the exclusion of those who wield far greater influence than we do in shaping educational policies under which we must work, and in determining educational practices which we must accept. ³

Nichols was concerned about the effect that departmentalization has on students. He did not believe that the practice of teaching

¹F. G. Nichols, "Co-operation vs. Competition in Business Education," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, XXXII (November, 1948), p. 64.

²Ibid., pp. 66-7.

³F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, The Commercial Department," The Journal of Business Education, XXIII (September, 1947), p. 9.

specialized courses by departments is the best means of developing a single, well-integrated personality.

Human characteristics ". . . must be fused into a composite whole, . . . by some other process that will retain the identity of the partial units while producing a new composite one quite distinct from any of the partial ones--a well-integrated personality.¹

Nichols, in 1948, wrote about the problems caused by departmentalization and proposed two possible solutions.

It has long seemed clear to the writer that competition between departments in the high school exists in considerable degree, and that the sound objectives of education cannot be achieved until one of two things happen: (1) the elimination of subject departments, or (2) complete and effective co-operation among them. Frankly, the writer prefers the former as he despairs of the achievement of the latter.²

Nichols advocated abolishing subject-matter departments, but he was critical of attempts to effect partial integration of various courses.

. . . Integrating an entire program of education is something quite different from integrating several subjects in an unintegrated program. Under the former plan an entirely different use will be made of student and teacher time. Subjects will give way to units of instruction, each of which will represent several areas of education. Under the unintegrated program, the one nearly all . . . are participating in, teachers are assigned subjects and given a definite amount of time for each.³

With departmental organization, such as is prevalent today, Nichols would have advised the business teacher not to ". . . go out of his way to drag in all the other high school subjects and teach them at the expense of the subjects for which he is primarily responsible."⁴ He particularly believed integrating too many indirectly "useful" lessons into skill courses could result in weakening desired usable skills.

¹Nichols, National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, XXXII (November, 1948), p. 62.

²Ibid.

³F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, "Integration and Correlation," The Journal of Business Education, XXIV (October, 1948), p. 9.

⁴Ibid.

. . . One should lose no opportunity to teach a good outside lesson through his specialty, but he should refuse to assume excessive responsibility for other courses which might well defeat the aims of his own. No, business English cannot be taught so well in a typing class as it can be in a special class. Nor can economics be left to the shorthand teacher. At least not until specialized courses give way completely to general units of instruction so organized as to take over their responsibilities.¹

Although Nichols would have preferred to eliminate subject departments and the resulting competition that characterizes departmentalization, he realized that such elimination is not likely to occur for many years, if at all.

Now the writer has stressed this departmental matter because he believes that as long as there are departments so long will there be competitive frictions that militate against the achievement of the primary aims of secondary education. But the writer knows full well that departmentalization will be with us for a long time to come, not because it couldn't be done away with at once if responsible department leadership willed it so, but because rarely, if ever, does it happen that special interests take the initiative in a move to eliminate themselves.²

Complete and effective cooperation, according to Nichols, is the next best approach to insuring that the total educational program be spared much unnecessary duplication while providing a minimum education for all. Where business departments and other departments teach the same subject matter, the leaders of these departments should get together and determine what information should be taught, what each should teach, and what should be emphasized by both departments. "Duplication is not necessarily bad. . . . It is unnecessary, unplanned duplication that is bad. Lack of active cooperation results in this kind."³ The following items

¹Ibid., p. 29.

²Nichols, National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, XXXII (November, 1948), p. 64.

³Ibid., p. 66.

indicate what he believed cooperating departments should do to make sure that students receive the best general and business education that can be offered to them.

1. Agree upon the irreducible minimum of general education for all.
2. Pool all their instruction materials and divest themselves of their departmental names and status.
3. Select from the common pool all materials needed for the achievement of the high-school education agreed upon as necessary for all.
4. Organize selected material into segments of instruction without regard for traditional department lines.
5. Combine these segments into a required minimal program of education which will bear little resemblance to traditional subject "constants," or even to the current "core curriculum" of traditional subjects.
6. Assign the best qualified teachers to teach each segment regardless of his previous departmental affiliations.
7. In short, form a team for the achievement of the primary aims of secondary education.¹

In matters affecting business education, departmental cooperation instead of departmental competition could, according to Nichols, cause history departments to stress the business aspects of history, induce English departments to include emphasis on practical usage in the teaching of English, and prompt several competing departments to provide economic education of a definite sort for all students. Nichols indicated that all departments, not just one or two, needed to cooperate with one another. He believed that ". . . until there is an almost complete obliteration of departmental lines in the discussion of mutual problems there can be no adequate and sure preparation of youth for the responsibilities of life."² He challenged educators:

Resolve to shake off departmental shackles to the extent that they have outlived their usefulness, and strike out in new directions with every assurance . . . of ultimate success. Let's cease being departmental specialists, and become educators in fact, not merely in name.³

¹Ibid., p. 68.

²Ibid., p. 67.

³Ibid., p. 68.

Guidance and Placement in Business Education

Organization of business education should include, according to Nichols, provisions for guidance and placement activities. Guidance activities should insure that qualified persons will be selected to prepare for the various business occupations. Placement of business graduates should be made in terms of their preparation for particular initial positions.

Concerning the goals of guidance, Nichols indicated that:

It should be the ideal of every social unit to see that all of its members are happily and efficiently employed for the common good. An economic niche for every employable person and a suitable employable person for every such niche is a worthy ideal. . . To bring about the closest possible approximation to this ideal should be the aim of every worker in commercial education and vocational guidance.¹

When Nichols wrote about guidance, his statements usually emphasized its vocational aspects. He recognized the need for a comprehensive guidance program, but he devoted most of his writing to that part of guidance that is applicable to business education in a vocational sense. He quite succinctly described vocational guidance in the following passages.

. . . Vocational guidance is not a single act, or short series of acts, performed by some individual member of an educational staff by whatever name. It is a continuing process--participated in by many people and agencies--which has for its objective helping boys and girls, men and women too, in their efforts to adjust themselves to the demands and opportunities of a dynamic economic system, and to make such occupational readjustments as may be necessary from time to time in an economic world where order and chaos seem destined to chase each other around a more or less inevitable cycle.

This process, called guidance, begins very early in life, even before the 'teens are reached and continues to the end of one's occupational career.²

¹Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, p. 251.

²F. G. Nichols, "Some Observations on Vocational Guidance in Commercial Education," Guidance in Business Education, Ninth Yearbook of the Eastern Commercial Teachers Association (Philadelphia, Pa.: Eastern Commercial Teachers Association, 1936), pp. 23-24.

Nichols had definite convictions on who should be responsible for guidance activities. He did not place all of the burden on any one person or group. Rather, he contended that much cooperative effort is necessary for effective guidance to result.

It [guidance] should not be left to chance; nor should it be considered the sole responsibility of any individual or single group of individuals. It cannot be entrusted to a "vocational counselor," however wise in occupational lore, because no counselor can know more than a smattering about the multitude of jobs, or even the lesser number of fields of service. It cannot be reserved for the teacher of occupations, however well prepared for his work, because available teaching materials are too meager and unreliable, and the coverage of any such course is too scanty, to produce desired results. It cannot be handled effectively by the "home-room teacher" alone, however well equipped, for all the reasons given above. In short, it is a cooperative job in which all who come into contact with the "advisee" must have a part; one in which there is proper coordination of effort through a well-conceived guidance program under expert, though by no means the same, leadership throughout the secondary school period of guidance and training.¹

To Nichols, effective vocational business education was dependent on adequate guidance activity. In 1944, he said that ". . . vocational training without sound guidance is futile. . ."²

As to the importance of guidance to business education, Nichols wrote the following in 10-year intervals starting in 1924.

. . . Better vocational guidance must be established, if commercial education is to function in the largest possible way for the largest possible number of people.³

If anything is fundamental in commercial education, it is vocational guidance before, during, and after business training;
.....

¹Ibid., p. 24.

²F. G. Nichols, "Readjustments in Business Education," The Journal of Business Education, XX (December, 1944), p. 28.

³F. G. Nichols, "Commercial Education in the Public School Organization," Vocational Education Magazine, II (February, 1924), p. 457.

Commercial education without the support of an adequate guidance program is as futile and objectionable as any other game of chance.¹

. . . A forerunner of every vocational business course must be adequate result-getting guidance to the end that choices of training objectives will be in line with the prospective student's talents.²

One does not have to read long in Nichols' writings to learn why he stressed the guidance function in business education. He believed that business education should assist pupils in choosing their occupations so that they will not prepare for positions for which they are not capable, so that business will not have to suffer the financial loss of trying out people who fail to make good, and so that society will not have to bear the cost of ill-advised business preparation for many of its citizens.³

Of all instructional departments, Nichols believed that the business education department was the most frequent depository of "misfits," students lacking either the aptitude, the ability, or the interest for preparing satisfactorily for business occupations. As a result of faulty guidance, a large number of business students graduate each year and are disappointed because they are unable to "hold down" business positions for which they allegedly are prepared. Nichols deplored the practice of using the business department as a "dumping ground."⁴ He believed that satisfactory vocational business education was dependent on vocationally

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Vocational Guidance in Commercial Education," The Journal of Business Education, X (September, 1934), p. 8.

²Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XX (December, 1944), pp. 11-12.

³Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, p. 242.

⁴Nichols, Junior-Senior High School Clearing House, VIII (December, 1933), pp. 209-10.

oriented students capable of profiting from a particular business curriculum. Students, in other words, should be guided into preparing for a business occupation only after carefully considering job requirements, promotional opportunities, and financial rewards in relation to their overall capacities. Only thus is it possible to eliminate the misfit problem at its source.

Vocational training of any kind is futile unless given to those who are capable of doing what is required for the attainment of that degree of competency which will meet occupational requirements on the initial job. In other words, unless your students in any vocational course are potentially trainable, your best efforts will produce no good results in terms of occupational competency. On this point there is universal agreement among vocational educators and others who have given any thought to this matter.¹

It should be the aim of every school to see that, as far as is humanly possible, each student shall select and pursue a program of training suited to his aptitudes, interests, and abilities. This means that all the facilities available for guidance should be used.²

To choose an initial job for which one is capable to prepare is not enough. Nichols maintained that each business student should have two vocational goals--one the more immediate and the other more remote. The student should prepare for an initial job and have in mind a higher position to which he aspires. Consequently, unless an individual shows at least reasonable promise for promotion to higher levels of business employment, Nichols held that he should not be encouraged to prepare for junior positions in either stenography, bookkeeping, clerical, or retail selling. His contention was predicated on the belief that the economic

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Selective Enrollments," The Journal of Business Education, XI (September, 1939), p. 9.

²F. G. Nichols, "Research in Business Education," American Business Education, VI (October, 1949), pp. 18-19.

rewards of these lower positions are not sufficiently adequate to allow one to choose one of them as a permanent life work.¹

One might criticize Nichols' contention that every possible means should be used to select only qualified students for vocational business courses. Some will even say that such a stand is undemocratic. Nichols defended his position on this matter as follows:

No student has an inalienable right to enroll for anything he pleases at the expense of the public and of his classmates.²

. . . I believe that the good student's right to the best possible chance to get the most out of his courses is as inalienable as is that of his less talented schoolmate.³

I quite agree that "careers are life and death matters," but I can't believe that keeping someone out of a career in which he would succeed because a paper test says he will not succeed is such a serious matter as it is to permit all and sundry to take courses which at best can land them only fifth-rate jobs that pay little at the outset and offer no opportunity for advancement. I raise the question as to whether or not greater danger may not be done by permitting all who desire to enroll in our vocational courses, regardless of all the evidence against the wisdom of such enrollment, than ever can be done by possible or even probable exclusion of a few on the basis of that evidence who might in the end prove their ability to do the kind of work desired.⁴

In other words, proper guidance activity should assist students in choosing educational and vocational programs suitable to their aptitudes, abilities, and interests. And, if necessary, students who lack suitable minimum qualifications should be barred from enrolling in vocational business courses. If unqualified students are allowed to enroll,

¹Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, p. 94.

²Nichols, American Business Education, VI (October, 1949), pp. 18-19.

³Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XXV (February, 1950), p. 29.

⁴F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Straw Men," The Journal of Business Education, XVII (January, 1942), p. 9.

Nichols insisted that failing grades should be given those who do not meet necessary requirements so as to correct faulty guidance activity.

Resist any grading scheme that is designed to prevent failure in vocational courses for which obvious aptitudes and abilities are required and when the outcomes of which must be high quality to justify their retention in the program. Reject the "normal distribution curve" theory with all the vigor you possess. Oppose finagling of any kind in an attempt to "get by" students who never should have been admitted to the course--easier examinations, lenient marking, more periods, etc.¹

Nichols did contend that business education should assist in helping low-ability students achieve satisfactory occupational adjustment. Such students should be guided into other vocational areas that prepare for occupations in line with their aptitudes and abilities. And, business education should appraise employment possibilities and attempt to organize new courses--not slow down present ones--to help meet the needs of more of the heterogeneous student population.²

By using guidance resources, Nichols also advocated separating vocational and non-vocational business students into separate classes. Where an insufficient number of students might make this grouping impossible, Nichols would at least separate the two groups on paper.

By such a separation as is proposed, a better job of training can be done with each group. More and better vocational preparation can be given those who should be encouraged to go forward in preparation for certain initial office and store jobs. More and better general education, consumer training, and vocational guidance can be given the other group.

.....
 Mistakes will be made in any such segregation, but they will not be serious and they can be remedied. However bad they may be, they will do less harm to all persons concerned than is being done by the

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Think it Over," The Journal of Business Education, XIX (February, 1944), p. 9.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, The Low Ability Pupil," The Journal of Business Education, XIV (December, 1938), p. 8.

indiscriminate listing of all pupils as potentially trainable office and store workers, or even by listing all as non-vocational students to be taught from a consumer or personal utility viewpoint.¹

In dealing with the role of business educators in providing guidance, Nichols categorized guidance activities in terms of periods and designated responsibilities relating to these periods as follows:

The first period in guidance he called a "general period." The work of this period is primarily the responsibility of the guidance department. The need for making vocational choice and general information about the various fields of social service should be stressed in this period.²

The second period (prevocational) Nichols described as follows:

During the prevocational period--perhaps grades 8, 9, and 10--teachers of "occupations," vocational and educational counselors, home-room teachers, teachers of exploratory subjects, and others are doing what they can to assist boys and girls in the wise choice of a field in which to go forward and within which to choose a curriculum.³

Students during this period decide either to go to college or to choose a field like agriculture or business in which they plan to work. They should also be given additional try-out experiences of a business nature to help them choose initial-contact jobs for which they will prepare in the senior period. By try-out experiences, Nichols did not mean try-out courses for a particular store or office position. He believed that the qualities necessary for succeeding in most business occupations can be discovered by means other than try-out courses.

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Separating the Sheep from the Goats," The Journal of Business Education, XI (June, 1936), p. 22.

²Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, p. 259.

³Nichols, Guidance in Business Education, p. 28.

During the latter part of this prevocational period there should be additional try-out commercial experiences, not courses, for those who have chosen the field of business. These are necessary to a choice of initial-contact office or store job for which to prepare in the senior period of secondary school education. These experiences may be obtained through elementary business courses such as junior business training, a first course in bookkeeping, personal typing, and business arithmetic; or in more general educational courses, or in extra-curricular activities. They should reveal to the pupil whether or not he possesses the aptitudes, interests, and abilities required for success in any of the many office and store occupations in which he may start his business career, and help him decide in which of these he has the best chance of succeeding.¹

The responsibility for guidance during the prevocational period is still largely that of individuals other than business educators. However, the business educator is responsible during this period for making known to prospective business students the requirements of the various business occupations. As a result of such guidance in the prevocational period, a reasonably homogeneous group of capable students should be available for business preparation in the vocational period.

The "early vocational" or "vocational training" period constitutes the third period of vocational guidance according to Nichols' outline. Because of their unique knowledge of specific business-position requirements, business educators become primarily responsible for the guiding of business students during this period. The business student has chosen and is preparing for a particular, initial business occupation. Guidance activity by the business teacher should help the business student realize that the development of desirable personality traits is essential to successful occupational adjustment, that his vocational choice is not irrevocable if he decides that he has made a wrong choice, and that the goal of an initial position should not be the ultimate goal of his business career.²

¹Ibid., p. 29.

²Ibid., pp. 29-31.

It is important to remember that the first position which a boy or girl obtains is not usually of a type which will be of permanent interest. What we call the initial-contact position is one which is obtained to secure experience and promotional opportunity to reach some more important future goal. Therefore, when speaking of an occupation, do not think merely of the kind of position for which you wish to prepare in school and obtain on graduation. Think also of the kind of work you will like to be doing ten or fifteen years hence.¹

Also, guidance activity in the vocational period should help the business student become acquainted with the occupational environment into which he will move. It should aid him in choosing wisely a particular business office or store in which he can receive the most beneficial experience.²

The final vocational guidance period that Nichols isolated is the "early employment" or the "after training" period. He believed that the business department and the guidance department have guidance responsibilities after the business graduate has obtained employment. Graduates should be aided in adjusting to new jobs and in making later readjustments that may be necessary. Contacts made with the worker during this period will also help to reveal ways that subsequent vocational preparation of future business students can be strengthened.³

Nichols aptly summarized the guidance functions of business educators as follows:

1. During the preemployment period they assist others in handling this work if and when called upon to do so.
2. During the vocational training period they assume primary responsibility for guiding their pupils in the ways indicated, with such assistance as others can give them.

¹F. G. Nichols, Junior Business Training for Economic Living (New York: American Book Co., 1941), p. 616.

²Nichols, Guidance in Business Education, p. 30.

³Ibid., p. 31.

3. After the vocational training period they again share with guidance workers responsibility for what is done to further the interests of those who have been trained and the interests of the department that trained them.¹

Placement of business education graduates is closely related to the guidance function. Nichols maintained that business educators need ". . . to lend a helping hand in assuring placement that will enable trained students to render socially valuable service of the kind for which training has been given. . ." ² He advocated that business educators should have a significant part in placing their graduates for several reasons. First, he contended that such a practice would help show the need for enrolling capable students in vocational business programs. Attempts to place those who have been enrolled who are manifestly unsuited for occupational preparation in business should cause schools to select vocational business students with a little more care.³

Second, Nichols contended that a good measure of a school's vocational business education program is its ability to place successfully graduates in positions for which they have been prepared. This means that business education should assume some of the responsibility for finding appropriate specific jobs for specific people whose abilities and occupational aspirations are known, rather than merely filling orders for office workers.⁴

¹Ibid.

²Nichols, Junior-Senior High School Clearing House, VIII (December, 1933), p. 210.

³Nichols, Education, LVIII (December, 1937), p. 177.

⁴F. G. Nichols, "Business Training for Veterans," National Business Education Quarterly, XIV (October, 1945), p. 24.

The proof of successful vocational training is satisfactory occupational adjustment. The justification for any vocational training program is found largely in the direct contribution which it makes to the occupational success of those who pursue it. On this basis many current programs are not justified. Too many stenographic graduates get typing jobs. Too many bookkeeping graduates get routine semi-skill clerical jobs.¹

Until success in the initial position has been demonstrated, the vocational training activity has not been completed. While many contributory factors beyond the teacher's control enter into the ultimate success or failure of a vocationally trained boy or girl, the vocational trainer should follow through into the job to see what happens; to learn what mistakes are made, why they are made, and how to train so as to prevent them in the future.

Only by placing responsibility for placement and follow-up on those who do the actual training can the standards of training be raised to the desired level; only thus can vocational trainers keep abreast of progress in office and store work; only thus can commercial teachers become qualified to do their part in any effective program of guidance for their pupils.²

In other words, business teachers need to assume considerable responsibility for the guidance of business students. The results of guidance, embodied in the business graduate, should be the responsibility of those who prepared him. Unless the preparer has a hand in placing his product and assumes some responsibility for that product's occupational adjustment, he is not apt either to be aware of the adequacy of his preparatory program or to feel any obligation for his graduate's success or failure.

In summary, Nichols viewed guidance as a continuing process. This view caused him to contend that there was no such thing as finished preparation for a business career and that a successful career in business would result not so much because a person was taught a particular business skill but because he is now better equipped to make the most of the daily lessons

¹Ibid., p. 22.

²Nichols, Guidance in Business Education, p. 28.

that experience will reach him.¹ He held that there needs to be guidance activity designed to help qualified students choose business as a career, to assist students in choosing and preparing for an initial-contact business position, to assist one in becoming adjusted to an initial position obtained through proper placement procedures, and to assist in readjustments that become necessary as a result of either technological change or promotional opportunity. There is much yet to be done to accomplish the guidance and placement functions Nichols envisioned.

Personnel in Business Education

In the previous section, it was noted that proper guidance procedure and activity is essential to sound business education. This section will present additional information on what kind of student personnel is necessary for effective business education. Also discussed will be the business teacher--his importance and his qualifications.

The Business Student

It is evident that Nichols believed that only capable students should be selected to prepare for business occupations. He also advocated that, even in courses not considered vocational, ability grouping should be used to insure homogeneous classes necessary for instruction and learning and that vocational and nonvocational business students should be separated.² In discussing student personnel, Nichols identified four categories of students who need business education.

¹Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, p. 271.

²F. G. Nichols, "Personnel Problems in Commercial Education," National Business Education Outlook, First Yearbook of the National Commercial Teachers Federation, 1935, pp. 34-37.

(1) large numbers of those below the eleventh year whose objectives are as yet undecided and who need non-vocationalized training of commercial character; (2) a smaller, but sizeable number of eleventh-year pupils who properly wish a try-out year in the beginnings of vocational education; (3) a still smaller number who have proven their fitness for an ability to take vocational training for one of the recognized callings in the field of business; and (4) the largest number of all, scattered throughout the four years who need what is being designated . . . as "consumer knowledge" about practical economic matters.¹

Two other points concerning student personnel, age and sex, were important to Nichols. Because of everchanging economic conditions, he held that the age of business students needs to be considered and evaluated continually. He recognized the trend in business to prefer mature, older workers for business occupations. This situation caused him to suggest starting vocational preparation for business not earlier than the eleventh grade. It also prompted him to caution business educators to be aware of hiring trends and to adjust their vocational programs to changing business demands. He expected that business would continue to push up the desired age of applicants for business positions and that preparation for business would consequently need to be further upgraded in accordance with this trend--even to the point of eliminating practically all vocational business education at the secondary-school level.²

Nichols noted that ". . . in business there is a preponderance of male workers. Yet in business courses at the high school level male students in vocational business courses are decreasing year by year."³ This decreasing enrollment of the male sex in vocational business courses in

¹Ibid., p. 36.

²Nichols, Objectives and Problems of Vocational Education, p. 424.

³Nichols, American Business Education, VI (October, 1949), p. 16.

the high school he attributed to several causes. First, much business preparation for male students has been upgraded to the post-high school level. Second, vocational business courses tend to prepare only for initial, clerical positions generally held by female employees. And third, mechanization of office work has tended to make office positions less attractive to boys.¹ Nichols believed that business educators need to be concerned with developing programs at the high school level that will prepare more boys for personally and financially satisfying business positions. However, he deplored the practice of encouraging large numbers of boys to prepare for positions, like stenography, that are normally occupied by women.² Such practice is not the way to provide satisfactory vocational business education for boys. Rather, Nichols believed new kinds of programs suitable to boys should be devised.

The Business Teacher

Business education needs to be well organized and administered. Guidance activity should insure that qualified students enroll for business courses. However,

. . . business education can be no better than its teachers make it.³

No supervisory system however perfect, can compensate for poor teachers.⁴

¹Nichols, Objectives and Problems of Vocational Education, p. 456.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Male Stenographers Again," The Journal of Business Education, XVII (December, 1941), p. 11.

³F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, The Poor Classroom Teacher," The Journal of Business Education, XXII (January, 1947), p. 9.

⁴F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Homesick," The Journal of Business Education, XIV (June, 1939), p. 10.

Even the best student personnel will fail in the absence of equally good teachers.¹

These quotations indicate Nichols' view of the importance of the business teacher. All other conditions can be satisfactory; but qualified business teachers are necessary for them to become effective in achieving desired results.

To Nichols, teaching in general and business teaching in particular was more than either a profession or a skilled labor. He considered it to be a fine art. The business teacher should be more than either a mere laborer or a member of a learned profession. He should be a "teacher-artist" possessing imagination, idealism, purpose, manipulative skill, and pride of workmanship. As a professional, a teacher must possess broad general knowledge, as well as special knowledge. As a skilled laborer or artisan, he should also be a master of the techniques of his profession. However, Nichols maintained that the mere possession of professional knowledge and skill does not guarantee that one will be successful and effective as a teacher. In fact, he contended that the manner in which one's knowledge is used (art of teaching) may be quite as important as is the professional aspect of teaching. This art of teaching is developed largely through experience, not created by professional study.²

The art of using . . . aids must be acquired through long-continued, thoughtful, purposeful practice. In the end the degree of success attained by a teacher will depend quite as much, if not more, upon the degree to which he masters the art of teaching than it will upon the extent of his professional training, or the extent of his knowledge of the subject taught. But mastering the "art of teaching" is

¹Nichols, The Business Education World, XVI (June, 1936), p. 762.

²F. G. Nichols, "Teaching, A Fine Art," Education, LIII (September, 1932), pp. 6-8.

not enough. The mastery of what may be called the fine art of teaching is necessary.¹

To achieve true greatness in the teaching profession then, according to Nichols, one must do more than practice the art of teaching. In other words, he must do more than master the routine procedures of teaching. He must master what Nichols called the "fine art" of teaching. For such mastery, it is necessary for the teacher to achieve proficiency in certain fine arts of teaching about which Nichols frequently lectured.

