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Open Letter to the Robbins Committee

The Committee on the Development of Higher Education in Great Britain, with Lord Robbins as Chairman, was set up earlier this year by the Prime Minister with the following terms of reference: "To review the pattern of full-time higher education in Great Britain and in the light of national needs and resources to advise Her Majesty's Government on what principles its long-term development should be based. In particular, to advise, in the light of these principles, whether there should be any changes in that pattern, whether any new types of institution are desirable and whether any modification should be made in the present arrangements for planning and co-ordinating the development of the various types of institutions."

The Editorial Board, feeling that the report of this committee is certain to be of great significance for the future of education in this country, asked the editors to write an Open Letter for publication in FORUM, putting forward the general standpoint of its members following a discussion at a recent Board meeting. Members of the Board should not, however, be taken as committed to every point made in the letter which is the joint product of the editors alone.

Dear Lord Robbins,

FORUM was set up as new educational journal exactly three years ago today, when its first number was published. Our purpose was to provide a forum for discussion of new trends in education—of the movement towards the comprehensive school in its various forms, the development of advanced courses in secondary modern schools, the tendency towards the modification of rigid streaming and selection. In general, FORUM is primarily interested in all those developments in the school system which open wider opportunities for the mass of the children, leading towards the breaking down of the many barriers which stand in the way of the full development of children's abilities and talents.

It may seem surprising, therefore, that we should wish to address a letter to your committee, which, by its terms of reference, is not concerned with the schools but with higher education. But there is a simple enough reason. The fact is that the pattern of higher education profoundly affects the schools in various ways. Many of the measures that we would like to see brought into practice are inhibited or even prevented because our system of higher education takes the form it does at present. The aims that FORUM stands for can only be achieved if the pattern of higher education is radically changed.

Two examples will suffice. The first concerns the universities alone. It is well known that the pressure to enter the universities has enormously increased over the last two or three years—that already there are many who qualify and wish to enter who cannot obtain a place. This is having a disastrous effect on the schools, intensifying the pressure on the pupils, and leading to increasing specialisation and therefore to a narrowing of educational purposes. Fast

streams are being widely introduced into grammar and even comprehensive schools with the aim of getting three years in the sixth form and so ensuring entrance to a university. The growing competition for university entry is turning education more and more into a conscious race in which the children are the sufferers—a race which buttresses the whole competitive system of streaming and selection down to and including the infant school. It is to these developments that FORUM is essentially opposed. To open up higher education much more widely is the only positive solution to this problem.

Secondly, the quality of the educational experience of every child depends, above all, on the quality of the teachers. Yet there exists today in England and Wales an entirely irrational system whereby teachers in the same types of school (especially secondary modern, comprehensive and junior schools) are prepared in two separate ways, one regarded as superior, from an educational point of view, to the other. This separation of the teaching profession into those educated in universities and those educated in training colleges may at one time have had some justification—but it has so no longer. Whether this division is to continue or not depends on the future pattern of higher education, which is the object of your enquiry. For these and other reasons, we wish to bring to your notice our point of view on these matters, a point of view, we believe, that is held by a large number of teachers in all types of school.

Basic principles

Perhaps we should state at the start our belief that the principle FORUM stands for at the school level applies also to the field of higher education. In essence, FORUM is opposed to the division of secondary education into different types of school

from The Schoolmaster

'Here is a book which should be known by all teachers of mathematics. It will certainly cause some soul-searching and probably some indignation, but this is all to the good, for in some quarters the well established methods of teaching the subject have been treated to too little criticism over the years.

'Dr. Dienes analyses the reasons why so many young people fail to learn or to develop their ideas, and why the subject tends to become unpopular with so many once they leave the junior school. He suggests that there may well be differences in the ways children form abstract ideas and develop concepts. Moreover, learners are so seldom allowed to formulate these ideas in their own language, where this is possible, that the knowledge never really becomes part of them. He makes a strong plea that mathematics teaching should tap the creative in children, and be aimed at personal fulfilment and satisfaction. Most of the other aims which are often quoted are, he suggests, hardly valid today. Interest in maths should develop from interest in happenings, in structures and relations; for this reason, construction should precede judgement or analysis. The approach must necessarily be to individuals or to small groups.