1. One must be able to teach as a generalist while being employed as a specialist. One must, in other words, efficiently perform the duties and responsibilities of his specialty while cooperating intelligently and willingly with fellow-teachers in achieving aims common to all departments of a particular school.²

2. One must be able to teach individuals while dealing with groups of everincreasing size. While realizing that one must teach large numbers under our present educational pattern, the "teacher-artist" will find ways to individualize instruction so that he will do more than impart knowledge to large groups. He will find ways to lead, guide, and stimulate the thinking of individual pupils. He will deal with groups as individuals.³

3. One must be able to stand in loco parentis in many instances without seeming to do so. The business teacher must be able to assist with some of his student's problems of a social, physical, and personal nature, problems that formerly were considered to be the sole prerogative of parents. Such action must be taken without arousing the antagonism of parents whose cooperation is being sought.⁴

¹Ibid., pp. 8-9.

²Ibid., pp. 1-10.

³Ibid., pp. 10-11.

⁴Ibid., pp. 11-12.

4. One must be able to hold opinions on important subjects without imposing them on his students. To master this fine art, one must stimulate his students to investigate pertinent problems and arrive at their own conclusions about them. He must encourage students to practice clear thinking about important matters so that definite viewpoints can be established. The business teacher should aid students in developing these personal, logical viewpoints while adhering to his own point of view.¹

5. One should be a good citizen and by precept and example stimulate pupils to assume gladly and thoughtfully their civic responsibilities. The business teacher should help develop right social attitudes and civic virtues in his students by properly performing his own duties as a citizen and by showing respect for the law.²

6. Finally, one must idealize his pupils and magnify their virtues while working to eliminate their weaknesses. In mastering this fine art, the business teacher has more to learn from the artist than from the artisan.

The real artist teacher does not copy; he creates anew. The artisan reproduces but rarely creates. The former multiplies types of people through the creative influence of his teaching. The latter contributes to the leveling process which is tending to smother individuality.³

The teacher-artist will see in each student the potential for becoming a competent, useful individual. The teacher-artist will be an idealist with a vision, a vision of what he believes the ideal boy and girl should be. Such a vision will aid him as he helps to develop boys and girls to approximate his ideal while encouraging and assisting each

¹Ibid., p. 12.

²Ibid., pp. 12-13.

³Ibid., p. 14.

person to maintain characteristics peculiarly individual to him.

Such a teacher in a very real sense must be an artist, . . . rather than a mere laborer or member of a learned profession. Professional training may help one to function as a teacher-artist, but only when there is in the trainee an inherent foundation of artistry on which to build. The teacher-artist who idealizes his pupils because he is an artist, and who takes full account of their shortcomings because he is professionally trained, may be relied upon to produce educational results that will go far toward the achievement of that social betterment at which all public education is aimed.¹

In brief, the teaching function in education and business education should be performed by one who has professional knowledge, by one who can perform skilled labor, and by one who has mastered the fine art of teaching. Nichols concisely summarized the need for more than just professional knowledge and skill in business teaching when he wrote that all teachers should:

. . . study themselves with a view to determining their own personal characteristics in the light of the need for artistry as well as professional efficiency and skilled workmanship in teaching. They should realize that recognition of their calling as a profession will not help them much as teachers, that skill in teaching techniques will not raise them to a high place in their vocation, and that recognition by organized labor will not add materially to their claim to greatness as teachers from the standpoint of social service. In the future, as in the past, success in the teaching profession will be measured in terms of the effective use of such arts as have been referred to in this discussion. Every teacher has it within his power to increase or decrease the measure of his greatness as a teacher by mastering the fine arts of teaching a specialty as a generalist, teaching individuals while dealing with large groups, assuming and discharging successfully some responsibility for matters formerly left wholly to parents, holding opinions on social, religious, and personal matters without imposing them on youthful minds, regulating his conduct so as to wield an influence for good in civic matters, and idealizing his pupils while not ignoring their shortcomings.²

In emphasizing the importance of the fine arts of teaching, Nichols did not mean that teachers should not also be well qualified by way of

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., pp. 14-15.

professional preparation.¹ He was highly critical of the practice of letting academic teachers teach business subjects for which they have had no prior preparation.

It often happens that a "commercial" teacher is employed on the false assumption that a teacher so named can teach equally well any commercial subject; so we find teachers who were employed to teach shorthand, for which they are qualified, also filling out their schedules with accounting, economic geography, or business economics for which they are not qualified. . . . unlike academic teachers who at least have studied all major high school subjects, commercial teachers often have specialized in but one or two, or perhaps three subjects in their field.²

If competent, qualified business teachers are not available to teach a particular business course, Nichols would have advocated that it not be offered.

Once a business teacher becomes initially qualified to teach certain business subjects, he does not necessarily remain forever so qualified. Teachers, according to Nichols, need to seek ways constantly to insure that their professional growth keeps them abreast of changing business and education conditions. One individual way of growing professionally that Nichols recommended was for teachers to write down at the beginning of a school year a list of goals to achieve. Then, at the end of the year, he suggested comparing one's achievements with his desired goals. By conscientiously making these yearly plans and appraisals, one would be aware of his shortcomings and could take action to effect suitable remedies.³

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Why Not?" The Journal of Business Education, XXIII (March, 1948), p. 9.

²Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XXV (February, 1950), p. 9.

³F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Year-End Survey," The Journal of Business Education, XXVIII (May, 1953), p. 316.

Fearing that some teachers might not be prompted to grow professionally on an individual basis, Nichols believed that schools should assist in providing ways and means to insure such growth. He realized that professional growth could result from many different kinds of experiences, but he believed some plan for preventing professional stagnation was desirable and necessary.

Every teacher needs refresher training from time to time; not necessarily formal courses that require time off. Group conferences, in-service training through competent supervision, assigned professional reading with written or oral reports of it, periodical institutes attended by the teachers of several schools, visiting lecturers, and other devices may be used to keep teachers abreast of progress in the teaching profession.¹

Merit pay for teachers is another matter related to the teacher personnel topic about which Nichols expressed his beliefs. He was for merit systems that base teachers salaries on teaching ability. He believed that such a system would do much to eliminate deficiencies like poor equipment and heterogeneous vocational business classes that presently cause good teachers to reap poor results from their efforts. If good teachers could expect better salaries for better results, Nichols believed that they would try harder to improve teaching conditions. To business teachers, Nichols wrote:

If confronted with a proposal that a salary schedule based on merit be tried out, give the matter serious thought before you react unfavorably towards it. No good teacher has anything to lose; most good ones may reasonably expect to gain much more than they ever have from the abominable system now in general use--that which provides salary increments on the basis of additional "semester hours"

¹Nichols, National Business Education Quarterly, XIV (October, 1945), p. 21.

of professional training. Even the poorest teacher can win increments under that system.¹

Nichols recognized that salary merit plans are not perfect; but he held that they are better than other plans and that they help good teachers gain recognition for superior teaching.²

Briefly, business education is as effective as teacher personnel make it. Other inadequate conditions can be somewhat overcome by superior teacher personnel, but the best conditions will be ineffective in producing sound business education without good business teachers. Teacher personnel, to be most effective, must, in addition to being well qualified as professionals and skilled laborers, master the fine art of teaching.

Teacher Preparation in Business Education

One of the best ways of insuring that teacher personnel will be competent is to have teacher education programs of high quality. In 1930, Nichols expressed at length his concern about business teacher preparation. He summarized those concerns in a list of still relevant principles upon which a business teacher-education program should be based.

1. Fundamental principles of vocational education must be recognized since commercial teacher training is vocational education.
2. Service to society must be the acknowledged basis of all such programs.
3. Business is a social institution, and society is served through any contribution to its betterment.
4. The department, school, or college of education is best equipped to handle a commercial teacher-training program and should be

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Teacher Salaries Based on Merit," The Journal of Business Education, XXIII (December, 1947), p. 21.

²Ibid., p. 9.

the integrating agency where several departments, schools, or colleges are to cooperate in conducting such a program.

5. Existing practices in secondary commercial education are not sufficiently in harmony with modern business needs; hence not all such practices should be perpetuated by establishing teacher-training programs merely on the basis of information about curriculums obtained through questionnaires sent to high school teachers.

6. Teacher-training institutions should be held responsible for a large amount of leadership in business education; hence studies to determine the kind of business training needed rather than surveys to determine the kind being given should precede the organization of commercial teacher-training programs.

7. Standards of business training must be raised continually, and commercial teacher training must contribute its part to this end.

8. Commercial teachers cannot be trusted to train others to do what they cannot do themselves; hence vocational competency is one evidence of teaching ability.

9. No commercial teacher-training program that omits practice teaching will be effective.

10. Vocational competency can scarcely be acquired without job contacts; hence business experience is an essential part of commercial teacher training.

11. The theory of individual differences must be applied in the training of commercial teachers as practically no individual could be expected to be interested in or qualified to teach all of the numerous commercial subjects, and because the time available for technical subjects is limited.

12. That the school is but one of many agencies for giving business training should be conceded, and that a proper coordination of these agencies is the best means to the development of a sound vocational business training program should be an accepted principle.

13. Waste and inefficiency defeat the ends of education and neither should be tolerated in the training of commercial teachers.¹

Several of the views listed above Nichols continued to write about over the years. He elaborated on these principles, as well as on other related points.

Nichols believed that those institutions that desire to prepare business teachers should place all of the major work of such a program under the control of a department of education. He held that the education

¹F. G. Nichols, "Principles of Organization and Administration of Business Teacher Training," Administration and Supervision of Business Education, Third Yearbook of the Eastern Commercial Teachers Association (Philadelphia: Eastern Commercial Teachers Association, 1930), p. 47.

department is most apt to have as its single aim--the preparation of persons for service in business teaching. Other departments should help prepare business teachers. The arts and science department should help provide general education. The business department should provide technical knowledge and skill. However, Nichols held that courses taught in other departments to business teachers should be carefully integrated into the prospective business teacher's curriculum.¹

The outmoded practices of teacher-education institutions that tend to perpetuate the status quo particularly disturbed Nichols.

Surely some of the responsibility for defects in public-school business training must be shouldered by teacher-training institutions which have considered it their sole duty to meet the demand for commercial teachers in the territory served without questioning the validity of that demand. They teach teachers to teach what always has been taught without raising a finger to redirect demand into new channels more appropriate to the requirements of the economic system under which we live, to the needs of employers whose methods of doing business have greatly changed, and to newly established principles and practices in the field of education.²

. . . high schools continue to teach what their teachers were trained to teach; vacancies are filled by hiring people to teach what retiring teachers have taught; teacher-training schools continue their out-worn programs to prepare teachers to meet this demand; and thus the vicious cycle is complete.³

Nichols gave to college and university teachers a major share of the responsibility for improving teacher-education programs and effecting needed reorganization in business education.

We college and university teachers are strategically situated for service in any movement to modernize our program of business education.

¹Ibid., pp. 43-44.

²Nichols, Objectives and Problems of Business Education, p. 457.

³Nichols, The Business Education World, XVI (June, 1936), p. 763.

We train the teachers. We give the graduate courses that teachers take. We should be most responsive to change in this field. We should pave the way for the growth of teachers in service. We write much of the professional literature in this field. We consume most of the time on associational programs. We write most of the textual material used by teachers. We do direct most of the research on which desirable changes must be based. We hold most of the associational offices. We have the greatest opportunity to share experience with others in distant places. We set up degree requirements. In short, it is we to whom over-burdened teachers look for light and leadership. Yet I fear we have been too complacent about what really goes on in our schools, too ready to talk and write when action alone is needed, too willing to let others carry the ball while we watch from the sidelines, too likely to keep our ear to the ground to catch the rumblings of new demands instead of making new demands for others to hear--in short, too busy to lead, or even to be a part of, a crusade for better business education and better conditions under which to give it.¹

The graduates of a teacher-education institution, Nichols maintained, need to be able to do more than teach subject matter. They need to be able to envision the place of business education in general education and in vocational education. To prepare such teachers he suggested that teacher-education institutions:

Find a way to exclude low-grade personalities from teacher-training classes. Set up a program that stresses an all-around understanding of the field of commercial education instead of concentrating on individual subjects which, at best, are but facilitating devices in the vocational-training process. Make sure that graduates carry away with them as few mind-sets and prejudices as possible; that they go out determined to keep pace with progress instead of perpetuating the status quo in their field. Insure flexibility of mental attitude toward the many vital problems with which commercial teachers always have been and always will be confronted.²

In other words, the institution that prepares business teachers should:

. . . turn out a progressive, alert, competent commercial educator, not just a traditional teacher of traditional subjects; and see that each teacher is kept aware of changing attitudes, points of view,

¹Nichols, Modern Business Education, VII (January, 1941), p. 10.

²Nichols, The Business Education World, XVI (June, 1936), p. 763.

requirements, and procedures in the teacher-training institution from which he graduated. Remember that deficiencies of teacher personnel are due to narrow outlook on the profession, lack of understanding of its requirements, and the worship of favored subjects rather than to lack of teaching ability, . . .¹

The matter of state certification requirements was also given by Nichols as a factor affecting teacher preparation. He considered these requirements to be the cause of much faulty business teacher preparation.² In addition to contending that many state certification plans are inadequate to begin with, Nichols argued that they are many times either too comprehensive in scope and thus allow unqualified teachers to teach business subjects or too rigid and inflexible for business education purposes. He believed that business teachers, to be certified, should meet all of the general, special, and professional requirements imposed on other teachers.³ More specifically, however, he recommended that, for certification purposes, four business teaching fields should be established. Then, business teachers would be certified as follows:

. . . set up these: pre-vocational, consumer business subjects, background vocational business knowledge, and vocational skill . . . issue a single certificate which will cover at least one of the four alternative fields mentioned and on which will be entered any additional commercial subject which the holder becomes competent to teach. Thus would the beginning teacher be equipped to hold the type of position which usually is available to him; thus would each teacher be encouraged to go forward with his professional training; and thus would most boys and girls be assured teachers competent to teach them.⁴

¹Ibid.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge," The Journal of Business Education, XIV (January, 1939), p. 8.

³Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XXIII (March, 1948), p. 9.

⁴F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Commercial Teacher Certification," The Journal of Business Education, XII (January, 1937), p. 8.

requirements, and procedures in the teacher-training institution from which he graduated. Remember that deficiencies of teacher personnel are due to narrow outlook on the profession, lack of understanding of its requirements, and the worship of favored subjects rather than to lack of teaching ability, . . .¹

The matter of state certification requirements was also given by Nichols as a factor affecting teacher preparation. He considered these requirements to be the cause of much faulty business teacher preparation.² In addition to contending that many state certification plans are inadequate to begin with, Nichols argued that they are many times either too comprehensive in scope and thus allow unqualified teachers to teach business subjects or too rigid and inflexible for business education purposes. He believed that business teachers, to be certified, should meet all of the general, special, and professional requirements imposed on other teachers.³ More specifically, however, he recommended that, for certification purposes, four business teaching fields should be established. Then, business teachers would be certified as follows:

. . . set up these: pre-vocational, consumer business subjects, background vocational business knowledge, and vocational skill . . . issue a single certificate which will cover at least one of the four alternative fields mentioned and on which will be entered any additional commercial subject which the holder becomes competent to teach. Thus would the beginning teacher be equipped to hold the type of position which usually is available to him; thus would each teacher be encouraged to go forward with his professional training; and thus would most boys and girls be assured teachers competent to teach them.⁴

¹Ibid.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge," The Journal of Business Education, XIV (January, 1939), p. 8.

³Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XXIII (March, 1948), p. 9.

⁴F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Commercial Teacher Certification," The Journal of Business Education, XII (January, 1937), p. 8.

In brief, business teacher preparation should be under the direction of a department whose sole aim is teacher preparation, teacher-education institutions preparing business teachers should be leaders in bringing about needed changes in business teaching and business education, and business teacher graduates should be more than teachers of business subjects; they should be business educators.

Work Experience

Nichols believed in work experience for both business students and business teachers. He had definite beliefs about the values that students can derive from work experience, how work experience should fit into the curriculum, whether students should receive pay for work experience, why credit should be given for work experience, why on-the-job work experience was more important in distributive education than in office occupations, and what kinds of work experience teachers should experience.

Until the passage of the Smith-Hughes Act in 1917, there was scant recognition of the value of work experience as vocational preparation. The Smith-Hughes Act helped to draw attention to the educational value of such experience. In 1916, before the passage of the first vocational act, Nichols organized high school cooperative work-experience programs in the state of New York. Nichols' belief that work experience was important to both teachers and students involved in vocational preparation for business occupations was apparent in 1932 in his second "Criticism, Comment and Challenge" article.

From the standpoint of vocational training, attempts to give effective business education without actual business contacts during the period of training are futile. Most thoughtful and progressive

teachers believe this to be so, but too few such teachers act in accordance with this belief.¹

Again, twenty-one years later in 1953, he said:

Yet, I, for one, firmly believe that work experience of the right sort, under right conditions, by the right teachers and trainees does result in understanding of working conditions which is indispensable to good teaching, and which can be acquired in no other way.²

Cooperative work experience for students that helps them to relate school more closely to life is needed, according to Nichols, to ". . . round out, through practical experience, their vocational preparation."³ In addition, he believed other values like the following could be gained from such experience.

Work experience . . . should be provided to develop a sense of responsibility, initiative, and understanding of personal relationships, tolerance, appreciation of the dignity of labor, an awareness of the real value of education, to establish contact with non-teacher adult points of view concerning the whole economic structure, and to stimulate interest in vocational choice. In the achievement of these and other similar objectives of education, work experience can be made a most useful device.⁴

Nichols believed that work experience should be included in the curriculum of a high school, not as "something extra" to be taken by a student in addition to an academic course load but as an integral part of his total educational program.

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Cooperative Business Training," The Journal of Business Education, VIII (December, 1932), p. 8.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Work Experience," The Journal of Business Education, VIII (December, 1932), p. 8.

³F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Work Experience," The Journal of Business Education, XVII (March, 1942), p. 9.

⁴F. G. Nichols, "Work Experience," National Business Education Quarterly, XII (May, 1944), p. 10.

Work experience probably should not be included in the program on an extra-curricular basis. It requires more control than such a plan makes feasible. It must be taken more seriously than that method would imply. It will detract from, rather than add to, the good results of teaching if it is carried along as "excess baggage" in the secondary school program. Its educational values must be clearly recognized, and it must be so placed as to make their realization reasonably sure. It must be dignified by being given a place in the program comparable to that of the other features of a sound educational program. In short, it must displace something that is already in the program--course, homework, research, study, laboratory, etc.--or become an interference with what is there and a futile gesture in the direction of something worthwhile.¹

Nichols believed that, in most cases, students should receive payment for work experience--even that work experience provided within the school.

If, as is claimed, work experience should be provided as the one and only way of achieving certain outcomes that are essential to the proper training of all boys and girls for social and occupational adjustment at school leaving time, the best means of providing that work experience should be adopted. If certain work in the school building or on the school grounds, seems to offer the best opportunity for the kind of work experience needed, opportunity to get that kind of experience should be afforded. If the work chosen is the kind which will be done by someone even if students do not undertake to do it, and which will be paid for in the ordinary course of good school management, then students who do that work should be paid at least a nominal wage for services rendered. If, on the other hand, the kind of service, while educative, is the kind that would not ordinarily be done and paid for, students should be expected to do it as a part of their school program and without compensation.²

Although Nichols did agree that payment, in some instances, for truly educative work experience was unnecessary, he believed that credit for work experience was of the utmost importance. If work experience is included in the curriculum, is under school direction and supervision, and is such as to take some of the student's regular school time, Nichols argued that a student should receive credit for it.

¹Ibid.

²Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XVII (March, 1942), p. 9.

If credit is not given for this work, it is bound to reduce legitimate time which students should devote to recreation and other activities outside the school, or to lessen the amount of time that they can spend on their regular school assignments. But the more potent argument in favor of credit for any kind of controlled work-experience is that, since credit is regularly given for any assigned work which directly contributes to the education of a boy or girl, credit should be given for school-designed and controlled educative work experience.¹

Ten years later he stated the same idea as follows:

. . . School credit for occupational experience is earned if such experience contributes to the achievement of an important goal of such training, which goal is occupational competence up to the point reasonably demanded of beginners.²

His belief about credit for work experience can be best summarized by the following quotation:

High school boys and girls must have work experience. School administrators are committed to this idea. Some of that experience may be had within the schools. Some must be provided outside the schools. The more realistic it is, the better it is. Any work experience given will make in-roads on the time available for conventional school work. Credit, therefore, must be given for work experience. It should not be an added burden without recognition as a part of the training program.³

Nichols conceded that some work experience for office occupations could be undertaken within the schools. He did not believe, however, that in-school retail selling was adequate for the distributive occupations for the following reasons:

. . . Training for work in the selling field is something quite different from that for jobs in the clerical field. The former requires preparation for personal contacts and relationships not duplicated in office work.

It is possible to simulate actual office conditions in a 'model' office, but no model store can be anything more than a poor imitation

¹Ibid.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Work-Experience and Credit," The Journal of Business Education, XXVII (April, 1952), p. 8.

³Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XVII (March, 1942), p. 18.

of a real store. To be real there must be goods or services actually for sale, a potential seller, and a potential buyer. There must be the profit motive and certain essential known facts on the basis of which bargaining can be done. The distributive occupational trainee must be able to appraise his customer and shape his thinking to the end that a sale results. The typist has but a machine to control. Both the clerical worker and the salesperson must get along well with their fellowworkers and superiors; but the salesperson also must be able to deal with his employer's customers in such a way as to make sales and build goodwill.

State of mind, emotional nature, financial status, buyer intelligence, and many other factors determine a customer's behavior while he and the salesperson are face to face. Store policy, profit range, cost of merchandise, customer's credit status, size of account, and many other factors determine the salesperson's scope of action in dealing with a customer.

In no class situation can any considerable number of these vital factors be present. Only in a real store can they be found.¹

Finally, Nichols believed that the work experience of the vocational business teacher should be "occupational experience" rather than just "business experience." Any kind of work experience in any kind of business would not do. The teacher should have experience pertinent to the type of occupation for which he is preparing students. Nichols wrote that a teacher should have:

. . . Occupational experience, that which is identified with a particular job. That is the kind I want teachers to have; something specific and definitely in line with their teaching job. Just getting a job in business is not enough. Getting one for which you are giving training is most desirable.²

For the teacher of advanced or vocational shorthand--the one who rounds out the pupil's training just before graduation and employment--stenographic experience is essential. For the teacher of vocational typewriting typing experience is desirable. For the one whose responsibility it is to prepare people for bookkeeping positions, experience as a bookkeeper is important.

There may be no potent reason why teachers of the elementary principles of bookkeeping, typewriting, or shorthand should have had

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Cooperative Business Training," The Journal of Business Education, XVI (March, 1941), pp. 11-26.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Work Experience," The Journal of Business Education, XXVIII (February, 1953), p. 184.

pertinent occupational experience (a better term than business experience); but, there is every reason why teachers of the advanced or vocational phases of these subjects should be sufficiently experienced in the callings for which they are giving training to be reasonably intelligent about their specific requirements.

There is no more reason to believe that one who has never functioned as a stenographer will be able to anticipate the needs of her pupils on their first jobs than there is to assume that one who has never functioned as a carpenter can be relied upon to train another to build a house.¹

In other words, he believed that the vocational business teacher should have work experience and that it should be in an occupation for which the teacher was giving training.

Federal Aid

Federal aid in business education dates back to 1917, when the Smith-Hughes Act was passed. Business education was recognized as one of four fields of vocational education, and, it was included in that part of the Act that provided funds for research. Funds were provided for studies, investigations, and reports to aid the states in the organization of training for business and business pursuits. Funds for stimulating business education, in other than research, seemed unnecessary because business education was already relatively well supported by local funds. Provision was made for subsidizing part-time (co-operative) business courses, "But the hitch was this; such aid would have come out of funds earmarked for, and badly needed by, industrial training programs. Hence it seemed best, if not necessary, to let commercial education shift for itself."²

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Business Experience," The Journal of Business Education, XIV (April, 1939), p. 8.

²F. G. Nichols, "The Background of Distributive Education," National Business Education Quarterly, XI (March, 1943), p. 12.

Nichols was interested in and participated in federal aid activities from the time of its inception. He was the first Assistant Director of the Federal Board of Vocational Education in charge of the Department of Commercial Education from 1918 until 1921. Many of his ideas about what federal aid should be and should do are being realized as a result of the passage of The Vocational Education Act of 1963.

Nichols blamed business educators for not taking advantage of federal aid for business education. He said:

Business teachers had nothing to do with the passage of the Smith-Hughes Act or the George-Deen Act. Both were sponsored by educators in other fields of vocational education. At the time of the passage of these bills business teachers were reluctant to admit the vocational implications of their courses. They preferred to claim equality with the traditional academic subjects.¹

The only way to get support from federal sources for business education, according to Nichols, is for there to be unified demand and effort on the part of business educators and employers of business graduates. He asserted, "If you want service you can have it. But you must demand it, and gain support for it from influential educational and employer associations."²

Nichols early recognized the need for business education to receive federal aid on a definite rather than a permissive basis. He contended that funds for the exclusive use of business education are necessary to insure that new programs will be instituted as need for them is revealed.

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Federal Aid for Office Occupations," The Journal of Business Education, XXI (January, 1950), p. 7.

²F. G. Nichols, "Federal Services in Business Education and How to Use Them," Wartime Problems in Business Education, Sixteenth Yearbook of the Eastern Commercial Teachers Association, 1943, pp. 136-44.

. . . Commercial education should receive the same treatment which has been accorded to other fields in previous legislation. This means that a certain proportion of funds appropriated should be available for commercial education of a definitely vocational sort and under the strict requirements of vocational education in other fields. It means, further, that if such funds are to serve to stimulate better types of vocational education, they should not be available to some other field of vocational education if not used in the commercial field.

.
It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that whatever provision is made for commercial education shall be made on a mandatory and not on a permissive basis.¹

It was left to the George-Deen Act of 1936 to provide federal aid of a definite type for distributive business education. The Vocational Education Act of 1963 finally provided that "business and office occupations" could receive federal aid as a separate vocational area. To Nichols, federal aid to high school business education should be provided for vocational courses at the eleventh and twelfth-grade levels. He wrote:

All of these courses in the upper two years should be regarded as distinctly vocational and should be given by occupationally experienced teachers and on a basis which will insure that every pupil will have some contact with the job for which he is preparing during a part, at least, of the period of training.

All of the usual commercial work of the eighth, ninth, and tenth years should be regarded as prevocational and not entitled to federal or state aid under any vocational act.²

Nichols maintained that federal aid should be used to stimulate business education through cooperative courses, post-graduate preparation, supervision, extension courses, and vocational schools.

The interest that Nichols had in federal aid stemmed from his belief that it was the only means by which business educators could be

¹F. G. Nichols, "Making Federal Aid Possible in Business Education," The Journal of Business Education, IV (April, 1930), pp. 38, 55.

²Ibid., p. 38.

motivated to organize preparation for business and office occupations in accordance with sound vocational principles and objectives. As late as 1950 he declared:

Unless a federal grant is earmarked for vocational business training of a kind not now being widely offered, no changes will be made in most schools. Specialists in shorthand, typewriting, and book-keeping will continue to play up these subjects as always. Federal aid has been available for the past thirty years. Few have taken advantage of it.¹

While Nichols, in general, believed in federal aid, he contended that necessary changes in business education could be achieved without it.

If legislative pressure is necessary to modernize business education I am for it. But of three things I am convinced: (1) the necessary changes can be made without federal aid if business educators want them made badly enough to fight for them.; (2) nothing short of an act as specific as the Smith-Hughes and George-Deen Acts can be counted upon to get essential changes made; and (3) no such federal act is likely to be passed at any time.²

The first two statements above appear to be correct in the light of current events. The third statement has proved to be incorrect. At the time he wrote the above, he believed that federal aid for specific areas of education was past. He said:

The day of special grants for vocational education, or for any other kind for that matter, is over. There will be further grants in aid of education, but they will be for such use as the states may elect to make of them in any or all fields of education. If the N. E. A. bill for the support of education is passed and it will be, some time, no funds made available are likely to be earmarked for vocational business education.³

Research

Much of Nichols' adult life was devoted to research. He conducted research, he supervised research, he interpreted research, and he severely

¹Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XXV (January, 1950), p. 26.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

criticized research. His intense interest about research in business education was demonstrated in his extensive writing about it. Perhaps no other aspect of business education was of so much concern to him because he believed that any changes in business education should be based on sound research findings.

From time to time, Nichols expressed his beliefs about what research is, how research should be conducted, why so much research is defective and superficial, who really benefits from much of the research conducted, what research methods and techniques are available, how research statistics need to be carefully explained and used, and why a lag exists between research results and practice.

Nichols believed research in business education should be conducted by qualified individuals using appropriate procedures and techniques. He saw research as a process by which one should ". . . start with a question, gain an impression, seek corroboratory evidence, establish the facts, and draw sound conclusions. . ."1 He recognized the great need for research to aid in solving business education problems. He said: "In no other area of vocational education is there greater need for more sound research projects than in that of business education."2 Consequently, he believed that those who conducted research effectively should be encouraged in every way possible.

More about what Nichols believed the research process to be is revealed by the following:

¹F. G. Nichols, "Significant Research in Business Education," Harvard Educational Review, XIII (March, 1943), p. 98.

²Ibid.

No one should undertake to do research until he has a real specific problem of sufficient interest and importance to him to arouse his enthusiasm for the task of throwing light on it. No steps should be taken to deal with the problem selected until it has been clearly stated. (At this point many seemingly important problems fall apart). No attack on the problem should proceed far until a complete plan of attack has been mapped out. (At this point many problems are greatly simplified when it becomes obvious that too much has been included). Until one knows what he will do with facts gathered he is not ready to go after them. (At this point he may reach the conclusion that when he has the facts all he will be able to say is: Here they are; so what?) At least some idea as to what effect his findings will have on his local program, if not on others outside his area, should be in his mind before he gets very far into his investigation.¹

Nichols was aware that much research in business education is poorly done by incompetent researchers and that much of it should not be reported in business education publications. He wrote:

Research is a commonly used term these days. Time was when specially equipped people did most of it. Now everyone does it. In earlier days only carefully planned and expertly managed projects rated this designation. Only scientifically drawn conclusions were considered authoritative. Now almost any superficial investigation or study is considered research, and the results of it are treated as authoritative. What is even worse, most reports of such studies find their way into print--several hundred each year. What is in print must be so. Hence no end of new and still questionable practices are spawned annually.²

Nichols attributed much of the blame for "poor" research to the requirements--mainly the master's degree--of colleges and universities.

Our colleges and universities are largely responsible for the situation noted. They have a thesis requirement for every advanced degree. Hence every candidate, regardless of his professional training or goal, must do a research project and report upon it. Since the thesis is but one requirement at the Master's level, those who administer that degree cannot be too exacting in their appraisal of what is reported. On the other hand at the Doctorate level the thesis

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, What Would You Do," The Journal of Business Education, XVI (April, 1941), p. 11.

²Nichols, American Business Education, VI (October, 1949), p. 11.

usually is the major requirement and in high-standard universities it may be considered dependable evidence of something, if not completely authoritative as to the conclusions reached.¹

Many times before this column has pointed out the futility of much research in our field and urged that teachers and supervisors and college professors become more critical in their appraisal of it. Once again it is appropriate to condemn the master's thesis requirement for much of the defective research whose reports get published in one form or another.²

Nichols' critical view of superficial research did not keep him from seeing that there is benefit to the participants in such research work. He wrote in 1933:

Every such thesis and report, if conscientiously undertaken and seen through, has immeasurable value for its author; but not every such report has value for others.³

In 1949, he expressed the same thought as follows:

Even at the Master's level a superficial study can be of great value to the candidate. It may show him the importance of classroom experimentation, of gathering essential facts as a basis for curriculum construction, and of honest interpretation of data gathered. It also may show how simple investigations should be made and how experimentation should be carried on. When such research is thus used by universities, its benefits to participating candidates may far outweigh its disadvantages to others.⁴

While admitting that even a superficial study could be of great value to an individual researcher, Nichols believed that something needed to be done to protect business educators from being exposed to the results of defective research. He suggested that:

¹Ibid.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Gullibility or Professional Apathy?" The Journal of Business Education, XXVII (November, 1951), p. 123.

³F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, The Questionnaire," The Journal of Business Education, VIII (June, 1933), p. 8.

⁴Nichols, American Business Education, pp. 11-12.

Student investigators should be told at the outset that their studies are being made for their own benefit; that as a rule reports will not be published or given wide publicity; that only those which happen to make a real contribution to our knowledge of the subject under investigation will be printed in some form; and that no stigma attaches to a report that fails to warrant publication.¹

Nichols was critical of those who would place the main burden of research on the already overworked classroom teacher. Classroom teachers might do research in the field of method; however, he said that "The average teacher-load does not leave much time for research beyond that which can be managed in connection with one's teaching duties."² He believed that classroom teachers should have a share in establishing policies, selecting equipment, determining objectives, and setting up standards for business preparation. But, he did not believe they should have the responsibility of gathering all of the factual data required in making the above decisions. Classroom teachers could make their greatest contribution, according to Nichols, in the following way:

If classroom teachers this year implement the results of research already available to them they will improve business education far more than they possibly can through such fragmentary research projects as they will have time to organize and manage.³

Nichols had misgivings about attempts to involve many classroom teachers in research activities. In his opinion, research should be limited to individuals who had the necessary interest, aptitude, ability, time, and facilities. He felt that colleges and universities were emphasizing research to the detriment of classroom instruction, and he did not want this situation to carry over to the secondary-school level. He wrote:

¹Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, VIII (June, 1933), p. 8.

²Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XXII (January, 1947), p. 9.

³Ibid.

Too much research ability and interest and too little teaching ability have reduced instruction in many colleges and universities to a degree that is at last attracting much attention. . . . Now it would seem that we are trying to over-emphasize research at the secondary school level. Teaching is one thing. Research is a quite different thing. Schools need expert teachers to implement the results of research studies made by competent workers in that field.¹

Various techniques and methods for conducting research in business education were discussed by Nichols. He made reference, at one time or another, to the questionnaire technique, the expert jury technique, the survey of literature technique, the personal interview technique, the testing technique, the local survey, and the experimental technique. Of the methods and techniques listed, Nichols expressed his beliefs more often and at greater length about the local survey, the questionnaire technique and the expert jury technique.

The survey of literature technique involves listing, studying, and reporting the conflicting views about a topic. Nichols indicated the following about this technique:

To carry through such a study and come up with authoritative results requires much time, patient study, expert interpretation, a keen sense of the importance of facts presented, an unbiased approach, full knowledge of the degree of authority behind each reference item used, and great expertness in reaching and reporting conclusions.²

Concerning the personal interview technique, Nichols asserted:

This method has its uses. The authenticity of its results will depend on many factors--selection of interviewees, carefully worked out interview plan, care in timing interviews, accurate on-the-spot recording of answers to questions, proper weighting of answers, and competent interpretation of data noted. Not an easy task. Not many teacher-made studies of this kind inspire confidence. Not that teachers are unqualified to use this method, but that it is more time-consuming than their schedules will permit.³

¹Nichols, American Business Education, VI (October, 1949), p. 12.

²F. G. Nichols, "The Lag Between Research Results and Practice," National Business Education Quarterly, XVII (March, 1949), p. 58.

³Ibid., pp. 58-9.

One using the testing technique, according to Nichols, should: ". . . Decide what are acceptable as the aims of such teaching and test those who have been taught to see whether or not expected results have been achieved."¹ He believed more research of this type needed to be done in business education. He believed many research questions could be answered in no other dependable way.

Nichols held that the local survey, designed to determine facts about local occupational opportunities, should not be too narrow in either its data-gathering aims or its conclusions. He indicated that:

. . . The whole truth about commercial occupations should be sought. Opportunities on the higher levels of business organization as well as initial contact, or stepping-stone opportunities, should be determined. . . . local opportunities should not be allowed to become the boundary lines beyond which commercial education should not go as far as the number to be trained for any given occupation is concerned.²

Why he believed local surveys should be made and what they should accomplish were revealed in the following quotation:

If, for no other reason, local surveys should be made to establish helpful contact between the school and business; to keep teachers from becoming pedantic and somewhat fossilized with the gradual receding of their own school and college days. . . . Through such a study these things should be accomplished:

1. Education and business should be brought into closer relationship to their mutual advantage.
2. Commercial teachers should be kept abreast of the times in business matters having a bearing on their teaching.
3. Business men should be enlisted for permanent services to the cause of business education.
4. The actual needs of local business men for trained commercial workers should be discovered.

¹Ibid., p. 59.

²F. G. Nichols, "What are the Steps in the Process of Determining the Occupational Opportunities in a Given City?" Foundations of Business Education, First Yearbook (New York: Eastern Commercial Teachers Association, 1929), pp. 364-65.

5. The particular jobs for which school training should be given should be listed.

6. The promotional opportunities inherent in these jobs should be revealed.

7. The part that commercial education can play in helping boys and girls to take advantage of these promotional opportunities should be made clear.

8. The actual requirements of contact or stepping-stone jobs should be listed in terms of occupational skills, vocational intelligence, general business knowledge and social understanding.

9. Shortcomings of training already given should be revealed by a study of the occupational histories of those who had such training before entering upon employment.

10. The way should be paved for the establishment or improvement of plans for dealing with the placement problem.

11. The basis for an adequate program of "pusher" or "extension" business training should be laid.¹

Nichols contended that a local survey should provide for extensive contacts between teachers and businessmen, not only for the initial survey but also on a continuing basis. Since business is everchanging, ". . . Commercial education must be dynamic and fully responsive to the constantly changing needs of business if it would render the largest measure of service to its pupil patrons and employing clientele.² If business teachers would continue to use businessmen they contacted during the survey as advisors and resource personnel, the results of the local survey could be made permanent; and, it would not need to be repeated.

Nichols singled out the questionnaire for considerable discussion and criticism. He, at different times, described the questionnaire technique, suggested how the questionnaire should be prepared, and criticized its weaknesses. His general thinking about this technique was probably best revealed when he wrote: "The most often used technique is that of the questionnaire. What a multitude of sins this device is responsible for!"³

¹Ibid., p. 365.

²Ibid., pp. 365-66.

³Nichols, National Business Education Quarterly, XVII (March, 1949), p. 57.

Although he was highly critical of the questionnaire technique as a method of research in business education, he believed that it could serve a useful purpose.

It is useful; it has much to commend it. For example, it is the outward expression of an inner urge to find out how to do a better piece of work; how to teach something better; how to find new instruction material; how to remedy faults of technique; how to be sure that current procedures are sound. . . . It is a neat, though sometimes annoying device for use in gathering factual data. It is a contributing cause to reflective thinking on the part of the one who prepares it and the one who received it. In short, the questionnaire doubtless has made for itself a place in the field of research; and also a few enemies who can see no good in it.¹

Nichols believed, however, that the questionnaire technique could be made more useful. He believed that: The questionnaire should be carefully constructed. Individuals sending questionnaires should be well qualified. Furthermore, respondents should check only those questions they are qualified to answer. Concerning the construction of the questionnaire, he said that "the construction of a questionnaire is no simple task. One cannot set down questions in an offhand sort of way and hope to get answers from which sound conclusions can be drawn. . ."2 In another article, he wrote:

Every prospective user of a questionnaire should fill it out conscientiously before he perpetrates it on anyone else. Then he should try it on a few others who are willing to be guinea pigs for him. When the "bugs" have been eliminated, if this instrument still looks to be a useful one for his purposes, he may duplicate and mail it. This procedure will avoid much trouble.³

¹Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, VIII (June, 1933), p. 8.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, The Ubiquitous Questionnaire," The Journal of Business Education, XXVIII (November, 1952), p. 52.

³Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XVI (April, 1941), p. 11.

In one discourse, Nichols presented a list of suggestions for those who would use the questionnaire technique. He declared:

1. Investigations undertaken should be confined to problems well within the scope of their ability and training.
2. Data obtained by the use of questionnaires usually is tabulated; hence only tabulatable answers should be called for.
3. Student investigators should learn to distinguish between fact and opinion in prosecuting a study as these two responses cannot be brought together in a single table.
4. Questionnaires rarely should be used for gathering anything but facts.
5. No questionnaire should be sent out until it has been approved by the instructor who it is assumed is competent to evaluate it.
6. No questionnaire should be sent to any but a carefully selected and approved list of questionees.

.
 If the above rules are followed, the much maligned questionnaire will assume its rightful place in the field of research, many busy people will be spared much trouble, and controversial problems will be solved much more readily and surely.¹

Of respondents, Nichols said:

. . . Almost any teacher will check almost any questionnaire regardless of its nature, and regardless of his or her incompetence in any field covered. Few will pass up a single item. The shorthand and typewriting specialist will check the distributive field items without having had any contact with that field and the retail selling teacher will likewise make a stab at the shorthand questions.²

Nichols suggested that studies be set up with separate sections, each covering a special area. Then, respondents should check only the areas in which they have had training and experience. He pleaded:

Fellow teachers, I plead with you to resolve. . . not to check on any questionnaire that may come to you any item that lies outside the area of your special competence, or any item the meaning of

¹Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, VIII (June, 1933), p. 8.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Now We Know--or Do We?" The Journal of Business Education, XXV (September, 1949), p. 9.

which is not entirely clear to you. Only thus can you make your special competence count in the direction of better business education in our schools.¹

Certain weaknesses of the questionnaire technique, such as construction of the instrument and replies of questionees, have been inferred in the foregoing discussion. In addition, other weaknesses of this method were given special attention by Nichols in his writings. In January, 1933, Nichols wrote: "One shortcoming of questionnaire studies is that they do not reveal the reasons for the facts they turn up."²

Another weakness of the questionnaire technique that was frequently criticized by Nichols was the tendency of users of this technique to confuse opinions with facts. In 1929, he said: "Many studies have failed to show results that are reliable because the surveyors did not distinguish between objective fact and subjective opinion. It should be remembered that facts count for more than do opinions."³

In 1941 and again in 1952, he expressed this same belief as follows:

Often in the past I have said my say about the questionnaire as a device for getting misinformation. I have tried to differentiate between those that call for factual data and those that seek opinions. The former are useful; the latter are of doubtful worth. Facts can be tabulated because facts are facts entirely independent of who furnishes them.⁴

. . . Facts and opinions needed must be carefully determined, and

¹Ibid., p. 34.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Blind Spots in Commercial Education," The Journal of Business Education, VIII (January, 1933), p. 8.

³Nichols, Foundations of Business Education, p. 368.

⁴Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XVI (April, 1941), p. 11.

facts and opinions must be treated separately.¹

Nichols viewed opinion questionnaire studies as generally unreliable. He said that "an opinion is only as valuable as the competence of the one stating it."² He believed that the opinion of an authority in some particular area of business education was, in most cases, much more reliable than either the opinions or practices of the rank-and-file. He was highly critical of majority opinion and practice. Nichols attributed the practice of relying on majority opinion as authority in business education to our democratic heritage.

Living in a democracy we tend to assume that majority opinion is the best guide for action. Yet whether or not it is depends on the relative degree of competence of those canvassed. The competence of questionees in a questionnaire study is important. It rarely is taken into account in selecting participants for a study or in reporting results of it. Hence little if anything is proved by such studies except where facts alone, as distinguished from opinions, are sought.³

To determine majority opinion about a particular practice or course of action, according to Nichols, is not necessarily beneficial. Majority opinion may not be right. He expressed the same belief about majority practice--from which most opinions stem--when he declared:

". . . It is absurd, if not misleading, to rely upon majority practice for evidence as to the value of anything in dispute. As I have pointed out so many times, majority practice can be so wrong."⁴

¹Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XXVIII (November, 1952), p. 52.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Objectives--Student Opinion," The Journal of Business Education, XXII (February, 1947), p. 9.

³F. G. Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XXV (September, 1949), p. 9.

⁴Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XXVIII (February, 1953), p. 184.

Nichols, in 1941, presented a challenge to college professors in which he appropriately summarized his beliefs about the questionnaire technique. Today, this challenge is still applicable to research practice.

It is up to professors of business education, under whose direction most of these studies are undertaken, to see that all are properly handled, that the limitations of each are clearly understood, that the student gets all possible benefit out of the experience, and that publication and listing follow only when the character and authenticity of results justify making them a part of the permanent record.¹

"Then there is that abomination in the research world, known as the 'Expert Jury' type of research, whose reliability is wholly dependent on the degree of expertness of the jurors and the way they are used."² From this introductory statement regarding the expert jury technique, one can see that Nichols recognized weaknesses in the use of this technique. Individuals using this technique question a jury of leaders who furnish the facts about a researchers topic. The researcher uses these facts to draw and report his conclusions. Nichols described and gave an example of the expert jury technique in the following quotations:

A graduate student (commercial teacher) wants to find out which is better, the "functional" or the "manual" method of approach in the teaching of shorthand. A "jury of experts" is selected. Prominent business educators qualify regardless of any lack of experience with either of these two methods of teaching. A questionnaire is prepared--a curious mixture of questions of opinion and fact. Data thus obtained are tabulated, usually without any attempt to differentiate fact and opinion, and without proper weighting based on the background of the participants.³

. . . This is the finest illustration of undersampling, since the basis of selection is often defective, few "leaders" are equally

¹Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XVI (April, 1941), p. 11.

²Nichols, National Business Education Quarterly, XVII (March, 1949), p. 58.

³Nichols, Harvard Educational Review, XIII (March, 1943), p. 99.

well qualified to answer all questions put to them, and opinions among them vary as widely as they do among teachers in general.¹

Unless panel members of an expert jury are all qualified to discuss the topic being researched, Nichols believed that little good would result from a study using this technique. He questioned the advisability of reorganizing business education programs on the basis of such research.

Finally, Nichols believed that the experimental technique was being neglected by business educators. He believed that this technique was the only one, for example, that could show the comparative merits of two methods of teaching. He asserted:

Admittedly experimental research is more costly of time and money, and more demanding in the way of technical competence. But it alone can be relied upon to answer many of the most urgent questions that must be answered before great improvements in instructional methods can be expected. It would be better if research funds and talent could be pooled for an attack on some of these questions, instead of being spent on superficial studies that singly or in combination prove little.²

"One can prove anything he wants to with statistics" is a statement that is often made to discredit statistical data. Nichols was critical of the way the statistics of business education research was often used. He believed that statistics needed to be honestly presented and carefully explained so as to prevent needless misconceptions about them. Concerning statistics, he declared:

A long time ago Mark Twain is said to have made a remark which indicated his belief that statistics is a term which may be regarded as describing the superlative lie. Without going the whole distance with the late Mr. Clemens, we can follow along to a point where we

¹Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XVI (April, 1941), p. 11.

²Nichols, National Business Education Quarterly, XVII (March, 1949), p. 59.

agree that unexplained or misused statistics often do approach the twilight zone between truth and untruth.¹

Some lag between research results and practice is inevitable. It takes time for new methods and objectives to be incorporated into business education programs. However, Nichols believed that this lag was greater than necessary. He referred to this lag between research results and practice by saying:

. . . The lag is so great in some areas that the findings of research studies often are out of date long before indicated changes are made. This is as true of purely local research as it is of that of state or national scope; of the solid, authentic kind as it is of the more superficial survey type.²

In 1949, Nichols proposed that a 5-year moratorium be placed on research in business education to allow practice to catch up with research results. He mentioned some of the specific practices that he believed were lagging behind proven research--practices like the following that still lag today:

In typewriting, research evidence indicates there is no necessary correlation between scores made on copying speed tests and scores based on office-typing production tests. Yet, teachers still stress typing a few more net-words-a minute on short straight-copy tests to the detriment of real office-typing work. Studies have shown that classroom-type dictation does little to develop all-around stenographic ability. Yet, shorthand teachers still use this method almost exclusively. The number of individuals being trained for distributive occupations is still far

¹Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XV (February, 1940), p. 9.

²Nichols, National Business Education Quarterly, XVII (March, 1949), p. 19.

less than what research has indicated to be necessary. Preparation of office clerks still lags far behind preparation for office positions in shorthand, typewriting, and bookkeeping. This condition exists even though research has shown that there are more positions for other kinds of office clerks than these three positions combined. Research continually has revealed the need for developing desired personal traits. Still, little concentrated effort is made to improve good personal trait development. Research in guidance has shown that students with certain deficiencies should be excluded from vocational courses. Yet, students are allowed to enroll who have little, if any, chance of success.¹

Most business educators would agree that practice lags too far behind research results. Many different reasons for this condition could be offered. Nichols believed that the following reasons could be given to explain this lag:

There are many reasons for the lag of which complaint is made. Business teachers are not wholly responsible for it, but their fair share is a big one.

Inertia plays a large part in this situation. It is easier to keep on doing something than it is to do something new.

Lack of administrative support often nullifies the best efforts of teachers to change offerings in important ways.

Parental insistence keeps many misfits in business courses; in shorthand especially.

Political factors often play an important part in maintaining the status quo.

Teachers trained to teach certain subjects rightly hesitate to teach others, and neglect to prepare to teach new ones.

Employers have taken their cue from educators and universally ask for what teachers produce rather than for what they should produce--copying skill instead of typing ability, spurt shorthand instead of sustained writing and transcription speed or all-around stenographic ability. So why change?

¹Nichols, American Business Education, VI (October, 1949), pp. 12-19.

Little or no competent leadership at either the local or state level to stimulate and keep moving trends in the direction of the better training all research proves to be needed.

Heavy teaching schedules and school clerical work that prevent moves in new directions, or even sustained planning for them.

Lack of pressures in the direction of change, and the presence of plenty against it.

These and many other potent obstructions retard progress and often block it completely.¹

Nichols raised many questions about theory and practice in business education. Although he did not answer all of his questions, he did propose solutions to many of them. He did suggest ways of strengthening research in business education and of determining the extent to which practice has lagged behind research results. He directed his still timely suggestions to the UBEA Research Foundation:

1. Undertake to list the most important defects in business education, not on the basis of extensive new research but on that of well known facts now in the possession of all well informed business educators.

2. Undertake to bring to light what actually has been accomplished in the way of remedying the defects listed.

3. Organize unquestionably competent committees to assume responsibility for each activity in the proposed Foundation research program, going outside of membership as may be necessary to assure the degree of competence and objectivity desired.

4. Make a careful study of the reports of research to date with a view to squeezing out of each of them such morsels of value as it may contain, without fear or favor. (Look with great suspicion on Master theses, and don't consider doctorate theses sacrosanct.)

5. Consolidate all of the tid-bits uncovered into one report that will reveal exactly what has been accomplished and what remains to be done to produce reasonably complete and accurate answers to the relatively small number of major problems selected for consideration.

6. Outline in considerable detail specific research projects yet to be undertaken and completed before final answers to certain problems can be arrived at.

7. Offer all interested persons and organizations opportunity to take on one of these projects--doctorate candidates, professors, N.O.M.A., teacher-training departments, foundations, etc.

¹Nichols, National Business Education Quarterly, XVII (March, 1949), pp. 22-3.

8. Insist that the possession of means of carrying through a project be proven before it is made available for research under the Foundation's sponsorship.

9. Scrutinize each research report with the utmost care and competence before acceptance and publication to make sure that its findings are cut down to size.

10. Build up such a reputation for thoroughness that Foundation-sponsored research reports will come to be looked upon as the gold standard of research in the field of business education.

Such a program conceivably might not only tell us exactly where we stand in the matter of dependable research results, but also reveal to what extent practice actually does lag behind research findings.¹

Nichols' beliefs about research have been presented in this section; and, of much research, he was highly critical. The following statement concisely summarizes Nichols' thinking about research and reveals that he was in favor of competent research.