'With these points in mind, he puts forward a theory of teaching mathematics, and outlines his own methods of introducing children to mathematical ideas, using as part of the plan a specially structured apparatus.'

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Z. P. DIENES, B.A., Ph.D.

from The Essex Teacher

'It is certainly a useful addition to the armament being fired off in an effort to improve the understanding and teaching of mathematics. It is a book for thinkers, and not just a handbook of how to do things differently. Reference has been made to the theories of Piaget, Stern, Gattegno and Cuisenaire, and others, and the protagonists of the theories under fire will be hard put to refute what Dr. Dienes has to say.'

Preface by Sir Herbert Read

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offering varying degrees of opportunity, and prefers the development of forms of comprehensive school where the schools are of equal status and where the doors of opportunity are kept open as long as possible. In exactly the same way we are opposed to the development of a selective system of higher education comprising (as is the case at present) a variety of institutions of unequal status—universities, technical colleges, training colleges—offering widely different facilities and opportunities. This hierarchical system, inherited from the past, must be transformed into what may best be described as a comprehensive system of higher education, open to all who qualify, and comprising an integrated system of institutions of equal status offering equal, though various, opportunities. Such a change clearly involves a radical re-thinking of the purposes and methods of higher education.

Educational potential

What are our grounds for making this proposal? The first and most important is that the whole conception of the existence of a restricted 'pool of ability'—the rationale on which our educational system has rested, especially over the last 30 years—has been shown and is being shown day after day to be no more than a metaphysical standpoint based on certain *a priori* assumptions. There is no need here to reiterate the growing volume of evidence as to the great wastage of educational potential (if we may use the term) which we allow at the present time. A year ago, in summarising the conclusions of the Crowther Report we pointed out that 'the Report proves beyond question, with massive facts, that there are great sources of talent still untapped or under-developed' among those who go early to work—and that 'we cannot afford to allow so much talent to go unutilised'.^[1]

But it is not only a question of reserves of talent, now wasted. It has been authoritatively shown that if the present trend to stay at school to 18 continues—and there is every likelihood that it will not only continue, but that it will accelerate—then by 1970 at least 50 per cent of children in grammar schools will stay to 18 as compared with 24 per cent today. Add to this the probability that an increasing proportion of comprehensive and modern school children will become qualified for university entry, and we reach the conclusion that as many as 140,000 young people *per year* may qualify themselves for higher education by 1970, without any lowering of standards of entry.^[2] This figure would involve, on the government's present plans, a shortfall of 70,000

places *per year* in institutions of higher education—in other words, unless there is a radical expansion, combined with a change in the structure of higher education, the crisis at 18 plus will, by 1970, reach truly alarming proportions, involving an intensification of all those negative features in the school system that we referred to earlier.

The fact is that sufficient young people will qualify themselves for higher education over the next 10 years to require an expansion of the whole field to at least double the present figure as an irreducible minimum—a threefold expansion would probably be more realistic. This would mean that instead of the present 7-8 per cent of an age-group in training colleges, universities and technical colleges (full-time over 18), the figure should rise to 15 per cent or higher. The larger age-groups reaching 18 in the mid-60's and again in the 70's adds another factor requiring a wider extension, in terms of actual quantities, than percentage figures indicate. From the present 150,000 full-time students over 18 in the three main types of institutions (as defined above) we need to think in terms of from 300,000 to 500,000. This is the scope of the challenge. Such a radical development clearly involves a re-thinking of the purposes and structure of the whole system of higher education. The problem threatens to outgrow the present means of its solution.

If the future pattern of higher education is to be determined on *educational* grounds (rather than in terms of vested interests, preservation of privilege, and other extraneous social factors), then the purposes and structure of the school system are very relevant to its design. While allowing room for some degree of specialisation or bias in the sixth form, we believe that the function of the secondary school should normally be to provide a broad general education and that a higher degree of specialisation should be the function of the university or college. There is wide agreement on this issue, the present discussions being mainly concerned with how it may be brought about. If the schools were to concentrate on a *general* education, it would then be possible to work towards a common entry qualification for all institutions of higher education, and this, we believe, would represent an extremely important step towards the unification of all institutions of higher education. As the Crowther Report pointed out, the tendency in the school system is to move towards greater flexibility of organisation, while types of comprehensive schools will, by 1970 (if present plans are implemented), include something approaching

^[1] *Has Crowther wasted his Time?* Robin Pedley and Brian Simon, FORUM, Vol. II, No. 3, p. 86.

^[2] John Vaizey, *Patterns of High Education—I*, 'Education', 6, January 1961.

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Dr Sinnhuber is lecturer in charge of courses on Central Europe at University College, London.

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20 per cent of the secondary pupils. The pattern of secondary school development, therefore, is towards a more general type of education in some form of comprehensive or flexibly organised grammar-modern school system. We believe that this tendency is profoundly in the interests of the pupils.

What, then, should be the pattern of higher education? The essence of the matter is whether the universities are to remain at the apex of the system, as centres of education for a small minority, or whether they are to open their doors both to the technical colleges (including the Colleges of Advanced Technology) and the training colleges, so that all the major institutions of higher education form part of the university system, offering a university education normally leading to a degree. This, we believe, is the crucial question facing your committee. For our part, we believe that the latter is the only realistic solution.

How could this work out in practice? How, in fact, do we see the development of higher education over the next two or three decades?

University expansion

First, a substantial expansion of existing universities must be planned. This is now generally agreed and the expansion has begun. The only argument is over the question of numbers—a discussion that we do not wish to enter here. In our view there is no standard optimum size of a university. On the other hand, the larger the university, the more necessary it is to break it down into effective sub-units on the basis of certain principles. At least as much attention should be given to thinking out how this may be done at universities such as Manchester and Birmingham as has been given to the same problem in the comprehensive schools, with their house systems, tutorial groups, and so on. This is a matter of decisive importance so far as the quality of university education is concerned.

Second, we need many more new universities than are now being planned. The go-ahead has been given for seven new universities and further steps are to await the report of your Committee. The somewhat tentative steps so far taken seem to indicate that the scale of the problem is still not fully grasped by those in positions of responsibility. A minimum target over the next 20 years would be an expansion in the number of universities from the present 26 to 50. Nor need these all be developed from scratch. There is no reason why—as in the past—some new universities could not be developed from existing technological institutions and, if the

proposals made below are carried through, from some of the larger training colleges.

Third, the rigid separation between technical colleges (and C.A.T.s) and the universities must be broken down, and these colleges brought into the university system. Official policy in the past has been to keep the technical colleges and universities at arm's length (with significant exceptions at Manchester and Glasgow)—to develop technology in the universities separately from and unrelated to the technical colleges. We believe that in so far as this separation of function reflects a division between theory and practice, it is educationally undesirable, and that in so far as it reflects hierarchic social values, it is pernicious.

There are two methods by which this dichotomy may be overcome, and both could be proceeded with simultaneously. First, certain C.A.T.s (as, for instance, at Bolton or Bradford) should be given university status and developed at first, perhaps inevitably, primarily as technological universities, but including growing departments of social science and the humanities. Second, certain technical colleges and C.A.T.s should be brought fully into the local university, and form part of the faculty of technology of that university (as the Manchester College of Science and Technology now forms part of the faculty of technology at Manchester University). The great majority of the students should work for university degrees (or diplomas), while the level of teaching and research, and the facilities, should be brought up to university standard. In certain areas the first steps towards this integration could be taken immediately. In others there would have to be a period of adjustment and planning leading to this solution.