I am not opposed to research. Not at all. I am for it. But I want it to be what it purports to be; not superficial tinkering with a problem or topic in a quest for degree credit. I want its outcomes to be honestly evaluated and clearly reported. I want its motivating purpose to be finding the truth about something, not the proving of something to the advantage of the researcher or of some view already held by him.

I want to stress also that I am in favor of studies and investigations and experimentation in every school and college in an effort to find better ways of doing these things and of better things to do. But I want such local projects to be treated for what they are--activities entered into largely for the benefit of their sponsors. I want their findings presented for what they really are--partial evidence of something and not proof of anything.²

Accreditation

There is need, according to Nichols, for accrediting agencies to motivate schools to upgrade their programs and to recognize schools that have achieved high standards. He was critical, however, of some of the

¹Ibid., pp. 60-1.

²Nichols, American Business Education, VI (October, 1949), p. 12.

criteria that are used to accredit even academic programs. For instance, he criticized accrediting agencies for evaluating a school staff on the sole basis of degrees held or for determining the adequacy of a library on the number, rather than the appropriateness, of books on hand.

In 1951, Nichols indicated that:

. . . Business education at the high school, junior college, and university level is without adequate accreditation such as can be relied upon by either a prospective student or an employer of graduates.¹

At the college and university level, Nichols did recognize the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business as an accrediting agency. However, because so few schools of business belonged to this organization, he was critical of it.

. . . It is obvious that either this is not a truly functioning national accrediting agency, or that there is something drastically wrong with business training in the great majority of colleges and universities, or that accreditation standards are too high or unrealistic or academic.²

It was at the secondary school and junior college levels that Nichols believed accreditation of business education was being neglected the most. He asserted:

Accrediting agencies for "colleges and secondary schools" pay scant attention to the business department of the latter school. Rarely if ever do they inspect that department. Almost never do they include on their inspection staff a competent business educator. Yet they accredit secondary schools on the basis of their academic program and facilities, such accreditation carrying with it the approval of business courses many of which are far below any acceptable accreditation standard.

The same is true at the junior college level. . . . relatively few of their business departments have been subjected to inspection

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Accreditation," The Journal of Business Education, XXVII (October, 1951), pp. 53, 77.

²Ibid., p. 53.

by competent business educators or even appraised in any satisfactory way through the use of criteria appropriate for vocational business training.¹

In addition to being inadequate in many cases to accredit academic programs, Nichols believed that accrediting criteria should be supplemented and weighted so as to provide for the rating of vocational education programs.

. . . What ever may be said of the criteria used for academic institutions, they are not wholly adequate to the purposes of accreditation of vocational or professional business training.²

He suggested the following additional criteria be utilized in accreditation investigations.

"Clear achievable objectives" should be added. "Achievement in terms of these objectives" should be included. Both should be weighted much heavier than any other criterion. "Occupational experienced" staff, not merely "competent staff" in terms of degrees held, is essential. "Suitable reference material and instructional aids," not merely "adequate library" in terms of number of books in each of several categories is desirable.³

In brief, Nichols believed that the main basis for determining the success of a school program is to study the school's achievement in terms of its stated objectives, that criteria for accrediting academic programs need to be strengthened, and that the usual academic yardstick for appraising college preparatory programs needs to be supplemented to provide for evaluating vocational education.

Professional Associations

There are many associations that provide service to business education. Associational effort has helped to bring about needed improvements in business education at local, state, and national levels. Nichols

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

believed that associations are useful in helping to unify business educators on many matters of importance. In his writings, he expressed beliefs about the relationships that should exist among the various business education associations, the need for associations to identify the major issues in business education, the manner in which association literature should be published, and the way speakers and programs at business education associational meetings should be utilized.

Nichols recognized that the business teacher's desire to have professional contacts and to exchange helpful ideas causes the multiplicity of associational effort. He would not have advocated eliminating any business education organization that served a useful purpose. He did believe, however, that the various organizations should determine what services they are best equipped to give so as to avoid competition. He maintained that there should be organizations at various levels to serve different purposes. At the top, Nichols believed there should be a national association that all business educators should support.

It seems reasonably clear that there should be one national association which would bring to all commercial teachers and other business educators an opportunity for an annual exchange of ideas on questions of major importance and for a chance to meet their fellow-workers from widely scattered areas.¹

In this writer's humble judgment there is not a commercial teacher in the U.S.A., bar none, who has a valid excuse for not joining up in this movement to establish a united front in the field of business education.²

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Too Many Associations," The Journal of Business Education, XV (January, 1940), p. 9.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, UBEA Forum," The Journal of Business Education, XXII (May, 1947), p. 9.

In addition to a national association, Nichols advocated, in 1940, that there should be regional associations in business education. Each business educator should belong to the national and one regional association as a matter of professional duty. Other associations should be entitled to support on the basis of their providing desired benefits or services.¹ This type of organizational structure is available to business teachers today through the National Business Education Association and its affiliated regional and state associations.

The National Council of Business Education (the forerunner of the NBEA), according to Nichols, was dependent on business educators through their associations to give it support and direction. He believed the Council existed to represent the associations which it served. Also, he believed its activities should be restricted to those that concerned all business educators and that were approved by the representatives of supporting associations. Nichols believed the Council's greatest service could be rendered through:

- (1) National policy-making;
- (2) Participation in educational studies of national scope;
- (3) Watchfulness to see that business education is not overlooked when national legislation is under consideration;
- and (4) Improvement of the National Clerical Ability Testing Program.²

Several times, Nichols expressed dissatisfaction with business education associations for emphasizing problems, or "tricks of the trade," in business education instead of more important basic issues. He also

¹Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XV (January, 1940), p. 9.

²F. G. Nichols, "Report on the Activities of the National Council of Business Education 1934-39," The Journal of Business Education, XV (October, 1939), p. 32.

expressed his dissatisfaction with business educators who, because of their narrow professional outlook, criticized leaders who attempted to isolate and discuss vital issues that underlie all good business teaching. Nichols believed that business educators need to first come to grips with issues and then proceed to solve the problems that arise in implementing recognized and accepted issues--problems whose solutions of necessity differ because of the differences that exist in teachers, classes, and local school conditions.¹

In one article on issues and problems, Nichols wrote:

There is a difference between an issue and a problem. The former is concerned with something vitally important in the way of a principle or philosophy which underlies the whole structure of business education or of an important phase of it, and about which there is a certain amount of disagreement. The latter more often grows out of attempts to put some sound principle or philosophy into practice. . . . Every teacher and every educational administrator has his problems, and will continue to have them even if all issues should be resolved.

.
 But an issue is something quite different; something that permeates the whole fabric of the business training program; something that may weaken its supports, and rob it of its substance and permanency; something that must be dealt with if this field of education is to possess that degree of unity of purpose and method which alone will insure its survival as a truly functioning part of the educational system. And, if it does not survive, the classroom teacher will not need the helps she so vehemently demands of leadership in this field.²

In illustrating what Nichols meant by the terms, issues and problems, he argued that whether or not vocational business preparation should provide for occupational experience is an issue. Once there is general

¹F. G. Nichols, "Issues and Problems: The Concern of All," Problems and Issues in Business Education, Seventh Yearbook of the National Business Teachers Association, (Bowling Green, Kentucky: National Business Teachers Association, 1941), pp. 1-3.

²Ibid., pp. 2-3.

agreement about the answer to an issue, then it is time to seek ways and means of implementing the issue. If a majority of business educators, for example, decide that business preparation should include job contacts, they can then begin to attack the problems of implementing this issue-- problems like how occupational contacts can best be obtained and what kinds of jobs students should be allowed to hold.¹

There is need, according to Nichols, for some organization with the support of all business educators and the cooperation of the various business education associations to isolate the major issues in business education. This organization should gather and weigh facts and suggest national policies on these major issues. Based on the facts gathered, business teachers should then be asked to decide whether or not the suggested national policies on major issues should be adopted. Nichols believed there should be a willingness on the part of business teachers to postpone concern about some of the many classroom problems until the major issues that underlie these problems are resolved.² Nichols undoubtedly would have been pleased with the accomplishments of the Policies Commission for Business and Economic Education. This commission has issued various booklets setting forth generally accepted statements about important topics that concern all of business education.

The following quotation reflects the degree of importance that Nichols attached to the subject of issues in business education. He wrote:

They concern every teacher of business subjects in every public and private school in the whole country. They underlie all of the

¹Ibid., pp. 3-4.

²Ibid., p. 5.

surface problems with which teachers struggle in classrooms and in associational meetings. They will be dealt with effectively only when the majority of teachers come to look upon them as being worthy of their attention.¹

Nichols read extensively the literature of business education. He commented on much of it in his "Criticism, Comment and Challenge" editorials. Of association periodicals, he noted certain limitations while admitting that discriminating readers could receive much help from reading this literature.

In the first place, for lack of financial support it has to be a bit opportunistic in the choice of material to publish. Too often its chief source of material is the annual convention program. But many papers that go over well at a meeting by way of provoking discussion, can be quite misleading, even dangerous, when published with the implication of authority.

In the second place, part-time editorship rarely can be counted upon to work out plans for issues far enough ahead to assure highest quality and adequate coverage of important problems. Part-time advertising management cannot be expected to secure advertising accounts sufficient to contribute the essential financial support to this type of periodical.²

In addition to the above limitations, Nichols believed many articles published in association literature represented mere expression of opinion and were misleading. He believed the careful reader could benefit from reading association literature. But, he believed that too many readers were not critical enough and accepted much information that was open to question.³

He took issue with the practice of having either to report or to publish every paper presented at association meetings. He believed that a joint editorial board could well be organized to cull out the best

¹F. G. Nichols, "Current Literature in Business Education," Modern Business Education, XV (March, 1949), p. 7-8.

²Ibid., p. 8.

³Ibid.

presentations from the many business education association meetings. Such a board should be free to reject any paper not worthy of inclusion in a combined publication. Nichols went so far as to suggest that a professional business education journal should be established that would command the respect of all educators. This journal should be free of advertising so as to eliminate any possibility of bias in the selection of articles to be published.¹ He did not believe that such a journal existed in his time and undoubtedly would have expressed the same idea about today's business education journals.

Finally, Nichols also wrote about speakers and programs at business education association meetings. First, he was disturbed because most of the principal speakers were publishing company representatives. He did not criticize the presentations given by this free talent, and he recognized the fact that money for speakers was usually meagre. However, he believed that to avoid being opportunistic in selecting speakers and to avoid having programs become repetitions, something needed to be done to provide programs from other than just this source.²

In addition to suggesting that more financial aid should be requested for business education programs from state teachers associations, Nichols suggested that associations should use their own members as speakers. Members who conduct experiments or research should report on their activities. These reports could be the basis of discussion at

¹Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XV (January, 1940), p. 9.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, A Business Teachers' Meeting," The Journal of Business Education, XXIII (November, 1947), p. 9.

business-teacher meetings.¹ Other possible program sources that he believed should be considered are reported in the following quotation.

Interim committees to investigate and report upon vital problems could be appointed. Programs could be built around their reports. Published reports of research carried on elsewhere are issued annually. These could be assigned for study and report. In short, without much money, excellent and professionally profitable programs for "teacher" institutes" can be organized. But there must be enthusiasm for our particular field of educational service, a willingness to devote much time and hard work to program-making, and a long-term approach to the problem of organizing and managing result-getting annual conferences on vital issues and problems facing business educators. . .²

Nichols advised program chairmen not to select top-level business executives just for "window dressing." Make sure they have pertinent topics about which to talk. And, don't overlook subordinates to top executives when seeking speakers. Lists of speakers in one's community and their topics should be prepared, according to Nichols, well in advance of the time they are needed.³

In order to avoid program duplications at association meetings and to afford each association an opportunity to render its most effective service, Nichols proposed that the major associations form a joint planning committee to develop long-term programs of activities.⁴ Such planned long-term programs of associational effort could enable each association to handle one aspect of a particular major issue and thus avoid duplicating convention themes and topics. The meetings of the national and regional business education associations would then be distinctively different.⁵

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 26.

⁴F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Which Will be First," The Journal of Business Education, XVI (January, 1941), p. 9.

⁵Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XV (January, 1940), p. 22.

It is evident from the forgoing discussion that Nichols believed that associational effort in business education is desirable. He believed in the desirability of a national association through which questions of major importance could be stressed. In addition, he said that "local, state, and regional associations are essential. Each has its place;. . ."1

All of the conditions referred to in this chapter need to be present in varying degrees if there is to be sound business education. Some of the conditions are more important than others. But ideally, all should exist. In Chapter V, curriculum construction, methods of teaching business subjects, and other instructional considerations will be presented.

1Nichols, Modern Business Education, VII (January, 1941), p. 3.

CHAPTER V

INSTRUCTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS IN BUSINESS EDUCATION

Nichols' views about the nature and purposes of business education and the conditions essential to effective business education have been examined in the preceding chapters. This chapter presents his beliefs about certain important instructional considerations. Topics included that relate to instruction in business education are curriculum, subject matter areas, methodology, and standards.

Curriculum in Business Education

The business education curriculum is a very important instructional consideration. It dictates the kinds of occupations for which business students will be prepared, and it specifies the general business and technical business courses and subjects that will be offered by a particular school. Nichols said that "a business curriculum should be a carefully planned sequence of courses so arranged as to achieve one or more specific purposes clearly perceived and definitely stated."¹ He maintained, however, that such a curriculum should be flexible enough to provide for the needs and capacities of individual pupils.²

¹F. G. Nichols, "A Philosophy of the Business Curriculum," National Business Education Outlook, Sixth Yearbook of the National Commercial Teachers Federation, 1940, p. 12.

²Ibid.

Fundamental Concerns

In organizing a business curriculum, Nichols stated that one should take into account the following fundamental concerns: "(1) people to be trained, (2) objectives of the training offered; and (3) conditions under which the training should be given."¹

Regarding the people to be taught, Nichols wrote:

. . . any attempt at curricular construction or revision should be begun by a most careful appraisal of the people in whose interest it is being undertaken. Such an appraisal will take into account all pertinent factors which will influence their work in any curriculum which may be organized for them.

.
Sex, age, nationality, general education, background business training, occupational experience or contacts, school record, personal traits, personal appearance, emotional stability, special interests, outstanding abilities, and definitely proved interests are some of the factors which are suggestive of the importance of knowing much about the people to be trained before organizing a curriculum to meet their needs, desires, and potentialities.²

The objectives upon which a secondary school business curriculum should be based were discussed at some length in Chapter III. Briefly restated, a business curriculum in the junior high school should provide try-out and exploratory experiences of a business nature, develop skills and understandings necessary to economic living, and prepare a foundation for the further study of business. In the high school, a business curriculum should, according to Nichols, include subjects that assist in providing students with a broad general education, with substantial background business information, and with usable occupational skills. Consumer business subjects are appropriate for providing exploratory experiences and for contributing to a student's general education. The

¹Ibid., p. 13.

²Ibid., pp. 14-15.

"social-business" courses are primarily to provide background business information. And, business skill subjects are necessary for insuring initial occupational competence.

With sound objectives determined and characteristics of students ascertained, conditions of instruction still need to be considered. According to Nichols, there should be suitable rooms and ample, up-to-date equipment. As noted in Chapter IV, there should also be proper selection of pupils for courses requiring special aptitudes and abilities, qualified teachers to teach business courses, opportunity for vocational students to obtain work experience, and suitable administration and supervision by competent persons in a community sympathetic to the aims of business education.¹

Specialization

Nichols advocated various kinds of occupational specializations within the business curriculum. He proposed a minimum of four business programs: stenographic, bookkeeping, general clerical, and distributive education. Such programming would allow a business student to specialize in one area and become occupationally competent while still receiving a sound general education. Nichols urged that the specialized programs be utilized for the following reasons:

- (1) Each of the curricular majors requires certain aptitudes, abilities, and interests quite different from those required for others;
- (2) Boys and girls differ greatly in their aptitudes, abilities, and interests;
- (3) Each vocational major should be accompanied by certain vocational minors, some general background subjects, and some related subjects through which fundamental business knowledge can be acquired;
- (4) There is not time for all desirable subjects and when

¹Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, pp. 116-129.

three or four vocational major are chosen, general education, or fundamental business knowledge, or essential related work is crowded out. All three may be diluted by carrying three or more vocational majors at the same time.¹

Nichols maintained that specialization of the above type would in actuality also give depth and breadth to a student's business preparation.

. . . the degree of specialization urged tends to broaden and deepen the scope of the business training received. The veils of overspecialization are avoided by differentiated curricula, each of which represents a well-rounded program of training which should insure that the essential skills, understanding of principles of business and general education will be obtained to the extent possible in the later high-school years, or on a post-high-school level.²

Because of the need for specialized programs and because of the universality of certain business activities, Nichols contended that local needs cannot entirely dictate a school's business education offerings. Often, the business education graduate finds it necessary to migrate away from the area where he received his business preparation. A particular local area may not provide opportunity for employment in the kinds of business occupations necessary to satisfy the wide variation in aptitudes, abilities, and interests represented in any sizable group of business students. Consequently, Nichols said that ". . . no adequate program of commercial education can be the out-come of a localized policy that ignores the theory of individual differences among boys and girls."³

As to the universality of business activities, Nichols noted that many business activities are common to business everywhere. Because of

¹Nichols, Objectives and Problems of Vocational Education, p. 442.

²Ibid.

³Nichols, Foundations of Business Education, p. 363.

this fact, more than just local influences and practices concerning common business activities need to be considered in curriculum development for business occupations.

. . . buying, selling, accounting, determining credit, handling stenographic work, typing, hiring workers, solving commercial traffic problems, financing, and collecting money are activities common to all business both large and small, and the activities do not differ greatly in different localities as far as fundamental principles are concerned. Hence, it is quite probable that national surveys of occupational opportunities will be more significant than local studies in shaping a program of commercial education.¹

A particular secondary school should prepare at least some of its students for business opportunities that exist in other than the local community. If those business activities of a universal nature have been taught, business graduates should be able to adjust quickly to almost any business environment.

Articulation

It is highly desirable and necessary that there be a minimum of confusion and duplication of effort as business students move from one business subject to another, from one grade to another, and from the junior high school to the senior high school. Nichols maintained that the unit-year approach offers the best solution for effective articulation. "By this is meant a curriculum in which each year is complete in itself and yet articulates with the year immediately preceding and following."²

Nichols held that vocational business subjects should not be brought down into the junior high school. He believed that the kind of

¹Ibid., p. 364.

²Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, p. 340.

instruction suggested below would prepare those students who drop-out of school for the kinds of positions they will be able to get. He contended that junior high school students are too young to be employed in business positions that require vocational business preparation.

. . . the most that can be done for junior high school commercial pupils is to develop in them a certain degree of vocational intelligence, some appreciation of what business expects of them, social intelligence, and a reasonable mastery of the tool subjects such as business writing, business arithmetic, and junior business training. This same type of training is an adequate basis for the study of commerce in the senior high school.¹

The following quotation concisely summarizes Nichols' answer to the problem of articulation as it affects business education.

The problem of articulation between the junior high school and the senior high school is no different from the problem of articulation between any year in the secondary school period and the one above or below it. It is essential that those who are preparing a program of business training for any particular year shall take into consideration what has been done in the preceding year, what are the capabilities and needs of the group under consideration, and just what courses will best meet those needs in the light of previous preparation and probable chances of further study or immediate entrance into business. If this procedure is followed, questions of articulation automatically disappear.²

In other words, the ideal solution for effective articulation is to determine what preparation is appropriate for each year of the secondary school. Then, the progress of each business student can be continuous without interruption from the seventh to the twelfth year. At each particular grade level, students will be taken as they are and the increment of preparation agreed upon as desirable will be added for such pupils.

Core Curriculum

Nichols' views on the construction of at least four different

¹Ibid., p. 344.

²Ibid., p. 323.

business education programs have been discussed. But, what subjects would he have included in the program of every secondary school business student? Nichols indicated that he had some doubts about the possibility of justifying a core of indispensable academic and business subjects for a business curriculum. Whether or not one should include a particular subject in a business curriculum should depend on the aims of that curriculum. He also noted that any plan for dealing with the instructional content of business education could be considered only as a point of departure for further development. He did, however, take a position concerning the core curriculum about which he invited and encouraged further investigation and challenge.¹

Nichols concluded that, ". . . pending further investigation, we are justified in assuming that no technical commercial subject is entitled to a place in the program of every high school commercial pupil;. . ."2 Such a position rules out requiring every business student to take as separate subjects bookkeeping, typewriting, business arithmetic, business communication, or shorthand.

Nichols recognized that academic subjects are ". . . essential in varying degrees as a part of any program of business education."³ He also realized that no business curriculum could possibly include all of the worthwhile academic subjects. He advocated choosing "modernized" academic courses which are most likely to contribute to the desirable

¹Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, pp. 367-68.

²Ibid., p. 380.

³Ibid., p. 381.

outcomes of secondary school preparation for vocationally minded students.¹ For a core curriculum, he suggested requiring three or four years of English, one year of general science in the ninth grade, one year of general mathematics in the ninth grade, and three or four years of social science ". . . unless it is of the traditional history type; in which case the social-business subjects should be regarded as the essential social science content of the curriculum."²

Finally, Nichols contended that the more important of the social-business subjects should also be included as a part of the core curriculum for business students. He held that not all of the following courses would need to be offered in the business department if their content could be absorbed in social-science and other courses.

. . . the social-business subjects--commercial geography, commercial law, business organization and management or principles of business, and economics--may be regarded as essential parts of any commercial curriculum.³

For the three-year high school, then, a core curriculum for business students should include three years of English, three years of social science that includes substantial consumer education, and selected social-business subjects. These subjects would be required of all business students.

In addition to suggesting a core curriculum for business students, Nichols presented a list of business subjects and/or kinds of business information that should be included in a secondary school offering.

¹Ibid., pp. 422-23.

²Ibid., p. 423.

³Ibid., p. 437.

Prevocational Period¹Required of all Pupils

Junior Business Training, with
Business Arithmetic and
Business Writing

Primary Outcome

Understanding of Fundamentals of
Economic Living
Try-out and Exploration

Secondary Outcome

Foundation for Vocational
Courses

Optional

First Course in Bookkeeping
First Course in Typewriting
Economic Geography

Primary Outcome

Foundation for Vocational
Courses
Try-out and Exploration

Secondary Outcome

Consumer Skills Useful in
Economic Living

Vocational Period

Required of Vocational Pupils

Principles of Business
Business Organization and
Principles
Business Economics
Business Law
(or equivalent)

Primary Outcome

Background Business Knowledge
Occupational Understanding
Basis for Promotion
Greater Occupational Competency

Optional Choice

Vocational Bookkeeping
or
Vocational Shorthand
or
Vocational Clerical
or
Vocational Retail Selling

Primary Outcome

Vocational Competency in
Initial position

Required of all Pupils

Senior Business Training
of Consumer Type

Primary Outcome

Efficiency in Handling Personal
Economic Problems of Adult Life

Although some of the subject titles have changed, this writer believes that Nichols would have advocated including in a present-day curriculum essentially the same subject matter content that is suggested by the foregoing material.

¹Nichols, National Business Education Outlook, 1937, p. 18.

In another listing of business subjects, at a later date, Nichols did not include as many background business subjects or the senior consumer business course. He did not, however, consider the essential content of these courses to be any less pertinent. Rather, he believed that the content should be absorbed in social studies and other business courses.

The business department, after making its rich contribution to the essential personalized and socialized economic training of all youth, will still have sufficient material left for use in its pre-vocational program of training, and in its vocational training program as well.

Put in more concrete terms it will still offer these truly

Basic Courses:

Elementary bookkeeping
 Elementary typewriting
 Principles of shorthand
 Fundamentals of salesmanship

In addition there will be left these

Vocational Courses:

Stenographic
 Typing
 Vocational bookkeeping
 Retail salesmanship
 Intensive specialized clerical practice

To top off the program there still will be these somewhat shortened, more pointed, and more vocationally significant

Background Business Courses:

Business Law
 Business organization and management¹

While recognizing that any suggested list of business subjects should be altered with changes in education and business, Nichols in 1947 proposed:

1. Select from our present social-business subjects all elements which can honestly be considered desirable for all students and make them available along with others for use in the core-curriculum of fundamental economic education.

¹F. G. Nichols, "Basic Business Education," Connecticut Business Education, VIII (December, 1947), pp. 9-10.

2. Reorganize the remaining material, with additions of appropriate new material if available, into somewhat shorter courses to be taken by all vocational business students along with their vocational skill courses. Call these courses Background Business Education.

3. Continue to offer the prevocational skill courses on a selective basis as preparation for vocational education to follow. Call these courses Basic Business Education.

4. Offer more effective vocational business courses at the proper level in preparation for specific initial jobs and for ultimate advancement to a higher level of employment. Call these courses Vocational Business Education.¹

Throughout the above subjects, as well as all other subjects, Nichols insisted that desirable personal traits be developed in all students. He believed that all teachers should assist students with such development. Nichols commented on reports stating that 90 per cent of the time workers lose their jobs due to faulty personality traits such as honesty, initiative, concentration, dependability, observation, promptness, industry, accuracy, responsibility, and ambition.² Although he emphasized the importance of developing desirable personal traits, Nichols argued that there is a tendency to overemphasize this reason for worker dismissal.

This is a bit strong as to job separations for lack of skill. Except in boom times a great many lose their jobs for lack of productive skill. Besides, "lack of dependability on the job" may result from lack of skill as often as from lack of good personal traits. But there can be no doubt about the need for personality development.³

Good personality is essential to success in almost any worthwhile office job. Not just "good looks;" strong character is desired. The traits that make for good character are well known. They are

¹Ibid., p. 10.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Personal Traits," The Journal of Business Education, XXVII (April, 1952), p. 324.

³F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Personality," The Journal of Business Education, XXVIII (April, 1953), p. 272.

possessed in some degree by all; they can be developed. They should be; to insure success they must be.¹

Every class, according to Nichols, can and should be concerned about personality development. He maintained that each class should give students opportunity to develop desirable personal traits by expecting students to respond to classwork as they should to the demands of a business job. In other words, students should have opportunity to practice continually the traits one expects them to develop.

Initiative? Why not teach students to find something to do when an assigned task is done, and expect them to do just that?

Courtesy? Why not hold every student to a high standard of courtesy in his classroom intercourse with teacher and fellow students?

Dependability? Why not expect and insist that jobs agreed upon (not merely assigned) for completion at a given time shall be done on time?

Industry? Why not expect students to work industriously?

Promptness? Why not expect that due dates for work to be completed be met, or failure to meet them explained?

In short, why not run your classroom jobs just as the recommended outside school jobs are run--efficiently, as an aid to personality development.²

Like personality development, Nichols said that "no subject in the business curriculum is without exceptional opportunities for teaching business ethics."³ He noted that there are many instances in our society that reveal a need for preparing students to deal ethically with temptations to which they will be exposed. He further noted that a special course in business ethics cannot hope to develop completely the sound ethical standards needed by business students.

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Personality," The Journal of Business Education, XII (September, 1936), p. 9.

²Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XXVIII (April, 1953), p. 272.

³F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Business Ethics," The Journal of Business Education, XXVII (March, 1952), p. 299.

I do not believe that personality can be developed in any course however well planned and taught. Nor do I believe that business ethics can be dealt with effectively in that way alone. Such courses can at best only pave the way for the development of good personal traits by all the teachers on the staff.¹

Nichols did not object to a business ethics subject. He did object to the practice of failing to include ethical instruction in subjects, for example, like bookkeeping, business law, and salesmanship.

Briefly, the total offering of business education at the secondary school level should include adequate coverage of the general business, foundational business, and vocational aspects of the field. Careful planning with students should facilitate the providing of differentiated programs that will prepare them for stenographic, bookkeeping, general clerical, and distributive positions. Because of the universality of certain business activities, the business subject offerings should be based on more than just the readily apparent general education and vocational education needs of the local community.

Subject Matter of Business Education

There are three areas of preparation, according to Nichols, in which the business education student should receive instruction. For one to be satisfactorily prepared to participate in business, he should have received instruction in general background studies like English, history, and social science; in background business subjects like business law, economic geography, and business organization and management; and in technical or skill subjects like bookkeeping, typewriting, and

¹Ibid., p. 281.

shorthand.¹ Only the courses in the three areas mentioned above with which business educators are primarily concerned will be included in the following discussion.

General Background Subjects

In the realm of general background subjects or general education, Nichols believed that business education could best make its contribution in the consumer education area. Consequently, it seems pertinent, at this point, to review Nichols' conception of consumer education and business education's relation to it.

. . . when we have in mind education in respect to the whole consumer movement we may use the term consumer education. By consumer movement we mean all of the activities now being engaged in on account of the consumer, and there are scores of them that have little or nothing to do with education. By consumer economic education we mean all those phases of consumer education which have to do with his economic life as an individual and as a member of several groups. By consumer business education we mean those phases of consumer economic education which have to do with one's handling of his own personal economic affairs with special reference to the purchase and use of goods and services.²

Consumer education, then, is just part of the overall consumer movement. Consumer economic education is part of consumer education, and consumer business education is that part of consumer economic education for which business educators should be primarily responsible.³ More specifically, consumer business education subjects should be designed for all students and seek to achieve the following:

¹F. G. Nichols, "A Balanced Commercial Education Program," Vocational Education Magazine, II (April, 1924), p. 634.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, A Definition," The Journal of Business Education, XVI (March, 1941), p. 11.

³Ibid.

Business educators should assume that their primary responsibility has to do with that aspect of consumer economic education which is designed to acquaint people with our economic system of free enterprise--what it is, how it functions, its defects, its strength, and its relationship to social well-being--help people understand the basic principles in accordance with which a business is organized and managed, and develop those simple skills needed for efficient use of the business services available to them.

Business educators should accept as their secondary responsibility intelligent and effective co-operation with the department of social studies in its attempt to acquaint young people with those principles of economics which are basic to good citizenship and all-round intelligent participation in community life, and with all other departments having contributions to make in the general field of consumer education.¹

Students should be assisted in developing concepts about consumer-producer relationships, private enterprise, and democracy throughout the secondary school. But, Nichols believed that the aforementioned topics should be particularly emphasized in consumer business education subjects. He was especially concerned about the practice of many business teachers who stress an inevitable conflict of interest between the producer and the consumer. Nichols recognized that there was some such conflict but that it could be lessened, if not eliminated, if individuals were helped to realize that these two groups--producers and consumers--are more or less identical. In other words, practically all consumers are also producers. Nichols said that "The foundation of mutually satisfactory and efficient service between any two groups is mutual confidence."² He held that greater confidence and therefore less conflict will exist between these two groups when and if consumers are helped to view themselves also as producers. He advocated that business teachers should:

¹Nichols, Modern Business Education, VII (January, 1941), p. 6.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Conference on Consumer Education," The Journal of Business Education, XV (June, 1940), p. 9.

. . . teach from the viewpoint that in the end the interests of consumers and producers are identical, rather than the interests of these two groups are unalterably opposed to each other.¹

Emphasizing conflicts between producers and consumers, according to Nichols, is detrimental to America's private enterprise system and its democratic way of life. He held that a private enterprise economic system is an essential part of democracy. Consequently, it would follow that any threat to the economic system would be a threat to democracy.

I happen to hold to the view that our economic system is an essential part of democracy, that with all its faults it is better than any system now operative in other countries of this greatly disturbed world, that, therefore, it should be preserved and improved, that a program of consumer business education can be developed within the framework of our system, . . .²

Nichols recognized that America's economic system has defects. He also recognized that some producers violate ethical business practice. He was not against teachers' speaking out against the defects of the economy or the malpractices of some of its producers. He was against a one-sided presentation that would mention bad practices without recognition of those that are good.

One of the aims of business educators surely should be the enlightenment of commercial pupils as to defects in our present system, while at the same time trying to minimize their temporary effects and encourage future producers to work for their complete elimination.³

They should leave no stone unturned to prevent students from getting the idea that our whole economic system is being condemned because of a few individuals engaged in a few types of business resort to practices which are open to question from a consumer point of view.

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Consumer Business Education," The Journal of Business Education, XI (May, 1936), p. 8.

²Nichols, Modern Business Education, VII (January, 1941), p. 6.

³Nichols, Business Education Outlook, 1940, p. 18.

One of the ways in which educators can assure that no unwarranted viewpoints antagonistic to honest business shall result from emphasis on malpractices of one sort and another is to balance discussion of these bad practices with discussion of good ones which are known to exist in every locality. In fact, it should be possible to do more than balance the discussion of bad practices with good ones; . . .¹

In addition to presenting information about various economic and political systems, Nichols believed that the schools of America should even stoop to indoctrination, if necessary, to impress students with the merits of America's economic and political ideology.

If we believe that democracy is the best form of government why shouldn't we indoctrinate our pupils with that idea? If we believe that an economic system of free-enterprise, under reasonable restrictions, is best calculated to serve our needs and is an essential part of a truly democratic system, why shouldn't we indoctrinate our pupils with that idea?²

The task of providing consumer education for all students is a tremendous one. As noted earlier, responsibility for it should be shared with other departments.³ Although Nichols isolated a phase of consumer economic education for which he indicated business education should be primarily responsible, he was willing and even advocated pooling economic information all students should have from any and all departments so as to accumulate a core of essential instructional content. He was not too much concerned about either who should teach this material or what it should be called, as long as it is taught.⁴

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, High-Pressure Salesmanship," The Journal of Business Education, XV (December, 1939), p. 12.

²Nichols, Modern Business Education, VII (January, 1941), p. 6.

³F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Integrity in Business Education," The Journal of Business Education, XIV (October, 1938), p. 9.

⁴Nichols, The Business Education World, XVI (February, 1936), p. 446.

This means that no longer is this basic economic training properly designated as "commercial" or "home economics", or social studies", or "mathematics" or "science." It is "general education" in the best sense of that term, and must be offered as such.¹

Nichols realized that consumer economic education would continue for some time to be offered in overlapping segments by various competing departments. Consequently, he suggested that the business education department meet its responsibility in this area by offering two courses, "junior business training" or "general business," in the junior high school and some kind of senior consumer business course in the high school.² In addition to these separate consumer business subjects, Nichols contended that some consumer business education could and should result from a student's taking other business courses. But, in order for this area to have sufficient emphasis, he believed that specially designed subjects are necessary.³

Nichols did not write much about the senior consumer business course he proposed. But, he did comment extensively about general business or junior business training. He wrote several textbooks with the latter title. Originally designed to include occupational preparation for early school leavers, Nichols revealed his willingness to adjust to changing conditions by discounting the vocational objective of junior

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Your Responsibility," The Journal of Business Education, XXIII (September, 1947), p. 22.

²Nichols, National Business Education Outlook, (1937), pp. 18-19.

³F. G. Nichols, "Whose Responsibility is Consumer Education?" Harvard Educational Review, IX (May, 1939), pp. 271-72.

business training in the 1930's.¹ Because business no longer desires juvenile employees, Nichols believed that the subject, general business, should not be thought of in terms of vocational preparation.

As the age of initial employment rises, vocational training in preparation for it can be up-graded in our secondary school program. . . . This makes it possible to add a "general business training," "elementary business training," or "junior business training" course, by whatever name it is called, to the rich exploratory program that is being made available in the early high school years in progressive high schools everywhere.²

Nichols said that junior business training or general business should be:

. . . a course in the fundamentally important concepts, principles, and practices involved in the management of one's personal economic life, entirely apart from any occupational niche which he may occupy in the business world.

. . . this course should be designed to inculcate sound fundamental economic concepts in the minds of every boy and girl during the impressionable adolescent age with a view to eliminating, or at least greatly reducing, economic illiteracy which is almost universal in our land of plenty, . . .³

There were other varied outcomes that Nichols held should result from the study of this subject. He maintained that it should provide try-out and exploratory business experiences; meaningful economic experiences having immediate as well as remote personal use values;⁴ opportunities to improve and extend basic educational skills; a ". . . foundation on which to rear a superstructure of more advanced business

¹F. G. Nichols, "Improvement of Instruction in Junior Business Training," The Journal of Business Education, XI (September, 1935), p. 8.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Do You Agree?" The Journal of Business Education, XVII (June, 1942), p. 9.

³Ibid.

⁴Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XI (September, 1935), pp. 8-9.

knowledge, occupational intelligence, and vocational skills;"¹ and experiences designed to aid students in developing the ability to think effectively about personal, social, and civic matters.

Concerning this latter desired outcome, Nichols wrote:

Factual knowledge, except for current use, always will be of less importance than ability to think effectively with respect to personal, social, and civic matters. Points of view, discrimination in the selection of facts upon which to reach conclusions, intellectual integrity and correct mental habits are far more important than mere acquired knowledge.²

In brief, until all departments cooperate in deciding what consumer education secondary students need and who should be responsible for its various phases, business education can well contribute to the general education of all students by offering appropriate general background subjects--one in the junior high school and one in the senior high school.

Background Business Subjects

The previous section examined so-called "social-business" subjects designed to impart needed consumer business education information to all students. This section is concerned with the social-business subjects that Nichols considered should be primarily taken as part of a business student's vocational preparation. This phase of the typical business student's preparation he considered to be sorely neglected.³

Consumer business education is needed by all; vocational business education is required by, and suitable for, only a portion of our high school population.

.....

¹F. G. Nichols, "Looking Ahead in Junior Business Training Instruction," National Business Education Quarterly, I (October, 1932), p. 28.

²Ibid., p. 21.

³F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Not A Pretty Picture," The Journal of Business Education, XXV (October, 1949), p. 9.

. . . vocational business education would be greatly improved by more liberal use of these valuable social-business subjects. . .¹

At one time or another, Nichols mentioned as vocational social-business subjects the following: business law, economic geography, advertising, business organization and management, principles of business, finance, salesmanship and economics.²

Nichols did not advocate that all of the information suggested above be offered in separate subjects. He believed that much subject-matter integration could well reduce the need for a variety of background business subjects. He argued that business education, having made its contribution to the general education core curriculum, should provide in various subjects for the following topics as a part of vocational business education.

In vocational business education we shall still deal with finance, buymanship, property, legal matters, functional business organization, aspects of business management, record-keeping, selling, advertising, clerical duties, occupational information and business ethics, even though some aspects of these subjects have been contributed to the core curriculum. Naturally some aspects of these things as they relate to one's personal economic life will be dealt with in the business segment of the core-curriculum sequence of instruction material. But other aspects of these same things will be dealt with as essential parts of various kinds of vocational business education, either background or skill types.³

The above quotation alludes to the fact that Nichols considered the background business subjects to be vocational education. Further evidence concerning his stand on this matter is provided by the following statements.

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, The National Council's Opportunity and Need," The Journal of Business Education, XII (November, 1936), p. 9.

²Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, p. 360.

³Nichols, Connecticut Business Education, VIII (December, 1947), p. 9.

Thus, it may be seen that these social-business subjects are as distinctly vocational as are the skill subjects, and probably rightly so.¹

Commercial law, business economics, business organization, etc., as they should be taught to vocational commercial pupils are quite as much vocational education as are shorthand, typewriting, and book-keeping.²

Subjects commonly known as social-business subjects, in their present or revised form, should be regarded as vocational business training and be taught as such.³

The social-business subjects should give business students a background of business information that will contribute to their occupational success. Nichols wrote that attention needs to be given ". . . to background business subjects which are calculated to lay the basis for advancement in business and to present sound principles and practices which should underlie all business management."⁴ More specifically, he said these subjects are needed for the following reasons.

This group of subjects and others of similiar nature that may be added are needed to insure that advancement from the lower levels to the higher levels in business which every ambitious youth has a right to expect. Promotion comes in business as a result of the kind of service which results from such knowledge as can be acquired partially at least through these general business training subjects and which formerly was acquired through experience.

Fundamental business knowledge and business experience are essential to the larger success in business which can come only to those who are qualified to assume and discharge successfully executive responsibility. . . . An elementary knowledge of the principles taught in the subjects included in this group will give a junior employee a decided advantage over those who bring no such knowledge into their first business experience.⁵

¹Nichols, Forty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, p. 216.

²Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, VIII (March, 1933), p. 18.

³Nichols, National Business Education Outlook, 1937, p. 20.

⁴F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Striking Contrast," The Journal of Business Education, XVII (November, 1941), p. 11.

⁵Nichols, Vocational Education Magazine, II (May, 1924), p. 726.

Selected comments of Nichols about several of the subjects listed earlier in this section are presented here to reveal how they should aid in giving business students needed background business preparation.

Economic geography. Nichols recognized the value of economic geography to business education students.

Study commercial geography to learn how people depend upon each other for almost everything they have; how production centers for different things are developed; how certain natural factors such as climate, topography, rivers, etc., contribute to the success of business enterprises; how great a variety of businesses are needed to supply human wants; and how to use facts intelligently in thinking through business problems.¹

Business organization and management. From the study of business organization and management, the business student should learn:

. . . how men bring together great aggregations of capital and people and develop a great business enterprise; how they divide responsibility by creating executive positions for those who carry a share of the management load; how they departmentalize their activities for greater efficiency in operation; how they maintain satisfactory relationships with their employees, and how they use the various business aids such as transportation, banks, advertising mediums, etc.²

Salesmanship. About the subject of salesmanship, Nichols wrote:

Study general salesmanship, not to master the art of selling, but to learn how to deal with people; how to know their desires and needs; how to influence their thinking in the right direction; how to help them reach decisions; and how to get them to see your point of view and act in cooperation with you.³

Advertising. In addition to learning how to analyze advertising material critically in consumer business courses, Nichols advocated that business students should study advertising in some form for the following additional purposes.

Advertising should be studied for much the same reasons that salesmanship is studied: to learn the fundamental principles which underlie the successful marketing of that which one may produce and

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

to learn how the way may be paved through publicity for those who go forth to sell the things a business has to distribute.¹

Economics. Nichols believed that the business student should profit from his study of economics in these ways.

Business economics should be included in a business training program because it helps one to appreciate those great principles of service that should guide every business man in the conduct of his business; because it teaches those principles which are the foundation stones of all successful business enterprises; because it enables one to conduct a business in accordance with approved scientific principles and not by guess which so often leads to financial ruin; and because it makes of business an interesting profession possessing unlimited possibilities for human service.²

Business law. Nichols noted that there seemed to be a growing disrespect for law in his day. He used this point to impress business educators with the need to insure that each business student have some contact with business law and that each business student realize that he has a responsibility as an individual citizen to help influence the making of laws worthy of respect.³ In addition, he wrote:

Commercial law is of great importance as it deals with the legal relationships that exist between people engaged in business. A knowledge of it develops respect for law; shows how to avoid unnecessary, expensive, and annoying legal entanglements; qualifies one to use legal service more intelligently and thus more satisfactorily should the need for such service arise; and leads to an appreciation of rights and obligations which are inherent in all business transactions.⁴

In summary, it seems pertinent to state again that Nichols advocated incorporating into a few social-business courses the specialty information suggested by the titles of the various individual business

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Teachers' Examinations," The Journal of Business Education, IX (October, 1933), p. 8.

⁴Nichols, Vocational Education Magazine, II (May, 1924), p. 726.

subjects. In a listing of subjects in 1947, business law and business organization and management were the only two vocational social-business subjects he indicated were the primary responsibility of business education.

Technical Subjects

In Chapter III, Nichols' view was given about business education subjects being properly divided into prevocational and vocational areas. This section will be concerned with his writings about technical prevocational and vocational business subjects. In addition to the distributive subjects, these include typewriting, shorthand, bookkeeping, office practice, office machines, business mathematics, and business English.

If Nichols seemed to dwell more often on topics relating to other than the skill subjects, it was not because he considered these subjects to be unimportant. He said that "the technical skill subjects are entitled to their share of attention. They are of inestimable value to a great many students."¹ He did, however, feel that matters concerning the skill subjects were adequately emphasized by others. In fact, he frequently referred to the lack of effort being exerted to promote and offer other than the technical business subjects.

Some authorities in Nichols time used the expression, "Basic Business Education," in various ways. They used it to refer to that part of business education everyone should have and to the background business subjects. Nichols was constantly concerned about the judicious

¹Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XVII (November, 1941), p. 11.

and discriminating use of business terminology. He wanted business educators to agree on the meaning of such terminology so as to facilitate communication and to lessen misunderstandings. He was willing to accept a definition for basic business education on which most business educators would agree.¹ However, he left little doubt as to what he thought this expression should mean. Rather than basic business being general education or background business education, Nichols advocated it should refer to prevocational basic skill subjects.

. . . I wish to state my complete disagreement with the belief that the term "basic" properly describes the socio-business courses which evidently are included among those currently called "Basic Business Education." . . . We must use this term realistically if at all.

.
An elementary typing course is basic to vocational typing. A shorthand principles course is basic to vocational shorthand. A first course in bookkeeping principles is basic to vocational bookkeeping. But what course is required as a basis for all of these? The underlying skill courses properly may be labeled Basic Business Courses.²

Nichols emphasized that there are no subjects basic to vocational business education preparation without having in mind a specific occupational objective. For the aspirant stenographer, study of shorthand principles should be basic to further shorthand study. However, he held that social-business subjects may be desirable but they are actually ". . . basic to nothing."³ This contention led him to conclude that only the prevocational skill subjects could properly be labeled basic business education.

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, "'Basic' Business Education," The Journal of Business Education, XXII (March, 1947), p. 9.

²Nichols, The Connecticut Business Educator, VIII (December, 1947), p. 8.

³Ibid.

For all skill subjects, but particularly typewriting and shorthand, Nichols maintained that personal-use and vocational objectives could not best be realized simultaneously. He held that students should have the opportunity of acquiring personal-use skills necessary for handling personal business affairs. However, he argued that using long, vocational subjects for this purpose is indefensible.¹ In an article about needed readjustments in business education, Nichols advocated and predicted:

In recognition of the obvious fact that personal-use values are not now being achieved through first courses, or even advanced courses, in shorthand, typewriting and bookkeeping, there will be more appropriate and rewarding instruction in short courses, or units of longer courses, designed to produce the personal skills and the habit of using them which we now falsely claim to achieve through courses designed for quite different uses.²

Those who teach the skill subjects, according to Nichols, too often are overly concerned with basic skills rather than with what he called "composite skills" or "occupational skills."³ Nichols conceded that business students need to acquire fundamental skills as quickly as possible. But, he deplored the prevalent practice of making such basic skill acquisition the final instructional goal. Rather, business students should become competent in performing a variety of tasks necessary for achieving success in a particular occupation. In other words, composite or occupational skills based on occupational requirements and

¹Nichols, Education, LX (January, 1940), p. 259.

²Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XX (December, 1944), p. 28.

³Nichols, The Business Education World, XXIV (October, 1943), p. 82.

reasonable office standards should be the overriding aim of technical skill instruction.¹ Nichols said it this way:

There is a persistent belief that pupils who have developed the basic skills which are essential to vocational competency can be trusted to put them together in such a way as to result in the composite skills which are essential to occupational competency. Nothing could be farther from the truth.²

Three specific examples illustrating the need for composite skills rather than just basic skills were cited by Nichols.

One who can type from plain copy at the rate of sixty net words a minute may be wholly incapable of turning out acceptable work as a typist who must type invoices, specifications, rough draft, lists of names, tabulations, letters, and other office jobs.

The speediest writer of five-minute dictation may be unable to take an hour's dictation, given at moderate speed, and get it out accurately.

The best student on a new-type bookkeeping test of principles may fail miserably when faced with a simple job requiring the complete bookkeeping cycle.

The skills mentioned above are of little use except as a basis for real vocational training which seeks to expand these skills into composite skills which are required for office work.³

Having presented several general points about the technical business subjects, attention will now be given to certain aspects of several of the specific skill subjects.

Typewriting. "Typewriting is a skill subject."⁴ To Nichols, typewriting could have various aims. It could be designed to provide prevocational and vocational preparation to vocational business students and personal use competencies to others on an elective basis. He

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, The Time Factor," The Journal of Business Education, XXII (September, 1946), p. 11.

²Nichols, Education, LX (January, 1940), p. 262.

³Ibid.

⁴F. G. Nichols, "Commercial Subjects," Review of Educational Research, VIII (February, 1938), p. 18.

disagreed with those who would teach typewriting in the elementary school¹ and with those who would make typewriting a required common learning.² Also, he was not convinced it should even be included in the junior high school.³ He did at one time list typewriting as an optional prevocational subject at the junior high level. But basically, he recommended that prevocational and vocational typewriting be offered in the high school.

Reference to the time it takes to develop typewriting skill was made frequently by Nichols. He wrote:

Mastery of this subject should be accomplished in the shortest possible time in order to provide greater opportunity for worthwhile education of a more substantial variety.⁴

Yet, in most schools, and even colleges, no end of time is wasted on the basic typewriting course.⁵

Nichols maintained that because no more time is apt to be given at the high school level for business subjects, every effort should be exerted to make better use of the time now available. Reducing the time it takes to teach typewriting is one way he believed time could be saved for other equally important aspects of vocational business preparation.⁶

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Commercial Education in the Elementary School," The Journal of Business Education, XI (June, 1936), p. 8.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Typewriting in Junior High School for Personal Use," The Journal of Business Education, XXIX (March, 1954), p. 237.

³F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, No. 1," The Journal of Business Education, XXII (March, 1947), p. 9.

⁴Nichols, Review of Educational Research, VIII (February, 1938), p. 18.

⁵F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Tangible Evidence of Wasted Time," The Journal of Business Education, XIX (September, 1943), p. 9.

⁶Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XXII (September, 1946), p. 11.

According to Nichols, penalizing advanced students so many words for typewriting errors is a poor substitute for correcting such errors. He contended that a heavy penalty should be assessed for each uncorrected error found on a student's paper. Too many such errors should cause a unit of work to be rejected. Nichols believed that students need to develop the art of correcting errors neatly and quickly. Success as a typist requires such proficiency for "a typist who habitually overlooks errors will soon be rejected; so why not begin early to eliminate this cause of failure."¹ Nichols held that errors should be corrected even during "timed writings." He said this plan should be used because ". . . it is honest; it shows how many usable words can be written in a minute."² He further claimed that present penalties that are supposed to compensate for not erasing are inadequate.

Of course some practice without error correction should be provided for the development of facility in typing, but results of teaching should be measured in terms of what can be done under normal job conditions where errors must be discovered and corrected--a skill which results only from plenty of practice.³

Nichols expressed his views on various other topics related to typewriting. In brief, he held that touch typewriting is learned faster and better by looking at the keys, that business teachers should assist in efforts to replace the present standard-keyboard "monstrosity,"⁴

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Typewriting Tests," The Journal of Business Education, XIII (April, 1938), p. 8.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Erasures in Typing," The Journal of Business Education, XV (April, 1940), p. 9.

³Ibid.

⁴F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Just Another School Year?" The Journal of Business Education, XXIX (October, 1953), p. 9.

that no boy or girl should devote a whole year to typewriting for personal use,¹ and that "non-typing" motions and correct work habits are as important as is "spurt-speed" copying ability.²

Shorthand and Transcription. Nichols described the technical subject of shorthand as follows:

Shorthand is but the facilitating means for doing certain work connected with communication. There is a great deal of training that needs to be done after the mastery of the shorthand system has been accomplished. Hence such mastery should be accomplished in the shortest possible time.³

According to Nichols, the objective of shorthand instruction given to business students is to prepare stenographers. He said that ". . . the shorthand teacher is not paid to teach shorthand, but to do her part toward training a stenographer."⁴ In order to prepare a stenographer the teacher must understand how her role fits into the overall plan and understand the nature of the finished product. Nichols stated that "it is unquestionably proved that it is only through an analysis of the stenographic job as it really is that we can hope to train people to match its requirements."⁵

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, An Opportunity," The Journal of Business Education, XVI (May, 1941), p. 9.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Typing Ability vs. Copying Speed," The Journal of Business Education, VIII (December, 1932), p. 8.