The training colleges

There is, finally, the question of the relations between training colleges and universities—and, since this is a matter that concerns the schools very closely, it is one to which we devote more detailed attention.

In the first place it is worth pointing out that the existence of two separate routes to the profession of teaching is due to what may be called an historical accident. When the training of teachers first began to be taken seriously—in the mid-nineteenth century—there were only four universities in England and Wales: Oxford, Cambridge, London and Durham (the two latter very recently founded). Teacher training was, therefore, developed outside the university—in close connection with the elementary

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school system. We may contrast this position with that in Scotland where, with four universities serving a much smaller population, the majority of teachers (and all male teachers in secondary and primary schools) have most of their personal education in a university, though all receive their professional training in separate 'colleges of education'.

For decades now the teaching profession has stood for a graduate profession, and rightly so. If this means anything at all, it means that all, or the vast majority of teachers, should receive their education *in a university*. It is surely educationally highly undesirable that the majority of teachers should proceed directly from school to college, where they are taught solely by ex-teachers and where their fellow-students are all prospective teachers, and then return to schools where once again they will mix only with other teachers. To raise the quality of the profession means that potential teachers should have the benefit not only of being educated by scholars, but also of mixing with other students having the wide variety of interests and perspectives that can only be found in the university. The young teacher of the future deserves the best education that can be given him.

Much of this case is widely agreed, but there is a danger that the prospective teachers may be conceded a degree, and yet be fobbed off with a second best. What is needed is nothing less than the full integration of the training colleges with the universities. In view of the scale of the problem, this needs most careful planning and clarity as to the stages of development. The Minister's pronouncement earlier this year that, at some unspecified date in the future, a professional training will be required of all teachers in maintained schools (a step long overdue) will further increase the number of students training as teachers and therefore the complexity of the problem.

The first step should be to set up Faculties or Schools of Education in each university, representing the training colleges in the area together with the university department of education—the faculty to have control over the syllabuses and general work of the colleges and the department. At the same time the training colleges should be declared colleges of the university. A formal integration of this kind might, of course, mean little to start with but it would provide the means by which, through exchange of staff and students, the training of teachers as a whole could begin to be welded into a unity.

At this stage, many training college students could already begin to prepare for a university degree and should have that opportunity if they so desired. This work has, after all, been carried on by certain training colleges for decades. Such students would have to be matriculated. But already about one-third of all entrants to training colleges have gained two 'A' level passes and this figure increases each year, so that the standard of a considerable proportion of training college entrants is already very considerably higher than pre-war university matriculation standards.

Other students, after completing their three-year course, should have the opportunity of proceeding to a new B.Ed. degree, which should be established by the universities. Much of the work for this degree could be undertaken during the three years' course. In fact, the bringing together of training college and university students should result in the development of common courses of study for both groupings. Certain universities, for instance Hull, Brighton and the proposed university at Coventry, are especially well situated to bring about this kind of development since, in all three places, well-developed training colleges exist, or will soon exist, close to the university site.

The aim should, however, be to lengthen the training college course to four years, and so to bring the course into line with the university degree course to which a year of professional training will be added. Although it is true that the training college course is only now being raised to three years, we regard this further lengthening as a vitally necessary step. This would permit a complete integration between university and training college and make possible a full education for the prospective teacher.

The content of education

We have said little about the content of the courses that should be made available to prospective teachers, and, due to lack of space, we cannot go into the matter here in any detail. But we believe that various opportunities should be open to the student, whether he has decided at 18 that he wishes to teach or not. In the first place it is evident that large numbers of teachers do not require the specialised, one subject honours courses of today's universities. Many would benefit more from general degree courses, sometimes with a specific bias, sometimes not. Many of those who have already decided to teach on entering the university would gain from undertaking a general, or sometimes a more specialised degree which, perhaps after the first year, included the systematic study of disciplines connected with children and their education—sociology, psychology and the theory

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and practice of education. Such students could begin their teaching practice in the third or fourth year. There is, in fact, an urgent need for the re-thinking of the content of degree courses for prospective teachers.

These proposals have certain implications. They could best be brought about by concentrating on the expansion and development of the larger training colleges situated close to universities, and this would involve the closure of some of the smaller and more isolated training colleges. These could, incidentally, be utilised for educational purposes connected with the needs of the areas in which they are situated. Certain training colleges will soon begin to approach the 1,000 mark and some of these, after a period as colleges of the nearest university, might develop as university bases themselves in the future—offering a broad general education together with a professional training for a number of occupations.

We are fully aware that there are many difficulties in the way of implementing the policy outlined here, but given goodwill on the part of the universities, these could certainly be overcome. Indeed it is vital that these steps should be taken if we are to develop an educational system measuring up to the requirements of the last decades of the century. The urgent need is for a more highly qualified, united profession. The divisions in secondary education are already being broken down through the growth of comprehensive schools and this movement must be paralleled by breaking down the divisions in higher education. For these reasons, we ask your committee to look at this matter with the utmost seriousness—not to be influenced by those who, regarding the training colleges as inferior, wish to preserve the inviolability of the universities, and instead to produce a workable scheme by which the training colleges may be brought fully into the university system. By making such a recommendation your committee would lay the basis for completing the work that was so courageously charted by the McNair committee 17 years ago.

Towards the future

We have made proposals that to some may appear revolutionary, but in fact they are modest. We have not proposed an expansion of higher education on the scale of that which already exists in the U.S.A. or the U.S.S.R.—nor even in Canada, Australia or New Zealand. In five years' time, estimates of the numbers requiring higher education may well be very much in advance of the highest now being suggested. The important thing, therefore, is to avoid maintaining a rigidly hierarchical system that becomes educationally self-defeating (as is the

danger at present), and so to adapt and transform the structure or pattern of our system that it has the capacity of absorbing new developments and further expansion without breaking at the seams. This, we believe, a flexible and comprehensive system, along the general lines suggested, would achieve.

The future pattern of higher education may well depend on your committee's report. We trust that you may find it possible to take these suggestions into consideration in its preparation. We are convinced that radical changes along these lines are necessary if the schools are not to suffer increasingly from the ill-effects of a restricted and divided system of higher education.

Yours sincerely,

THE EDITORS.

Lines on a junior boy in assembly

His face disappears behind the black hole of his yawning;

He sinks swiftly into the darkness of the long past,
Returning slowly, born again, creased and wet,
To the polished dryness he smells around him in the hall.

Back from chaos, he stands there, blinking,
Not quite sure where he is, until,
Guiltily, he hears voices singing about
Armour and the fight, and for a line, or two at most,
He joins in, then stops again to sniff
The vague sweet odour of make-believe.
Uncomprehending and bored, he does not ask as yet
Any questions — they will come later, soon,
Sooner than wishing, with all that he has yet to learn.

Old every morning is the love he is taught
To feel for others — men like Basher up here on the platform

Who tortures him with theorems and smacks his head,

The prefects, or form-mates who at the end of term
Let his pride down, all these, he hears it said,
And sometimes says himself, he must forgive
Their trespasses. And then, at long, long last
The same short bit about the grace of our Lord
And so on, and the Head gliding down the aisle
On his black wings, and the rush to sit
At the back of Basher's room, the race back to the real

World out of dreamland, out of the scented smell
Down the dust corridors where already to-day's dinner

Raises before Christ's boy-soldier its blood-stained banner.

JULIAN ENNIS

Educating the Non-Scholastic

H. RAYMOND KING

Mr. H. Raymond King has been head of Wandsworth School, London (first a grammar school and now a comprehensive school) since 1926. He is chairman of the Text Books Sub-committee of the U.K. National Commission for U.N.E.S.C.O., and an ex-chairman of the English New Education Fellowship.