³Nichols, Review of Educational Research, VIII (February, 1938), p. 18.

⁴F. G. Nichols, "An Experiment in Testing Stenographers," The American Shorthand Teacher, I (March, 1921), p. 208.

⁵F. G. Nichols, "An Experiment in Testing Stenographers," The American Shorthand Teacher, I (June, 1921), p. 340.

Nichols listed several points he believed were important to the shorthand teacher who is preparing stenographic personnel.

My own view has been, and still is, that (1) the goal of stenographic training is occupational competence; (2) that this represents more than the ability to take classroom-type dictation five minutes and get it out acceptably; (3) that only a comprehensive stenographic ability test can be depended upon to measure occupational competence; and (4) that it really is the over-all time it takes to get out usably a half-hour's office-type dictation that really matters.¹

About classroom dictation, he commented:

It also is my view, (1) that there comes a point of diminishing returns in continuous classroom-type spurt-speed dictation; (2) that there should be concentration on the mastery of the shorthand system for as long as is necessary to accomplish it; (3) that there should be concentration on basic shorthand skill such as is measured by the traditional spurt-speed tests; and (4) that after an 80 w.p.m. spurt-speed ability has been achieved there should be concentration on longer office-type dictation drills, beginning with ten minutes and increasing to forty minutes, with carefully timed transcription taking into account only the over-all time consumed in getting out the take; and (5) that no further spurt-speed dictations should be given since the desired spurt-speeds (if they are desired) of 90 and 100 will emerge automatically from the practice given to meet the longer office-type production requirements.

Only by shifting to office-type dictation early, and abandoning spurt-speed drills in favor of more realistic long-period drills, and putting emphasis on the rate of usable production can competent stenographers be graduated.²

Other points related to shorthand about which Nichols expressed his views follow in summary form. He held that: Inasmuch as there are relatively few positions available for male stenographers, only "high-grade boys" having appropriate aptitudes and interests should be prepared for such positions.³ Personal-use shorthand should be available on an

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, A Rating Problem," The Journal of Business Education, XXVII (December, 1951), p. 166.

²Ibid.

³F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Male Stenographers Again," The Journal of Business Education, XV (May, 1940), p. 9.

elective basis in classes where suitable materials and methods are employed to achieve this objective.¹ More students are continually enrolled in vocational shorthand subjects than can possibly find positions that require such skills.² Although a stenography student should include a related-work clerical subject in his program, he should not scatter his energies over a wide range of skill courses with the intent to also qualify for some other beginning clerical position.³ And, shorthand students should be prepared under distracting conditions to take the various kinds of dictation given to an average stenographer.⁴

One may be able to write shorthand; but as Nichols noted, ". . . it is the transcription rate that matters most, not the taking rate."⁵ He believed that transcription should entail reproducing dictated material into the best possible typewritten form while meeting acceptable production standards.⁶

. . . transcription is the essence of stenographic training. It should begin as soon as it can be undertaken . . . after the student

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Shorthand for Personal Use," The Journal of Business Education, XXII (April, 1947), p. 31.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Shorthand in Clerical Work," The Journal of Business Education, XXIV (January, 1949), p. 9.

³F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Families of Occupations," The Journal of Business Education, XVIII (December, 1942), p. 12.

⁴Nichols, The American Shorthand Teacher, I (June, 1921), p. 340.

⁵Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XXVII (December, 1951), p. 166.

⁶F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Transcription," The Journal of Business Education, XXVII (January, 1952), p. 192.

has reached a point in his shorthand course where he can take sustained dictation. The only indefiniteness about such an answer is the time required to reach specified points in the typing and shorthand courses. Quality and quantity of teaching, conditions of instruction, student ability, etc. will determine when these points are reached. But the principle that transcription should begin when, and only when, the student is qualified to begin it, and be continued until the primary goal of the course has been reached--ability to take a typical office dictation and get it out in a minimum of time to meet reasonable office standards is sound regardless of these factors.¹

There is, according to Nichols, a two-fold problem as far as transcription readiness is concerned. First, a student must ". . . reasonably well master his shorthand system."² Second, mastery of typewriting technique must have progressed to the point that ". . . transcribing from notes will not set up an interference with further improvement in typewriting."³

In this area of transcription, Nichols also contended that usable standards, rather than a single standard, must be stressed because the standard of form and accuracy on a particular transcription job is determined by the use to be made of the transcript;⁴ that shorthand and transcription, as well as other skill, grades should be based on performance at the end of that subject and not on the time it takes one to successfully pass a performance test;⁵ that transcription speeds should not be

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, A Clinic," The Journal of Business Education, XXIX (May, 1954), p. 325.

²Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XXVII (January, 1952), p. 192.

³F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Puzzled and Depressed," The Journal of Business Education, XXIV (November, 1948), p. 9.

⁴Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XXVII (January, 1952), p. 192.

⁵F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Another Ripley Believe it or Not," The Journal of Business Education, XXIII (February, 1948), p. 9.

tied to dictation speeds in order that progress towards these two goals may vary from time to time and from individual to individual;¹ and that no unattainable goals should ever be set as motivating devices.²

Bookkeeping. Nichols considered bookkeeping to be a most important business subject. He conceded that most business students should be encouraged to enroll in a basic bookkeeping course,³ but he held that every business student could not and should not be a trained bookkeeper.⁴ Compared to shorthand and typewriting instruction, Nichols wrote:

There is not such need for haste in the mastery of the principles of bookkeeping and the development of power in their application since the subject is rich in educational values, but it does seem possible to develop ability to do ordinary bookkeeping work in shorter time than is now taken for this task.⁵

In addition, he advocated that there is great need for workers who can do the routine hand or machine recording of business transactions;⁶ that although bookkeeping subjects could incidently provide for a student's personal record keeping needs, shorter subjects designed to meet these needs would be better than either devotionalizing or

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Transcription at Last," The Journal of Business Education, XIV (November, 1938), p. 8.

²Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XXIX (May, 1954), p. 325.

³F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge," The Journal of Business Education, XXVIII (March, 1953), p. 229.

⁴Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, p. 154.

⁵Nichols, Review of Educational Research, VIII (February, 1938), p. 18.

⁶Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XXVIII (March, 1953), p. 229.

socializing present bookkeeping instruction;¹ that a student preparing to be a bookkeeper should learn to ". . . keep a set of books, interpret accounting records, and work independently on any conventional set of business records;² and that any test purporting to measure bookkeeping ability should test all phases of a bookkeeper's work.³

Office practice. Nichols expressed concern over the many synonymous terms that are used to describe clerical preparation--terms such as clerical practice, secretarial practice, business procedure, business practice, office procedure, and office practice. He was also concerned because these terms mean many different things to those who use them and hear them. In one reference to non-stenographic and non-bookkeeping preparation, Nichols wrote: "I don't use the term 'clerical practice' or 'office practice' . . . or any other definitive term for this kind of training because there still exists no end of confusion as to just what these expressions really stand for."⁴

Nichols repeatedly referred to research that revealed that a preponderance of office jobs are of a clerical nature other than that of stenography or bookkeeping. He used these references to try to prompt more attention to an area of preparation he believed could meet more

¹F. G. Nichols, "Preemployment Business Training," The Business Education World, XIV (May, 1934), pp. 529-30.

²Nichols, National Business Education Quarterly, I (March, 1933), p. 22.

³F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, A Testing Principle," The Journal of Business Education, XIV (April, 1939), p. 8.

⁴F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Civil Service Tests," The Journal of Business Education, XXII (May, 1947), p. 9.

students' office occupational needs than all of the other vocational business programs combined.¹ In 1932, he wrote:

Clerical practice should be on a par with shorthand, bookkeeping and retail selling in the high school curriculum. For pupils who elect it as their vocational major, it should require as much time and carry as much graduation credit as shorthand or bookkeeping does for those who choose either of these subjects. For pupils who elect it as a minor part of stenographic or bookkeeping training, it will occupy less time and carry proportionately less credit.²

The above quotation bears out the fact that Nichols believed an "office practice" subject could and should provide specialized vocational preparation for some students and provide an acquaintanceship with clerical procedures and devices useful in the main work of those students pursuing other vocational courses.

Ten years later, Nichols pointed out the status of clerical preparation and again emphasized the great need for it.

A brief word should be said about this type of business training which, if given at all, is given merely as a minor subject in the bookkeeping and stenographic major programs. Yet, as has been pointed out, the vast majority of office jobs are nonbookkeeping and nonstenographic. It is high time that clerical courses should be given a major place in the program to the end that vocational business training may become more responsive to current demand for office help and to provide a much greater range of choice to meet the needs of young people of widely differing aptitudes, interests, and abilities.³

Those students preparing for typewriting, stenographic, and bookkeeping positions, then, can profit from a certain amount of clerical instruction. But, they should not receive the intensive preparation

¹Nichols, American Business Education, VI (October, 1949), p. 14.

²Nichols, "Equipment Needed for a High School Commercial Department," American School and University, V (1932), p. 230.

³Nichols, Forty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, (1942), p. 221.

necessary to fill what Nichols termed clerical positions. These positions, as he described them, can be appropriately classified as machine clerical, filing, and general clerical. He maintained that students desiring positions in these areas need to receive the same degree of preparation afforded to other business majors, not just acquaintanceship instruction.¹

In the machine clerical classification, Nichols held that certain students should be intensively, as well as extensively, prepared for initial employment in positions such as calculating-machine operator,² dictation-machine operator,³ and bookkeeping machine operator. The operators of these machines should acquire relatively high level skills. More than just familiarity is necessary for those who would desire to begin their business careers using such machines. Nichols held that there needs to be a distinction made between those non-skill machines that are used to facilitate the work of many office employees and skill machines used to perform a special job. Familiarity with the former machines may be sufficient, but the latter require skilled operators who have had intensive preparation.⁴

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Recognition for Clerical Practice," The Journal of Business Education, XVI (October, 1940), p. 9.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Measuring Results of Teaching Clerical Practice," The Journal of Business Education, IX (May, 1934), pp. 7, 20.

³F. G. Nichols, "Dictating Machine Instruction Essential," The Journal of Business Education, XI (January, 1936), p. 31.

⁴F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Perpetuating Old Fallacies," The Journal of Business Education, XXIV (January, 1949), p. 16.

In addition to the various machine clerical and filing positions, Nichols insisted that there is a need to prepare some students for non-machine general clerical positions¹ He said that "general clerical work of great variety makes demands upon workers such as can be met successfully only through adequate training, . . ."2 He gave some indication of what he thought such a subject should attempt to accomplish in the following quotation:

The need for such a general clerical course is not met by giving a smattering of instruction in calculating-machine, It will be met only by an entirely new type of general clerical course which seeks to develop a resourceful worker who can handle card records, loose-leaf books, and information-desk routine; . . . and who can adapt himself to situations involving cooperative effort among a group of employees.³

Such a subject, to Nichols, should be based on the common elements of clerical work found to be necessary in well-defined clerical positions.

Nichols also contended that if clerical units are to be taught as general education for some students, such units should be offered separate from vocational classes⁴ and that teachers of office practice should have special preparation at least equal to that required of shorthand, bookkeeping, and typewriting teachers.⁵

¹Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XX (December, 1944), p. 28.

²Nichols, Forty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, (1942), p. 221.

³Nichols, Objectives and Problems of Vocational Education, p. 434.

⁴F. G. Nichols, "Clerical Practice--Some Basic Considerations," National Business Education Quarterly, III (March, 1935), pp. 2-11.

⁵Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, IX (October, 1933), p. 26.

Briefly summarized, a particular office practice class, according to Nichols, can have varying objectives. One class can appropriately aim to provide typists, bookkeepers, and stenographers with some understanding of the clerical procedures and devices that may be useful to them in their main work. Another office practice class may well be primarily concerned with developing an occupational skill on some business machine or in filing. Still another such class may have as its objective the preparation of general clerical workers. A well-qualified business teacher, having sufficient instructional materials and equipment, could well seek to achieve several of the above objectives in the same office practice class.

Business arithmetic. Nichols agreed that business students should develop their abilities to make simple arithmetic calculations and to analyze problems.¹ However, he argued that very little tangible arithmetic ability or understanding is gained by students who take a business arithmetic subject.² Although all high school business students have been exposed to basic arithmetic problems in mathematics subjects, Nichols contended that there will be a need from time to time for remedial business arithmetic in various business courses. But, he held that such a need does not necessitate the offering of a separate arithmetic subject.³ Rather, he advocated teaching students how to handle business problems in

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Unproven Conclusions," The Journal of Business Education, XVII (April, 1942), p. 9.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Commercial Arithmetic," The Journal of Business Education, XVI (November, 1940), p. 9.

³F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, The Status of Commercial Arithmetic," The Journal of Business Education, X (February, 1935), pp. 7, 8.

their natural setting--in a business course when a problem is confronted,¹ In such a setting, an important motivating element is present that would not exist in a separate arithmetic subject. In 1948, Nichols said that he did not ". . . believe in business arithmetic as a separate subject, Specialized arithmetic can best be taught as related work in any course where it is needed."²

Business English. For a student to be in a position to develop proficiency in business English, Nichols held that he should first have a good background in regular English.

Every boy and girl in the high school should be taught the use of the mother tongue. It is the business of the English department to develop facility in the use of English and ability to interpret it when used by others. It is the business of the commercial department to cooperate with the English department in every possible way to this end. One of the ways in which such cooperation can be given would be to require every boy and girl to read and write the best English of which he is capable every time he is called upon to speak or write in connection with any commercial course.³

Having developed facility in the use of English, how should the business student be taught business English? According to Nichols, such teaching should be done in regular business subjects, not in a separate business English class. The minimum essentials of English needed for the various business positions should be determined. Then, business teachers should teach in their regular business courses the specialized English not provided by others.

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, The Case for Commercial Arithmetic," The Journal of Business Education, XI (December, 1935), pp. 8, 10.

²Nichols, National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, XXXII (November, 1948), p. 67.

³F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Business English?" The Journal of Business Education, XVI (October, 1940), p. 9.

It is doubtful if occupational English can be taught effectively outside the occupational courses. English for stenographers must be a part of the dictation and transcription course. That for bookkeepers must be bedded in the bookkeeping course. That for selling must be treated as the essence of salesmanship instruction. That for the correspondent must be given as correspondence instruction. And so on through the list of truly vocational courses. Of course, only the specialized English needed by workers in the fields covered is the primary responsibility of vocational business teachers.¹

Succintly, Nichols would have business teachers teach business English. But, such specialized English should be taught as a part of the subject to which it is related.

Distributive education. Distributive education is a broad term that encompasses many occupations. The George-Deen Act of 1936 stimulated preparation for occupations in this business education area--an area that had received little attention from business education up to that time. Nichols said:

The only vocational educators of that early day who were not interested in retail selling education were the commercial teachers. They were specialists in clerical training. Their "white-collar" job objectives had social approval; "white collar" store jobs, except in the office, had not yet become respectable objectives of training in their estimation.²

To insure that there is general agreement about what is meant by distributive occupations for which distributive education can be given, the following United States Office of Education definition is cited:

Distributive occupations are those followed by workers directly engaged in, or in direct contact with consumers when a. Distributing to consumers, retailers, jobbers, wholesalers, and others the product of farm and industry. b. Managing, operating or conducting a

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Business English," The Journal of Business Education, XXIV (December, 1948), p. 9.

²Nichols, National Business Education Quarterly, XI (March, 1943), p. 12.

commercial service or personal service business, or selling the services of such business.¹

Preparation for these distributive occupations can be provided in evening classes, cooperative vocational classes, and intensive short-course classes.

In the early 1900's, Nichols recognized the need for including preparation for distributive occupations in public education. In 1915, he established a retail selling program in the Rochester, New York public schools. In 1918, as a member of the Federal Board for Vocational Education, it was his duty to inform that Board regarding what elements of business education were being neglected and what could be done to bring business education more into line with the other fields of vocational education. Since Nichols believed more people were being trained for office work than was necessary, he said there was need:

- (1) To stimulate interest in the occupation of retail selling;
- (2) To set up a proposal for a training program in this field;
- (3) To stimulate interest in, and the acceptance of, the principle that job-contacts are necessary to successful vocational training.²

Nichols' belief, that the retail selling area of business education was being neglected, caused him to initiate activities to stimulate its development. He said:

The first dollar spent for commercial education by the Federal Board for Vocational Education in 1918 was spent for vocational training in the distributive field--retail selling. Two experts in this field were employed to cooperate with the Board's director of

¹F. G. Nichols, "Vocational Training for the Distributive Occupations Under the George-Deen Act," The Journal of Business Education, XVII (October, 1937), p. 9.

²Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XIII (October, 1937), p. 9.

commercial education in the preparation of a program of retail selling education. More than 20,000 copies of "Bulletin 22, Retail Selling Education," were printed and distributed.¹

When the George-Deen Act was passed, Nichols realized that preparation could be provided for many separate occupations in many different areas of distribution. He realized that, with the funds available, not all needs could be met. Consequently, he believed that retail distributive occupations should be the first to which financial support should be given. Other comparable courses could then be developed for other fields of distribution when there was sufficient demand for them. He stated:

While brokerage, commission, wholesale, personal service, importing, exporting, agency, and a score or more of other distributing activities, as well as retailing, are within the scope of the Act, it seems wise to make a beginning in the field of retail distribution only; . . .²

. . . I am not suggesting that the wholesale, jobbing, commission, brokerage, and service divisions of the field be entirely overlooked. Wherever a demand or need for training in these fields occurs in juxtaposition with conditions which made such training possible, every effort should be made to provide it. But obviously it will not be possible to study all of these divisions of the field thoroughly at the same time, or to set up courses for them with none except retail courses already available, or to find qualified teachers to give such a diverse program at the outset with the funds at the state's disposal. Hence the recommendation that a program developed first in that division of the field in which much of the spade work already has been done, teacher-training facilities already are available, teachers are most likely to be found easily, the need for training admittedly is statewide in both urban and semi-rural areas, and in which groups of business men are well informed as to the possibilities of training and more or less eager to assist in setting up and operating training programs.³

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Federal Aid at Last," The Journal of Business Education, XIII (October, 1936), p. 8.

²F. G. Nichols, "Vocational Training for Distributive Occupations Under the George-Deen Act," The Journal of Business Education, XIII (November, 1937), p. 8.

³Ibid., p. 10.

Although Nichols advocated that retail distribution should be the area first served, he did not have a narrow view of distributive education. Nichols disagreed with those who would restrict the term distributive education to educational activity associated with the George-Deen Act or to those individuals who have contact with customers. He declared:

There may be a distributive course under the act for store owners or workers who want to learn how to keep store books, or to handle cashier work, or to do necessary typing, or to handle store clerical work, or to audit sales slips. In other words, there is nothing in the act that limits the program to those who are "in contact with customers." Clerical training for small store owners, or for store managers who have clerical duties, may be federally aided. Any person engaged in the distribution of goods or services comes within the scope of the act.¹

Nichols' beliefs about distributive education, its place in education, its scope, its needs, and its organization were summarized shortly after the George-Deen Act was passed. In a series of recommendations, Nichols wrote:

1. Definitely recognize the plain fact that distributive occupations lie in the field of commercial education.
2. Set up qualifications for supervisors of training for this field with its peculiar needs in mind, and not with the thought that it is expedient to include requirements which can be met either by present supervisors of one of the other three vocational divisions or of commercial education.
3. Now that additional Federal funds are available, take steps to recognize existing cooperative courses for office work which still are reimbursible under the original vocational education act.
4. Adopt the broad interpretation of the meaning of the term distributive occupations and provide both skill and background related business training as essentials of training for these occupations.
5. Adopt the view that the term part-time schools or classes shall include evening schools, intensive full-time courses, and cooperative courses in vocational or comprehensive high schools.
6. Adopt the view that both preparatory training and extension training are desirable in any complete program of vocational training in this field.

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Definitions," The Journal of Business Education, XVIII (April, 1943), p. 9.

7. Adopt the view that the following types of people should be provided for in this new program and that their needs should be considered in the order listed: (a) young people who are already employed in distributive occupations and who need training to do their jobs better; (b) employed people who wish and are capable of taking promotional training; (c) young people who desire to prepare for distributive occupations; and (d) small or neighborhood store operators.

8. Appoint a supervisor of training for distributive occupations.

9. Set up specifications for this new office supervisor which will insure competency to deal with its problems and include:

(1) 5 years of working experience

(2) 2 years of post-high-school technical education

(3) 4 years of post-high-school general education

(4) adequate professional training for the work to be done, but not expressed in terms of semester-hours of conventional professional subjects

(5) 3 years of teaching experience either in store schools, public schools, or private schools

(6) 2 years of supervisory experience in stores or schools.

Note: Some of the experiences called for in (1), (5), and (6) should be acceptable if had concurrently.

10. Set up specifications for teachers which will get you competent teachers from the distributive fields for which training is organized, including:

(1) 4 years of working experience

(2) 1 year of post-high-school technical education

(3) 2 years of post-high-school general education

(4) 190 hours of professional training--teacher-training classes, summer schools, etc.

11. Concentrate on the retail division of the distributive field at the outset.

12. Offer intensive, short, unit courses for unemployed people who have had experience in one or more distributive occupations.

13. Start with departmentalized courses for employed people.

14. Stimulate the organization of preparatory secondary school courses.

15. Study the needs of neighborhood store workers and operators and try to meet such needs for training as are discovered, having in mind that there are unusual difficulties to be surmounted in this field.

16. Finally, adopt the long-term point of view and do not try to meet at once all conceivable needs for training in this new field.¹

The current practices and the position of distributive education indicates that much of what Nichols believed and recommended has been

¹Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XII (November, 1937), p. 10.

adopted. The remaining pages of this section will be concerned with expanding on what Nichols believed about certain points noted above.

Nichols believed that distributive education should be a part of business education. His belief is shown in the two quotations that follow:

At the outset I want to emphasize the fact that distributive occupations lie within the broader field of business education, and not within any other field.¹

The plain fact is that training for the distributive occupations is a phase of business education. That business educators have neglected it does not alter this fact.²

Nichols proposed that each state should create a "department of business education" to deal with distributive education and office education. He believed that leadership in the department should come from the business education field. In the state department of business education, he suggested that a director of business education should be appointed.

The director of business education should be able to supervise work under the office-training program and administer that which is attempted under the distributive occupational program. There should be a well-qualified supervisor of training for the distributive occupations. Such a plan should guarantee to each type of training the expert management that would insure its ultimate success. Nothing could do more to bring existing vocational business-training courses into harmony with sound principles of vocational education. . .³

The above plan, Nichols believed, would insure that those responsible for office training would logically assume responsibility for distributive occupational training. Mutual confidence would exist between

¹Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XIII (October, 1937), p. 8.

²Nichols, Objectives and Problems of Vocational Education, p. 439.

³Ibid., pp. 440-41.

teachers of office workers and teachers of store employees. Competition between office and distributive educators would be avoided. And, young people, who would do best in business by way of a distributive occupation and who tend to look down on store work in favor of office work, would be more apt to choose a career based on aptitudes, abilities, and interest.

Nichols plan could have promoted cooperation and unified effort in preparation for all business occupations. Instead, distributive educators and office educators have, in almost all cases, gone their separate ways and have foregone any benefits they could have received from each other.

The views of Nichols concerning the order of need for distributive instruction, as stated in 1937, appeared to change. It may have been that he believed that the needs of the employed group would soon be sufficiently met. In any case, he said in 1938: "The greatest weakness in business education today is its almost total lack of any adequate provision for preemployment training in the distributive field which absorbs more novices every year than does the field of office service."¹ Again, 4 years later, he declared:

Distributive occupations that absorb such a large proportion of youth must be assured of a larger place in plans for developing newer and better programs in this field. Under the stimulus of the George-Deen Act progress is being made in this direction, but the interest of those responsible for developments under this Act centers in the field of extension training for small-store merchants and employed people. The importance of this kind of training cannot be denied, but it should not be given at the expense of, or to the exclusion of, pre-employment training for those who expect to obtain work in the distributive field. To neglect this latter group is to perpetuate a vicious cycle of incompetence that can only be ameliorated

¹Nichols, Objectives and Problems of Vocational Education, p. 436.

by extension training given after much of the social loss, due to faulty merchandising practice and incompetent sales service, has been sustained by the public. It is perfectly proper to make training available to those who for lack of it are rendering low-grade service, providing the practice of waiting for such low-grade service to materialize before anything is done about it is not established on a permanent basis. In other words, to the extent that pre-employment training may be depended upon to eliminate, or even to lessen, the degree of incompetence of novice merchants and workers, no stone should be left unturned in attempts to provide it.¹

While not denying the need for extension training for the employed store worker, Nichols believed that adequate preemployment training should lessen that need. There is need to prepare individuals to perform efficiently before they become full-time distributive personnel. Individuals should not have to--through trial and error, or through extension training--learn acceptable skills and concepts that should be developed in pre-employment training. Nichols believed that cooperative work experience courses, with time divided between school work and experience on the job, are the means by which the pre-employment distributive preparation should be given. He said:

. . . That training of basic character given to employed people should be considered in the nature of a temporary stop-gap; that such training should be given widely in pre-employment, cooperative courses where it can be given less expensively and more opportunely; that advanced extension and refresher courses should be reserved for employed people or unemployed people who have had experience; and that this plan will substantially reduce losses, individual and social, which now accrue through incompetent initial service.²

Nichols was quite adamant in his belief about work-experience in distributive education. Regarding co-operative programs, he said that ". . . unless a vocational selling program can be a co-operative one in

¹Nichols, Forty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, p. 220.