'Blagg of 4 Iota has an announcement to make.'

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'Living for Kicks' tells the story of a tough group of adolescents: car-theft, joy-ride, near-tragedy, hospital, juvenile court, approved school, abscondence, gang-fight, and recapture—a topical story of wayward youth, seen through the eyes of the peer-group.

'Iota Productions' is a company on business lines run by the members of Form 4 Iota, Wandsworth School, to produce and exhibit films *made by themselves*. That is what justifies a description of their project as a contribution to educational method. Theirs is real and first-hand experience, made possible by the incredible restraint of a teacher who led them through discussion of all the difficulties and problems, but, when it came to the final project, refused to interfere.

Roles were widely distributed. All aspects of the production were in the hands of the boys themselves: story, script, direction, camera-work—including lighting and focusing—continuity, editing, titling, and publicity.

They managed their own finances, too. The school loaned the equipment, but the cost of the film stock and the production was raised by the chairman and directors of the company through the issue of shares at half-a-crown to members, and an appeal for donations.

The project was neither a stunt, nor a casual and unrelated episode in school life. Its significance is not fully apparent apart from what led up to it and what is due to follow.

It is a particular illustration of one aspect of a curricular plan for what we in a fully comprehensive school find to be the 'hard core' of the problem of secondary education for all: for the group that come between the 70 per cent on the one hand for whom we can plan a purposive education on scholastic, though not necessarily academic lines, and the 10 per cent on the other hand whose total education is in the hands of diagnostic and remedial experts.

Second class citizens?

In a fourth year arranged 15 forms abreast, this 20 per cent or so of less able 'secondary modern' pupils make up three forms. They have shown in their passage through the school little or no capacity for scholastic objectives, mainly owing to low I.Q., but in some cases to temperamental, emotional, social, or environmental factors. To send them out as failures contradicts what in one way or another a flexible organisation of wide resources enables us to do for the rest.

How for these too can we organise success?

To regard them as second class citizens contradicts the spirit of a comprehensive school. How can they earn recognition?

For failures and inferior citizens they will become unless there are teachers who have faith in them and in whom they in turn feel confidence.

But, paradoxically, in order to succeed with them we have to stop being 'teachers' and accept the role of social mentors. At this stage in their lives they are likely to react to being taught subjects or even to being treated like schoolboys with boredom and apathy, if not with rebelliousness and hostility. Their physical maturity and social independence and sophistication, callow as it may be, lead them to resent a situation in which their intellectual shortcomings are too continually and too painfully obvious. Schooling of the traditional kind has lost contact with their interests in life and their emotional drives.

We decided that goals of schooling other than scholastic must be accepted in the fourth and, for some, final year of the course. And yet what we appeared to be closing the door on did, as it turned out, come in at the window.

We re-thought their curriculum as a more integrated whole in terms of social skills. From the consideration of their education as persons, as citizens, and as productive workers, three interpenetrating

areas of formative experience emerged : Communication (the Person), Co-operation (the Citizen), and Calculation in conjunction with Construction (the Productive Worker). A fourth area was individual choice of a special activity. Moral education, social responsibility, and personal standards (courtesy, speech, appearance) were regarded as dimensions of the curriculum, or, to change the figure, a climate of education actively fostered by all the teachers concerned.

Now to return to Ted Blagg and his class-mates.

Ted was enjoying a new-found power to communicate, amounting to a transformation of personality.

Is it not reasonable to suppose that the drives and urges of inarticulate adolescents take the anti-social form they so often do because they cannot use the social channel of communication ?

We found it useful to start by encouraging free group discussion of the everyday social problems that these boys feel really concern them : relations with parents and teachers, other young people of their age, authority, the police. But it was not until we gave them the chance to work out their problems in simple social mime and drama that they began to show objective insight rather than subjective feeling, mainly resentment. At an appropriate stage we brought the police into the classroom and had it out together.