²Ibid., p. 221.

which appropriate work experience is assured, no attempt should be made to organize such a program."¹

Concerning the teacher of distributive education, Nichols wrote: "Whatever one may think about the importance of occupational experience for teachers of clerical courses, there can be little doubt as to the desirability of such experience for teachers of distributive courses."²

Nichols believed that extension courses in distributive education should be provided for small store operators, specialty shop personnel and department store employees. For workers in small stores he had reservations. "Most neighborhood store workers regard their employment as only temporary--a stop-gap until something else comes along. This leads to a state of mind which is not conducive to a favorable attitude toward extension training."³

As for the small store operator, Nichols did not believe that even instruction could save many of them from being displaced by the more efficient, aggressive chain stores. He saw the chain store as having advantages of capital, purchasing power, management, location, attractiveness of store, display, advertising, equipment, and so forth. In fact, he seemed to believe that preparing small store proprietors and workers might do some of them more harm than good. He said:

Unless small store proprietors can be picked with some degree of care, courses for their benefit may be a disservice to them since,

¹Nichols, Forty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, p. 117.

²Nichols, National Business Education Quarterly, XI (March, 1943), p. 48.

³Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XIII (November, 1937), p. 9.

at best, such courses may only postpone the day of their failure and prolong the agony of their going.¹

Before going too far with courses for either neighborhood store owners or workers, one should explore the possibilities for training these people for other jobs in other, but related, areas of the field of distribution.²

Except in matters of management, Nichols believed that departmentalized unit courses can serve the needs of all groups of employed retail personnel. Instead of offering specialized courses for small store operators, specialty store personnel, or department store employees, Nichols advocated that numerous departmentalized, evening extension courses of varying lengths should be organized in scientifically determined sequences. He said:

. . . There might be a course in trait development, one in meeting people over the counter, another in making a sale, another in oral English, another in the proper use of the voice, another in the clerical work of selling, still another in textiles, one in leather goods, one in glassware and china, one in rugs and carpets, one in groceries, another in footwear, one in credits and collections, one in delivery service, another in adjustments, another in window dressing, one in general display, one in store organization, and, but why go on? There is no visible end to the list that could be set up on the basis of a survey of needs to be met.³

He believed that departmentalized unit courses of the above type best fit the needs of most retail workers. An individual should choose only the particular units for which he has need.

Nichols commended the George-Deen Act for requiring that advisory committees be used to help improve programs preparing students for distributive occupations. However, he was critical of business education outside of the distributive field for not making use of similar advisory committees. He was convinced that advisory committees, made up of

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

employers, can be instrumental in insuring that the preparation of business students is pertinent to actual working conditions and needs.

It is most desirable that employers be consulted in the development of vocational training of any kind. Likewise those employed in jobs for which training is given can be, and should be, given the opportunity to contribute to the development of better vocational business training.¹

Just having an advisory committee is not enough, however, Nichols believed that the advisory committee should be picked carefully and used purposefully and expertly. For best results, he maintained that the business educator needs to know what kind of information he wants to obtain from the committee and how best to secure this information before he seeks the committee's help.

It cannot be expected that such conferees will know how best to make their most helpful contribution. Too many of them are unaware of important changes in the educational process. What such advisers propose on the basis of their own educational experience may be of little practical value. The kind of assistance sought */italics mine/* by a competent educator should be far more useful than what an adviser is likely to volunteer.²

Nichols saw distributive education as a "phase" of business education--a phase that had enormous potential and need for increased educational activity. Many of the things Nichols believed should be accomplished in distributive education have been attained. However, there is still need for greater emphasis and achievement in this area of education along lines advocated by Nichols as much as 40 years ago.

To summarize this section briefly, business education subjects can be divided into three general areas. Business subjects like consumer

¹Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XXV (January, 1950), p. 26.

²F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Prejudices?" The Journal of Business Education, XXV (June, 1950), p. 27.

economics help provide students with a part of that general education considered necessary for an educated citizen. Business students also need a background of business information that is provided in subjects like economic geography, business organization and management, and business law. Finally, technical skill subjects such as shorthand and typewriting are necessary for providing business students with occupational skills that will insure their obtaining an initial business position.

Methods of Teaching Business

The methods of teaching business subjects are important for several reasons. Nichols said business educators, as well as administrators, need to consider the method used in a particular subject at any time because:

. . . it may increase the cost of business training, unduly prolong the period of training in a given course, cause discouragement with consequent failure and repetition of a course, result in lack of ability to meet initial job requirements, or crowd out desirable general-education courses.¹

Also, the methods of teaching business education subjects must necessarily be diverse because of the different kinds of business subjects that have unique aims and objectives.

In the field of business education will be found a wide range of subjects including those like typewriting which involve a large amount of manipulative skill, those like bookkeeping which call for the development of understanding of basic principles and clear thinking in their application to concrete and often complex business situations, . . . and those like consumer economics which is intended to result in a sound attitude toward one's personal economic life, more than average ability to solve one's financial problems, and good habits in the handling of one's resources.

¹Nichols, Forty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, p. 111.

Obviously, methods that seem especially appropriate with one group of subjects may be wholly useless in others.¹

For a long time it has been obvious that no plan, however novel and well thought out, can be equally satisfactory for all kinds of courses taken by students representing a great variety of student ability, and for the achievement of any one of a score or more of desirable objectives.²

Since there are numerous methods of instruction, and since not all methods are suitable for all subjects, Nichols declared that "it is the business of commercial teachers to study new plans carefully, select whatever they contain that may be useful, and reject that which does not meet their requirements."³

In general, Nichols held that the methods of teaching other disciplines were also appropriate for teaching most of the business education subjects. He did recognize, however, that additional special methods of instruction are necessary for developing the skills needed by store and office employees. He noted that methods of instruction suitable for developing ". . . occupational skill may be wholly inappropriate for the development of sound points of view, occupational understanding, knowledge of business principles, observational powers and habits, and right attitudes toward ones job."⁴

. . . It may be assumed that principles of teaching which are acceptable for use in teaching what are called "academic" subjects are equally well suited to the teaching of the background business subjects (business law, business economics, economic geography, etc.), the consumer business subjects (junior business training, consumer

¹Ibid.

²F. G. Nichols, "Neglected But Essential Outcomes of Vocational Teaching, The Contract Plan for Achieving Them," National Business Education Quarterly, X (December, 1941), p. 11.

³Ibid., p. 12.

⁴Ibid.

economics, etc.) and the basic principles of the pre-vocational subjects (beginning shorthand, beginning typewriting, beginning book-keeping, etc.).

It is quite as important that special principles and methods whose adaptability to any skill subject has been proven in several other vocational fields should be adopted by teachers of business skill subjects. It must be recognized, however, that special methods necessary to the development of the peculiar skills needed for store and office work must be developed also.¹

Nichols did not often discuss or take a stand for a particular method of teaching a skill subject. He was more concerned with the view that the method used should be consistent with the objectives of the subject being taught. However, those persons who develop methods of teaching skill subjects, according to Nichols, should realize that:

. . . much, if not all, of the development of skills must be done in the classroom, the laboratory, or on the job. Skills are not developed through study of textbooks, or through lectures, or through discussions, or through any other activity except that which involves those manipulative processes, both mental and physical, which enter into the skill to be developed.²

In addition to skill methodology, there is need for suitable time and appropriate methods for developing other equally important aspects of a student's business education. Several methods that Nichols advocated could well be used to achieve certain skill and non-skill objectives of business subjects are as follows.

Nichols felt that business teachers have not recognized the worth of the "project method." He held that it could be especially useful in the skill subjects.

¹Nichols, Forty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, pp. 11-12.

²Nichols, National Business Education Quarterly, X (December, 1941), p. 12.

In all business-skill courses the project should have a prominent place, ranging all the way from simple laboratory projects at first to complex work-experience projects in a real office or store near the conclusion of the training period. Only in this way can willingness and ability to assume responsibility on the job be developed under school conditions.¹

Of the "contract plan," Nichols wrote:

The "Dalton" or "contract" plan, . . . is not suited to the uses of teachers of skill subjects in the development of occupational skill up to minimal employment standards. But it is almost indispensable to such teachers if they wish to assure to their trainees some degree of occupational intelligence or understanding without undue encroachment on the laboratory time, all of which is needed for the development of essential skills.²

Nichols viewed the contract plan as one way to provide a degree of homework for skill courses. The contract plan begins when a student and a teacher enter into a contract whereby the student agrees to investigate and report in writing upon some business-related topic of interest. The teacher, in turn, agrees to evaluate the student's work and properly reward him for his efforts. Nichols suggested that these reports on various business topics should be the basis of required reading for others in the class. By using the contract method in skill courses, Nichols contended that much useful occupational information could be acquired by each student as a result of independent research on his own topic. Also, each student would gain additional benefit from being required to review similar work on other topics completed by his classmates. Nichols believed that the overall achievement of vocational business students could be nearly doubled by effectively using this method of instruction.³

¹Nichols, Forty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, p. 113.

²Ibid., p. 112.

³Ibid., pp. 112-13.

According to Nichols, occupational contacts should be provided for vocational business students through a "cooperative plan." He would schedule cooperative programs as close to the time of a student's employment as possible.¹

In all advanced business courses at the point where vocational preparation has progressed far enough to insure minimal occupational skill, provision should be made for occupational contacts--in-school jobs at first, out-of-school jobs later, the latter merging into full-time employment if possible.²

Regardless of the method used for teaching a particular business subject or topic, Nichols held that the instructional materials need to be up to date in content. He criticized the tendency of business educators and book publishers to resist changing instructional materials even when new concepts and objectives render existing materials and methods obsolete.³ Nichols also referred to the importance of a good textbook to the business teacher. He believed that an inadequate textbook in the hands of a good teacher or an adequate textbook in the hands of a weak teacher was better than no textbook at all. Nichols maintained that teachers should supplement textbook content with outside materials; however, he argued that teachers who refuse to use textbooks because they want to select and prepare all of their own materials are apt to be using inferior instructional aids. Nichols did not believe that the usual, over-worked teacher has the time or opportunity to substitute completely the kind of quality material a competent author can produce.⁴

Succintly, no one method of instruction is suitable for the teaching of the various business education subjects. Rather, all

¹Ibid., pp. 113-14.

²Ibid., p. 114.

³Nichols, Commercial Education in the High School, pp. 346-51.

⁴F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Textbooks," The Journal of Business Education, XVI (November, 1940), p. 9.

available methods should be examined for the purpose of determining how they may be used appropriately and successfully in achieving predetermined objectives.

Standards in Business Education

The standard of achievement one expects a student to meet in a particular subject will govern, to a great extent, the effort put forth by both teacher and student. The standard thus becomes a goal for those who understand it and accept it as such. In business education, Nichols realized that different subjects call for different standards.

. . . there are many types of high school business training, including exploratory, prevocational, personal use, vocational skill, and background business principles. Each has its own peculiar aims, instructional materials, and teaching methods. Achievement in each must be judged by its own standards. No one can successfully generalize about standards that are suitable for all types and levels of business training.¹

For various reasons, Nichols contended that there are no real standards for either high school subjects or graduation in most schools. He cited the normal distribution curve as a technique that promotes flexible rather than definite standards of achievement. Nichols conceded that such plans might be defensible for general education subjects and for some business education subjects. But, for prevocational and vocational skill subjects, where the business teacher has control over the conditions of instruction, he advocated that there could and should be definite standards established in terms of actual achievement.² For the prevocational subjects, he wrote:

¹F. G. Nichols, "Standards in Business Education," National Business Education Quarterly, X (October, 1941), p. 14.

²Ibid., pp. 14-15.

Prevocational courses are intended to reveal abilities essential to the successful pursuit of the vocational course desired. Here standards become important. There should be very definite standards of achievement that must be reached as a basis for promotion to the vocational program chosen by each pupil. For these courses doubtless there must be, under present conditions, two standards--one for promotion to the advanced vocational courses for which they are intended to be preparation and try-out, and one for school credit with permission to transfer to another program.¹

In other words, some standard other than a letter grade should determine whether a student should be promoted from a basic prevocational subject to a more advanced vocational one. Nichols asserted that schools should ". . . abandon any attempt to give sound vocational training if such standards cannot be set up and maintained."²

Standards for the vocational skill subjects, according to Nichols, should be based on production standards required of beginning office workers as revealed by research.³ Nichols did not generally champion a specific standard for any business subject. Rather, he usually referred to standards in general terms. He recognized that any particular standard should change along with office practice.⁴ He did note that there was ample research available that schools could use in setting minimal office production standards. "No more surveys are necessary. Scores of them have revealed the facts. All that is necessary is to make use of their findings."⁵

¹Ibid., p. 14.

²Ibid., p. 50.

³Ibid., p. 52.

⁴F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Standards," The Journal of Business Education, VIII (February, 1933), p. 8.

⁵F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Measuring Competence," The Journal of Business Education, XXVI (February, 1951), p. 236.

Although Nichols in 1952 stated that ". . . standards, either school or office, are like the proverbial snakes in Ireland--there aren't any,"¹ he did believe that the following steps, if taken, could cause a change for the better in business education standards.

1. The standard for stenographic training courses could be made ability to take office-type original dictation at reasonable speed for say a half hour, and get out a usable transcript in a period of time that will reflect a decent initial stenographic standard of production.

2. Emphasis could be shifted from copying spurt-speed in type-writing to production in terms of real typing jobs done usably in at least an hour stretch, or better still a two-hour one.

3. The classroom standard of mere acquaintanceship with commonly used office machines could be changed to that of competence in their operation up to office standards through a reasonable unit of working time.

4. Some study of normal office working conditions, and preferably at least a small amount of actual experience on a job that is in line with the student's training program could be included.

5. The cooperation of an Advisory Committee of employers and supervisors of office workers could be sought in an attempt to bring training programs and standards into line with job requirements as to standards of production.

The steps suggested are not too much to ask of any school that should be offering real vocational business training.²

In addition to the above steps, Nichols maintained that proper testing in vocational business subjects could do much to improve standards. For effective testing, Nichols asserted that "perhaps the most important testing principle is to set up your test in such a way as to measure what you set out to measure."³ To Nichols, such a principle should cause vocational business educators to devise tests designed to

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Standards Again," The Journal of Business Education, XXVII (February, 1952), p. 236.

²F. G. Nichols, "Using the Findings of Job Studies to Improve Instruction in Business Subjects," Business Education Forum, VII (May, 1953), p. 28.

³Nichols, The Journal of Business Education, XIV (April, 1939), p. 8.

measure desired minimum occupational competence in terms of office standards--since this statement describes the goal of vocational business preparation. He particularly held that a concluding test should seek to measure such achievement.

National Business Entrance Tests are designed to measure occupational competence at the end of a student's business preparation. Nichols insisted that the National Business Entrance Testing program deserves the cooperation of all teachers of vocational business subjects.¹ Originally called the National Clerical Ability Tests, these tests identify those business students who have achieved minimal standards of employment necessary for obtaining various office positions. Nichols held that:

Enough experience has been had with these tests to justify the belief that they come closer to setting standards for achievement in the occupational fields covered than do any other tests now available to schools generally.²

In other words, Nichols believed that teachers could well consider the successful passing by their students of the National Business Entrance Tests as a suitable outcome of their instruction. He believed that this testing program helps to define occupational goals and set standards of achievement that will cause progressive educators to modify present business programs in ways designed to achieve the real objectives of vocational business education.³

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Year End Comments," The Journal of Business Education, XXIV (June, 1949), p. 9.

²Nichols, National Business Education Quarterly, X (October, 1941), p. 53.

³F. G. Nichols, "National Clerical Ability Testing Program," Modern Business Education, VII (March, 1941), p. 27.

In summary, if standards are set which correspond with minimal office production standards and if suitable tests are used to insure such standards are achieved, Nichols concluded that the result will be that business educators will:

Train stenographers--not just rapid spurt shorthand writers.
Train typists--not just fast spurt copyists.
Train machine transcribers--not just clerks who know how to operate the transcribing machine.
Train calculating machine operators--not just clerks who know how the machine works.
Train file clerks--not just alphabetizers.
Train bookkeepers--not just new-type information test takers.¹

In this and the two preceding chapters, there have been presented Nichols views on the nature and purposes of business education, the conditions in business education, and the instructional considerations in business education. In the concluding chapter that follows, the contemporary beliefs of Nichols that have been expounded upon at length are concisely summarized in outline form.

¹F. G. Nichols, "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Answers to Your Questions About the National Clerical Ability Tests," The Journal of Business Education, XIII (February, 1938), p. 19.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

Frederick George Nichols, who has been called the "father of modern business education," should be the object of numerous systematic, organized research studies. This study represents one such effort in that it concentrated in a discriminating, differentiating, and critical manner on the writings of Nichols so that his clear understanding, logical approach, and comprehensive philosophy might be more directly brought to bear on business education as it is today.

Restatement of Problem

The problem of this study was to analyze selected writings of Frederick George Nichols so that his philosophy of business education in the secondary school could be made applicable to contemporary problems in business education. The investigation was designed to show how his beliefs reflected the times in which he lived, how they anticipated the future, how they changed over the years, and how they correspond to thought in business education today.

The data for this study were obtained wholly from library sources. Nichols' books were analyzed, and his contributions to yearbooks and other miscellaneous periodicals were assiduously sought out and surveyed. Background information about Nichols' life and work was gathered to provide

material for the biographical sketch that appears in this report. An extensive, working bibliography was compiled and each source was searched for ideas relating to eleven broad categories of business education topics. The diverse beliefs and thoughts of Nichols were then brought together into a body of information accurately classified and appropriately summarized.

Results of This Investigation

The nature of this study is unlike most dissertations in that it is not possible to formulate any specific findings. An attempt has been made to reveal Nichols' beliefs about business education in order that they might be used in analyzing and evaluating present problems and activities. To enhance their usability, a concise outline of major ideas and supporting understandings concerning business education was developed from the writings of Frederick George Nichols. The beliefs contained in the following outline are held by this writer to have extensive contemporary value to business educators.

Resume of Nichols' Beliefs Concerning Business Education

I. Business education is a type of preparation which contributes to the general aims of education on any level and which enables people to enter upon business careers, or having entered upon such careers; to render more efficient service, and to advance to higher levels of business and office employment.

A. Business education includes the entire field of business preparation, but certain phases of it, such as the evening school, are designed to only partially fulfill the over-all objectives.

B. Business education may be viewed as a complete program of study to be chosen by a student on an elective basis wherein each subject taken, whether business or otherwise, makes a contribution to his preparation for a business occupation.

II. Philosophically, business education that encompasses truly functional objectives in line with modern developments in education and business is an essential part of any complete program of education. It should be taught by specially prepared teachers who utilize unique instructional materials and methods and evaluate learning by means of specifically designed instruments.

III. Objectives of business education must be determined before programs can be set up to prepare students for business occupations; then, business education organization, administration, supervision, and instruction activity should be primarily concerned with achieving results in line with predetermined objectives.

A. There should be prevocational and vocational objectives in business education.

B. Prevocational business education objectives should be consumer oriented and provide for exploration, tryout, and guidance; for a proper foundation for further study in business; and for an understanding of basic principles of personal economic living.

C. Vocational business education objectives should be producer oriented while being concerned with contributing to the general education and social understanding of all students and to the occupational skill and intelligence of vocational business education students.

D. Although some consumer economic education values can be taught in vocational business education courses, vocational courses alone cannot be relied upon to meet consumer needs.

E. Separate, short unit skill courses should be provided for students desiring skill in typewriting and shorthand for personal use.

F. Each vocational business education student should acquire skills necessary to meet minimal entrance standards of definite business occupations.

G. The product of a business education program should be able to function efficiently both as a producer of goods or services and as a consumer.

IV. General Education varies with the individual and is any education designed to prepare one to live successfully and happily as an individual and as a member of society.

A. Due to differing aptitudes, abilities, and interests, there is general education that all should have and general education peculiar to each individual.

B. Business education can be general education when it helps prepare one to be an all-around competent citizen.

V. Vocational education is education the primary purpose of which is to prepare one for occupational life, or to improve one's ability to perform the duties of his job or to advance to the next higher level of employment.

A. Business education that prepares one for occupations in business is vocational education.

B. Vocational business education can justify its existence as a segment of education by effectively preparing individuals for initial business occupations and for subsequent advancement.

C. Business educators should cooperate with other vocational education departments and should seek to effect a unification of all vocational departments into one educational family so that each area can contribute to the further progress of the total vocational education cause.

D. Vocational education, encompassing business education, is essential to a complete secondary education program.

VI. Secondary school business education is concerned with assisting in the general development of all students and the specific vocational preparation of selected qualified students.

A. Junior high school business education is that part of business education that is foundational and prevocational and that establishes a proper base for study in business at the high school level.

B. Senior high school business education is that part of business education that is given in all-day secondary schools to students between the ages of fourteen and twenty for the purpose of preparing them for entrance into business occupations and for socially useful and personally satisfying living.

C. Business educators should insure and employers should insist that high school business education graduates be occupationally competent in order that those who are employed will be hired "to work," not "to train."

D. Sound vocational business education at the secondary school level can best be provided in large comprehensive or vocational schools with business educators and employers working together in establishing occupational objectives and standards of achievement.

E. Small high schools offering business education should be content to lay a groundwork of foundational understandings and prevocational skills and leave the complicated and expensive vocational business education to larger schools.

F. It is at the high school level where the basic principles of business education can best be isolated and defined for extension to other levels and types of educational institutions.

VII. Business education beyond the secondary school should be conducted at various levels by many different agencies and institutions for the purpose of enabling students to gain the understandings and competencies essential to employment in middle-and-upper-level office and business occupations.

A. The need for in-service training, lessened by careful hiring by employers, should exist when a particular educational need is not provided by public or private schools, and should be available to those persons capable of profiting from it.

B. The evening school should supplement preparatory day-school business education of the public schools by up-grading or refreshing skills and knowledges of employed or unemployed, experienced workers so as to improve their productivity and their promotion possibilities.

C. Because business needs more mature employees, junior colleges, senior colleges, and private business schools should assume much of the vocational business education now being offered at the secondary school level in order to enable the older more occupation-oriented students to attain higher levels of competence and work proficiency.

D. The private business school is a major segment of business education and provides opportunity for many competent individuals to prepare or extend occupational skills and knowledges necessary for success in business.

VIII. Organization of business education at national, state, and local levels is needed to insure that business education develops in an orderly, systematic manner in response to changing conditions in education and business.

A. Educational administrators are best equipped and can most forcibly apply remedies to alleviate inadequacies in business education at national, state, and local levels.

B. Even though school administrators may lack preparation in business education or understanding of it, they must be held fully responsible for the results of education for business in their schools.

C. Specialists in business education should be selected with care and appointed to supervise the complex and extensive aspects of education for business at national and state levels and in large cities.

D. Business educators must practice kinds of public relations which will enhance efforts to better organize and administer sound programs of education for business.

E. Business educators should demand supervision whenever it is needed for coordination, for improvement of instruction and equipment, for evaluation, and for curriculum revision.

F. Departmentalization in the field of business education is capable of producing either good or bad results depending upon the motives for that departmentalization and the unity of purpose in it.

G. Complete and effective cooperation of supervisors, administrators, department heads, and teachers is fundamental to the development of any good program of business education.

IX. Guidance and placement in business education should be a continuing process that begins early in life, is participated in by many people and agencies, and is concerned with aiding individuals in adjusting and readjusting to a dynamic economic world until the end of their occupational careers.

A. Students should be assisted in selecting occupations that are in line with their aptitudes, abilities, and interests; each student should select two vocational goals--one for which he will immediately prepare and one to which he will aspire.

B. Guidance activity should result in homogeneous classes of vocational and nonvocational business students to facilitate better instruction and the achievement of suitable standards.

C. Business educators should assume some of the responsibility for guidance at the preemployment level, be primarily responsible for guiding business students during the vocational preparation period, and assist other guidance workers after the vocational preparation period in the occupational adjustment of business graduates.

D. Placement and follow-up activities by business educators should help assure that business education programs will have realistic, achievable standards and will be up-to-date in their content.

E. Guidance by business educators should result in the business student realizing that there is no such thing as finished preparation for a business career and that his success in business will depend to some extent on his being aware that his formal business preparation has, in the long run, merely better equipped him to make the most of daily lessons experience will teach him.

X. Business education personnel should consist of capable students, pursuing business preparation in homogeneous groups, and informed skillful teachers, practicing effectively the fine art of instructing.

A. The students in vocational business and office education should be at least eleventh-and twelfth-graders and new programs should be developed that are suitable to boys at that age level.

B. Unless a business subject can be taught by a teacher certified as competent in terms of general, specialized, and professional preparation, that subject should not be offered.

C. The salaries of business teachers should be based on teaching merit to insure that superior instruction will be recognized and that instructional deficiencies will be alleviated.

XI. Business teacher preparation should be offered through a department of education to capable individuals with other departments assisting in the over-all process.

A. The staff of an institution that prepares teachers should consist of leaders who initiate new methods and principles necessary for insuring that business education practice will be of the type currently needed.

B. The business teacher graduate should be a progressive, alert, and competent business educator who possesses an understanding of his field as well as the ability to teach individual business subjects in which he has specialized.

C. Beginning business teachers should initially be prepared and certified to teach in at least one of the following areas of business teaching: pre-vocational, consumer business subjects, background vocational business knowledge, or vocational skill.

XII. Work experience should be included in the preparation of both business teachers and business students if education for business is to be occupationally oriented and in accord with current business practice.

A. Cooperative work experience for students in business education is needed to help them relate school to life and to help round out their vocational preparation.

B. Educative work experience should receive school credit and be a part of the regular curriculum, not merely extra-class work.

C. Office work experience can sometimes be provided in simulated offices in schools; but, simulated store experience for distributive occupations should not be substituted for on-the-job work experience.

D. Students should receive pay for work experience when the work performed is of a type for which remuneration would ordinarily be given.

E. Work experience for vocational business teachers should be occupational experience identifiable with the particular types of jobs for which the teacher is offering instruction.

XIII. Federal aid should provide the motivation for business educators to organize and develop preparation for business and office occupations in accordance with sound vocational principles and objectives.

A. Business education should receive the same kinds of federal support that are accorded to other vocational fields.

B. Federal aid should be used for initiating new kinds of business preparation as new jobs develop and as wider ranges of aptitudes, interests, and abilities are represented in the high school enrollment.

C. Federal aid should facilitate the refinement and extension of business and office education at the eleventh- and twelfth-grade levels whenever it is organized with definite vocational objectives in mind and on the basis of sound principles of vocational preparation.

D. Federal aid should be restricted to programs involving instruction by business teachers who are occupationally experienced and who have demonstrated their ability to handle the jobs for which they are giving instruction.

XIV. Research relating to identifiable problems conducted by competent people following carefully developed procedures and techniques, with accurate interpretation and adequate dissemination of results is needed to maintain a proper relationship between theory and practice in business education.

A. Business educators who conduct research should choose problems on the basis of a felt need rather than merely satisfying college and university degree requirements.

B. Supervisors of business education research should see that their students benefit from their research experience by having them select problems within the scope of their abilities and insuring that they have adequate time, suitable training in investigational procedure and technique, and necessary resources for doing research.

C. Research methods and techniques need to be appropriately chosen and carefully used, with more studies in business education utilizing the testing and experimental techniques.

D. Majority opinion and practice can be wrong and should seldom be used as the basis for determining what should be either continued or attempted in business education.

E. Respondents to business education research should make replies only in the areas in which they have had adequate training and experience.

F. The only research results that should be publicized or published in business education are those that result from scientifically conducted research and that clearly make a real contribution to business education knowledge.

G. Inasmuch as research and teaching, are important but different activities in business education, both have their functions to perform and neither should be emphasized to the neglect of the other.

H. In addition to encouraging and initiating still necessary research, some organization should be formed to determine and to make available to business educators the valuable portions of business education research so that the lag can be reduced between research results and practice.

XV. Accreditation of business education at all levels is needed to encourage educational institutions to improve their over-all programs and to recognize superior achievement where it exists.

A. Accreditation criteria should be revamped so that the general and vocational outcomes of business education are appropriately evaluated in terms of something other than academic, college-preparatory standards.

B. The best basis for determining the success of business education preparation is to evaluate a program's achievement in terms of stated general and vocational objectives.

XVI. Professional business education associations can and should seek to meet the needs of business educators through local, state, regional, and national activity programs.

A. A national business education association should represent business education in educational movements of national scope, afford opportunity for the discussion of major issues, and express the will of the majority of business educators on national policies that affect business education.

B. The national business education association and one regional business education association should be joined and supported by every business educator; whereas, other business education associations should be supported when they serve particular needs.

C. The national and regional business education associations should cooperatively develop a long-term plan for convention programs to reduce duplication in the many convention topics and themes.

D. Business educators should be more concerned about resolving the major issues in business education that underlie the many varied classroom problems that so many association meetings discuss and overemphasize.

E. Business educators should support a professional journal that is free of advertising and which accepts for publication only the best presentations given at business education association meetings.

F. Business education associations should look more to their own membership for speakers for association meetings instead of relying largely on free publisher and business sources.

XVII. The business education curriculum should consist of a carefully planned sequence of general business, foundational business, and vocational business subjects designed to achieve specific purposes while remaining flexible enough to provide for the needs, abilities, and interests of individual students.

A. The business education curriculum should facilitate differentiated programs for the preparation of students for stenography, bookkeeping, general clerical, and distributive positions.

B. Because of the universality of certain business activities, the content of the business offerings should be based on more than just the readily apparent local needs.

C. Articulation in business education requires that the curriculum be based upon instruction in the previous year that, in turn, prepares each student for further study of business in the succeeding year.

D. The total program of every business student should include the study of English, science, mathematics, social science, and those social-business subjects, the contents of which have not been incorporated into subjects of other departments.

XVIII. The subject matter of business education should consist of content designed for the general education of all students, for providing business education students with a background of business information essential to occupational success, and for assisting business students in developing skills necessary for securing an initial-contact job.

A. Business education can best contribute to the general education of all students by offering suitable subjects in consumer economic education and by cooperating with other departments in imparting those economic principles that are basic to good citizenship.

B. Business subjects designed to provide business students with a suitable background of business information should be considered vocational in nature and have their essential content offered in as few separate subjects as possible.

C. Technical business subjects should be primarily designed to develop in students as quickly as possible occupational skills sufficient to allow students to perform up to minimal job standards the duties of particular, initial business positions.

D. Although commonly segregated, distributive education is an integral part of business education that should be designed to help provide for the varied aptitudes, abilities, and interests of the students preparing for varied types of distributive employments.

XIX. Methods of teaching business subjects should include diverse techniques and procedures which are consistent with the variations in the objectives and the content of each particular business subject.

A. Some of the methods used to teach academic subjects are also suitable for teaching most business education subjects; but, certain business subjects require methods of a specialized nature.

B. Methods of instructing business subjects can be most effective when they are coordinated with up-to-date instructional materials and equipment.

XX. Standards in business education should be somewhat flexible; but, for the skill achievement aspects of the prevocational and vocational subjects they should be fixed.

A. Standards for vocational business courses should be based on research that reveals the production requirements for beginning office workers.

B. Suitable employment tests given at the completion of a student's business preparation should be used to insure that vocational business education standards are achieved.

Conclusion

Nichols' life ended a little more than a decade ago. All available evidence indicates that the beliefs he held and expressed were soundly based when they were presented. The fact that his views changed somewhat on the objectives of junior business training is but one example that revealed how he was willing and eager to adapt to the demands of business practice. Yet, the principles he espoused around which business education should be developed show a keen type of foresight. Thus, it may be concluded that most of what Nichols held to be true can be appropriately applied to business education today and will likely constitute good business education for a relatively long additional period of time.

The twenty major ideas and the eighty supporting understandings developed from Nichols' writing encompass the full scope of secondary school business education. They reveal the achievable goals and objectives. They constitute guidelines to curriculum evaluation and to the improvement of business education. They reflect the need for continued quality research and the desirability of maintaining educational standards that are in accord with business practice. In the final analysis, they provide insight into the overall professional effort in the field of business education.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Nichols, F. G. Commercial Education in the High School. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1933.

_____. "Commercial Education: Principles, Practices, and Trends," Objectives and Problems of Vocational Education. E. A. Lee, Editor. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1938, pp. 451-52.

_____. Junior Business Training for Economic Living. New York: American Book Company, 1941.

Yearbooks

Nichols, F. G. "A Philosophy of the Business Curriculum," National Business Education Outlook. Sixth Yearbook of the National Commercial Teachers Federation, 1940, pp. 12-20.

_____. "Business Education--Clerical and Distributive," Forty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. Part I, Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1943, pp. 214-29.

_____. "Commercial Education in the Small High School," Problems of the Business Teacher. Eighth Yearbook of the Eastern Commercial Teachers Association, Philadelphia, Pa.: Eastern Commercial Teachers Association, 1955, pp. 321-22.

_____. "Desirable Outcomes of Teaching Business Subjects," National Business Education Outlook. Third Yearbook of the National Commercial Teachers Federation, Ann Arbor, Michigan: Ann Arbor Press, 1937, pp. 1-21.

_____. "Equipment Needed for a High School Commercial Department," American School and University. V, 1932, pp. 227-233.

_____. "Federal Services in Business Education and How to Use Them." Wartime Problems in Business Education. Sixteenth Yearbook of the Eastern Commercial Teachers Association, 1943, pp. 136-44.

- _____. "Issues and Problems: The Concern of All," Problems and Issues in Business Education. Seventh Yearbook of the National Business Teachers Association, Bowling Green, Kentucky: National Business Teachers Association, 1941, pp. 1-3.
- _____. "Methods of Teaching in Business Education--Clerical and Distributive," Forty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. Part I, Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1943, pp. 111-18.
- _____. "Personnel Problems in Commercial Education," National Business Education Outlook. First Yearbook of the National Commercial Teachers Federation, Ann Arbor, Michigan: Ann Arbor Press, 1935, pp. 34-37.
- _____. "Pre-Employment Business Training a Challenge to Educators," Business Education in a Changing Social and Economic Order. Seventh Yearbook of the Eastern Commercial Teachers Association, Philadelphia, Pa.: Eastern Commercial Teachers Association, 1934, pp. 60-71.
- _____. "Principles of Organization and Administration of Business Teacher Training," Administration and Supervision of Business Education. Third Yearbook of the Eastern Commercial Teachers Association, Philadelphia, Pa.: Eastern Commercial Teachers Association, 1930, pp. 41-47.
- _____. "Some Observations on Vocational Guidance in Commercial Education," Guidance in Business Education. Ninth Yearbook of the Eastern Commercial Teachers Association, Philadelphia, Pa.: Eastern Commercial Teachers Association, 1936, pp. 23-24.
- _____. "What Are the Steps in the Process of Determining the Occupational Opportunity in a Given City?" Foundations of Business Education. First Yearbook of the Eastern Commercial Teachers Association, New York: Eastern Commercial Teachers Association, 1929, pp. 364-65.

Articles and Periodicals

- Archer, F. C. "The Frederick G. Nichols Story, Part I," The Delta Pi Epsilon Journal, III (July, 1961), pp. 1-8.
- Fisk, McKee. "The Frederick G. Nichols Story, Part IV: His Writings and Research," The Delta Pi Epsilon Journal, IV (May, 1962), pp. 12-22.
- Lomax, P. S. "The Frederick G. Nichols Story, Part II: Leadership at the Federal and State Levels," The Delta Pi Epsilon Journal, IV (November, 1961), pp. 16-23.
- Nichols, F. G. "A Balanced Commercial Education Program," Vocational Education Magazine, II (April, May and June, 1924), pp. 634-35, 725-26, 822-24.

- _____. "An Experiment in Testing Stenographers," The American Short-hand Teacher, I (March, 1921), pp. 207-215.
- _____. "An Experiment in Testing Stenographers," The American Short-hand Teacher, I (June, 1921), pp. 339-41, 348.
- _____. "Are you Hiring People to Train--Or to Work?" NOMA Forum, XXIV (August, 1949), pp. 5-9.
- _____. "Basic Business Education," Connecticut Business Education, VIII (December, 1947), pp. 6-10.
- _____. "Business Training for Veterans," National Business Education Quarterly, XIV (October, 1945), pp. 9-22, 24.
- _____. "Clerical Practice--Some Basic Considerations," National Business Education Quarterly, III (March, 1935), pp. 2-11.
- _____. "Commercial Education in the Public School Organization," Vocational Education Magazine, II (February, 1924), pp. 457-58.
- _____. "Commercial Subjects," Review of Educational Research, VIII (February, 1938), pp. 15-18.
- _____. "Co-operation vs. Competition in Business Education," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, XXXII (November, 1948), pp. 62-8.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge," The Journal of Business Education, XIV (January, 1939), pp. 8, 10.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge," The Journal of Business Education, XXVIII (March, 1953), pp. 229, 243.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, A Business Teachers' Meeting," The Journal of Business Education, XXIII (November, 1947), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Accreditation," The Journal of Business Education, XXVII (October, 1951), pp. 53, 77.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, A Clinic," The Journal of Business Education, XXIX (May, 1954), pp. 325, 334.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, A Decade," The Journal of Business Education, XVIII (November, 1942), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, A Definition," The Journal of Business Education, XVI (March, 1941), p. ii.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, An Opportunity," The Journal of Business Education, XVI (May, 1941), pp. 9, 22.

- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Another Ripley "Believe it or Not," The Journal of Business Education, XXIII (February, 1948), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Answers to Your Questions About the National Clerical Ability Tests," The Journal of Business Education, XIII (February, 1938), pp. 8, 10.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, A Rating Problem," The Journal of Business Education, XXVII (December, 1951), pp. 148, 166.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, A Taxpayer Takes a Look at the Administration of Business Education," The Journal of Business Education, XXV (February, 1950), pp. 9, 29.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, A Testing Principle," The Journal of Business Education, XIV (April, 1939), p. 8.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, "Basic" Business Education," The Journal of Business Education, XXII (March, 1947), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Blind Spots in Commercial Education," The Journal of Business Education, VIII (January, 1933), pp. 8, 31.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Business Education by Proxy," The Journal of Business Education, VIII (March, 1933), pp. 9, 18.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Business English?" The Journal of Business Education, XVI (October, 1940), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Business English," The Journal of Business Education, XXIV (December, 1948), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Business Ethics," The Journal of Business Education, XXVII (March, 1952), pp. 281, 299.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Business Experience," The Journal of Business Education, XIV (April, 1939), p. 8.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Civil Service Tests," The Journal of Business Education, XXII (May, 1947), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Commercial Arithmetic," The Journal of Business Education, XVI (November, 1940), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Commercial Education in the Elementary School?" The Journal of Business Education, XI (June, 1936), p. 8.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Commercial Teacher Certification," The Journal of Business Education, XII (January, 1937), p. 8.

- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Conference on Consumer Education," The Journal of Business Education, XV (June, 1940), pp. 9, 26.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Consumer Business Education," The Journal of Business Education, XI (May, 1936), pp. 6, 24.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Cooperative Business Training," The Journal of Business Education, VIII (December, 1932), p. 8.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Cooperative Business Training," The Journal of Business Education, XVI (March, 1941), pp. 11, 26.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Definitions," The Journal of Business Education, XVII (April, 1943), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Do You Agree," The Journal of Business Education, XVII (June, 1942), pp. 9, 12.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Education for Business Today," The Journal of Business Education, XXIII (October, 1947), pp. 9, 29.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Erasures in Typing," The Journal of Business Education, XV (April, 1940), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Evening School Business Education?" The Journal of Business Education, XXII (June, 1947), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Families of Occupations," The Journal of Business Education, XVIII (December, 1942), pp. 9, 10, 12, 16.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Federal Aid at Last," The Journal of Business Education, XII (October, 1936), pp. 8-22.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Federal Aid for Office Occupations," The Journal of Business Education, XXV (January, 1950), pp. 7, 26.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, General Education," The Journal of Business Education, XXVI (March, 1951), pp. 289, 292.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, General Education or Vocational Education or What?" The Journal of Business Education, XXII (June, 1947), p. 9.

- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Gullibility or Professional Apathy?" The Journal of Business Education, XXVII (November, 1951), pp. 105, 123.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, High Pressure Salesmanship," The Journal of Business Education, XV (December, 1939), pp. 9, 12.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Homesick," The Journal of Business Education, XIV (June, 1939), p. 10.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Integration and Correlation," The Journal of Business Education, XXIV (October, 1948), pp. 9, 29.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Just Another School Year?" The Journal of Business Education, XXIX (October, 1953), pp. 9, 33.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Leadership Qualifications," The Journal of Business Education, XXVIII (January, 1953), p. 140.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Male Stenographers Again," The Journal of Business Education, XV (May, 1940), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Male Stenographers Again," The Journal of Business Education, XVII (December, 1941), p. 11.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Measuring Competence," The Journal of Business Education, XXVI (February, 1951), pp. 245, 250.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Measuring Results of Teaching Clerical Practice," The Journal of Business Education, IX (May, 1934), pp. 7, 20, 21, 22.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, More Power to You Prof. Selby," The Journal of Business Education, XVII (May, 1942), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, No!" The Journal of Business Education, XXII (March, 1947), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, No Such Thing as Vocational Education," The Journal of Business Education, VIII (March, 1933), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Not A Pretty Picture," The Journal of Business Education, XXV (October, 1949), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Now We Know-Or Do We?" The Journal of Business Education, XXV (September, 1949), pp. 9, 34.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Objectives--Student Opinion," The Journal of Business Education, XXII (February, 1947), pp. 9, 12.

- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Perpetuating Old Fallacies," The Journal of Business Education, XXIV (January, 1949), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Personality," The Journal of Business Education, XII (September, 1936), pp. 9, 18.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Personality," The Journal of Business Education, XXVIII (April, 1953), pp. 272, 290.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Personal Traits," The Journal of Business Education, XXVII (April, 1952), pp. 324-336.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Prejudices," The Journal of Business Education, XXV (June, 1950), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Puzzled and Depressed," The Journal of Business Education, XXIV (November, 1948), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Recognition for Clerical Practice," The Journal of Business Education, XVI (October, 1940), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Selective Enrollments," The Journal of Business Education, XV (September, 1939), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Separating the Sheep From the Goats," The Journal of Business Education, XI (June, 1936), p. 22.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Shorthand for Personal Use," The Journal of Business Education, XXII (April, 1947), p. 31.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Shorthand in Clerical Work," The Journal of Business Education, XXIV (January, 1949), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Standards," The Journal of Business Education, VIII (February, 1933), p. 8.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Standards Again," The Journal of Business Education, XXVII (February, 1952), pp. 236, 249.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Statistics," The Journal of Business Education, XV (February, 1940), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Straw Men," The Journal of Business Education, XVII (January, 1942), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Striking Contrast," The Journal of Business Education, XVII (November, 1941), p. 11.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Tangible Evidence of Wasted Time," The Journal of Business Education, XIX (September, 1943), p. 9.

- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Teacher Salaries Based on Merit," The Journal of Business Education, XXIII (December, 1947), pp. 9, 25.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Teachers' Examinations," The Journal of Business Education, IX (October, 1933), pp. 8, 26.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Textbooks," The Journal of Business Education, XVI (November, 1940), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Think It Over," The Journal of Business Education, XIX (February, 1944), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Too Many Associations?" The Journal of Business Education, XV (January, 1940), pp. 19, 22.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Transcription," The Journal of Business Education, XXVII (January, 1952), p. 192.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Transcription at Last," The Journal of Business Education, XIV (November, 1938), p. 8.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Typing Ability vs. Copying Speed," The Journal of Business Education, VIII (December, 1932), pp. 8, 31.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Typewriting in Junior High School for Personal-Use," The Journal of Business Education, XXIX (March, 1954), pp. 237, 246.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Typewriting Tests," The Journal of Business Education, XIII (April, 1938), pp. 8, 22.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, The Case for Commercial Arithmetic," The Journal of Business Education, XI (December, 1935), pp. 8, 10.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, The Commercial Department," The Journal of Business Education, XXIII (September, 1947), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, The Low-Ability Pupil," The Journal of Business Education, XIV (December, 1938), p. 8.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, The National Council's Opportunity and Need," The Journal of Business Education, XII (November, 1936), pp. 9, 22.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, The Poor Classroom Teacher," The Journal of Business Education, XXII (January, 1947), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, The Questionnaire," The Journal of Business Education, VIII (June, 1933), pp. 8, 24.

- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, The Small High School," The Journal of Business Education, XVIII (May, 1943), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, The Status of Commercial Arithmetic," The Journal of Business Education, X (February, 1935), pp. 7, 8.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, The Time Factor," The Journal of Business Education, XXII (September, 1946), p. 11.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, The Ubiquitous Questionnaire," The Journal of Business Education, XXVIII (November, 1952), pp. 52, 64.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, UBEA Forum," The Journal of Business Education, XXII (May, 1947), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Unproven Conclusions," The Journal of Business Education, XVII (April, 1942), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Vocational Guidance in Commercial Education," The Journal of Business Education, X (September, 1934), pp. 8, 22, 24.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, What Would You Do?" The Journal of Business Education, XVI (April, 1941), p. 11.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Which Will Be First?" The Journal of Business Education, XVI (January, 1941), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Why Not?" The Journal of Business Education, XXIII (March, 1948), p. 9.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Work Experience," The Journal of Business Education, XVII (March, 1942), pp. 9, 18.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Work Experience," The Journal of Business Education, XXVIII (February, 1953), p. 184.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Work-Experience and Credit," The Journal of Business Education, XXVII (April, 1952), pp. 324-336.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Year-End Comments," The Journal of Business Education, XXIV (June, 1949), pp. 9, 28.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Year-End Survey," The Journal of Business Education, XXVIII (May, 1953), p. 316.
- _____. "Criticism, Comment and Challenge, Your Responsibility," The Journal of Business Education, XXIII (September, 1947), pp. 9, 22.

- _____. "Current Literature in Business Education," Modern Business Education, XV (March, 1949), pp. 6-8.
- _____. "Dictating Machine Instruction Essential," The Journal of Business Education, XI (January, 1936), p. 31.
- _____. "Facing the Facts in Business Education on the Secondary School Level," Education, LX (January, 1940), pp. 257-63.
- _____. "Improvement of Instruction in Junior Business Training," The Journal of Business Education, XI (September, 1935), pp. 8-10.
- _____. "Looking Ahead in Junior Business Training Instruction," National Business Education Quarterly, I (October, 1932), pp. 20-8.
- _____. "Making Federal Aid Possible in Business Education," The Journal of Business Education, IV (April, 1930), pp. 8, 37, 55.
- _____. "Neglected But Essential Outcomes of Vocational Teaching: The Contract Plan for Achieving Them," National Business Education Quarterly, X (December, 1941), pp. 11-14, 28-38.
- _____. "National Clerical Ability Testing Program," Modern Business Education, VII (March, 1941), pp. 17-27.
- _____. "Needed Economics in Business Education," Junior-Senior High School Clearing House, VIII (December, 1933), pp. 209-11.
- _____. "Outlook for Commercial Education," National Education Association Proceedings and Addresses 1922, LX (1922), p. 1311.
- _____. "Pre-Employment Business Training," The Business Education World, XIV (May, 1934), pp. 527-531.
- _____. "Pre-Employment Training for Office Work--A Challenge to Employers," Office Management Series, Bulletin 65 (1934), p. 19.
- _____. "Poor School Administration Results in Futile Attempts to Give Business Training," Education, LVIII (December, 1937), pp. 193-98.
- _____. "Professor Nichols Receives Gregg Award (His Response)," Business Teacher, XXXI (March, 1954), pp. 9, 30.
- _____. "Readjustments in Business Education," The Journal of Business Education, XX (December, 1944), pp. 11, 12, 28.
- _____. "Research in Business Education," American Business Education, VI (October, 1949), pp. 11-19, 24.

- _____. "Report of Activities of the National Council of Business Education, 1934-1939," The Journal of Business Education, XV (October, 1939), pp. 30-32.
- _____. "Standards in Business Education," National Business Education Quarterly, X (October, 1941), pp. 13-16, 50-52.
- _____. "Some Readjustments in Vocational Business Education," Modern Business Education, II (January, 1936), pp. 6-9.
- _____. "Some Harmful Aspects of Business Education," Modern Business Education, VII (January, 1941), pp. 3-11.
- _____. "Status of Business Education," The Business Education World, XXIV (October, 1943), pp. 82-4.
- _____. "Significant Research in Business Education," Harvard Educational Review, XIII (March, 1943), pp. 98-100.
- _____. "Teaching, A Fine Art," Education, LIII (September, 1932), pp. 6-15.
- _____. "The Background of Distributive Education," National Business Education Quarterly, XI (March, 1943), pp. 9-12, 44-50.
- _____. "The Lag Between Research Results and Practice," National Business Education Quarterly, XVII (March, 1949), pp. 19-23, 57-61.
- _____. "Using the Findings of Job Studies to Improve Instruction in Business Subjects," Business Education Forum, VII (May, 1953), pp. 26-29.
- _____. "Vocational Training for Distributive Occupations Under the George-Deen Act," The Journal of Business Education, XIII (October, 1937), pp. 8-10, 20.
- _____. "Vocational Training for Distributive Occupations Under the George-Deen Act," The Journal of Business Education, XIII (November, 1937), pp. 8-10.
- _____. "Vocational Objectives of Secondary Commercial Education," National Business Education Quarterly, I (March, 1933), pp. 19-24.
- _____. "Whose Responsibility is Consumer Education?" Harvard Educational Review, IX (May, 1939), pp. 270-72.
- _____. "What is a Sound Philosophy of Business Education," The Business Education World, XVI (June, 1936), pp. 761-66.
- _____. "What is a Sound Philosophy of Business Education," The Business Education World, XVI (February, 1936), pp. 443-47.

- _____. "Work Experience," National Business Education Quarterly, XII (May, 1944), pp. 3-10, 36.
- Polishook, W. M. "Frederick George Nichols, March 18, 1878--June 1, 1954," The Journal of Business Education, XXX (October, 1954), pp. 7, 33, 34.
- _____. "The Frederick G. Nichols Story, Part III: A Profile of the Teacher," The Delta Pi Epsilon Journal, IV (February, 1962), pp. 25-32.
- Tonne, H. A. "The Frederick G. Nichols Story, Part V: An Image of His Times," The Delta Pi Epsilon Journal, IV (July, 1962), pp. 19-24.
- Unpublished Material
- Anderson, Roy E. "Contributions of Frederick G. Nichols to the Field of Business Education." Unpublished Ed.D. Dissertation, School of Education, Stanford University, 1963.
- Eberhart, R. F. "The Influence of Frederick G. Nichols On Business Education." Unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of Education, San Francisco State College, 1951.
- Fraide, Carmen. "Biographical Sketches of Selected Leaders in Business Education." Unpublished Master's dissertation, Department of Education, University of Southern California, 1940.
- Head, Rena. "Frederick G. Nichols' Philosophy of Secondary Education." Unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of Education, Oklahoma State University, 1939.
- Parrott, Sara Cason. "A Biographical Analysis of Leaders in Business Education." Unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of Education, University of Tennessee, 1948.
- Reid, W. D. K. "Philosophic Views of Leaders in Business Education Concerning Aims and Curricula." Unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of Education, University of Southern California, 1941.