It was development along such lines as these that led up to the making of 'Living for Kicks'.

And what came in at the window ?

The collective enterprise involved lengthy and lively discussion both of the story and of the organising of the producing company. Detailed observation of human behaviour in real surroundings was required and the right approach to co-operating people and institutions outside the school, in order to secure a realistic scenic background. They all got to know something of the many facets and functions of film-making, and found the obvious practical route to film appreciation.

The whole group was involved, practically, financially, emotionally, co-operatively. They were ready to accept responsibility, show initiative, and exercise self-discipline. Social integration is at the root of group morale. All experienced the enhanced status that comes from acceptance and from recognition of worth-while achievement, in this case by the whole school and the parents. A succession of showings at 3d. per head on an Open Day swelled Iota Productions' finances. Shares issued at 2s. 6d. are now worth 5s.

But when it was suggested that the film should be shown at a simple entertainment arranged for cer-

tain old people in the neighbourhood, no one had in mind to make a charge.

Who are these old people, and how do they come into the picture ?

This brings us to the second area of educational experience, that we call above Co-operation.

Social studies for this group are real and relevant, locally applicable (though not exclusively so), and designed to foster social awareness, social purpose, and social action. In this phase such studies link the school with its community and help to bridge the gap between school and working life for boys who are near the point of transition.

Local surveys form the starting point : honest social surveys from which they learn to appreciate social achievement and its complexity, but in which they note some of the weaknesses and failures of present-day society. Why, they ask for example, don't *They* do something about old age pensioners and cripples living alone ? Their compassion, genuine enough, doesn't mean that they feel in any way called upon to act. It is a matter for Them, the authorities, the grown-ups. Adolescents have no influence in affairs, no organised means, no status in public. Their emotional stirrings, compassion, a sense that things are not as they should be, even indignation, have no ready and rational social outlet.

Is it not reasonable to suppose that absence of, or ignorance of channels for social impulse and action account for a good deal of adolescent rebelliousness, violence, and vandalism ?

Group action

As individuals we all feel powerless very often, whether we are adolescent or adult. Social studies point the way to group action. We need group dynamic to start something, even to produce new attitudes in individuals : certainly to give the individual adolescent confidence and support in a novel undertaking.

John Fordham left school last Christmas. He wasn't a 'success' at school : he didn't pass any examinations. He was, in fact, a rather obstreperous member of the 20 per cent whose education we are grappling with as our toughest problem. School held him at any rate until the middle of his fifth year. Most of the staff no doubt thought it would be better for him to get the 'discipline' of work.

But patently not all his teachers had despaired of him.

The mother of one of my sixth formers, a social worker in the area, mentioned him and his doings to me recently. My informant knew nothing of his school record and reputation. She thought it brought

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great credit on the school to have produced a boy who had spent much of his spare time in the months after leaving in helping a lonely old age pensioner by painting and decorating her kitchen and living room and making a concrete path in her garden. He had done this without reward, without fuss, without any smug sense of charity or sacrifice, and without anyone — so far as he was concerned — knowing about it.

John is no sentimentalist : yet here he is, self-committed to works of compassion, self-identified with a human lot other than his own. I cannot number John among our failures. He has learned at least one lesson that our rethinking of the curriculum enabled us to teach him, that the adolescent can gain in stature and earn his own status in the community by seeking out and performing a social role.

Applied social studies as a curricular activity entail the keeping of a log which the pupil may submit for the Mayor's Award, a diploma for social competence and good citizenship.

A social survey brought a group into touch with a home for crippled children. They discovered a need for toy repairing, which led to social service of a useful and in fact congenial kind. Their work as members of a 'Toymakers' Association' carried over into what I have called the third area of educational experience: Calculation and Construction. The toymakers drew on an adequate range of resources: Woodwork, Metalwork, Painting and Decorating departments, Drawing Office, and English and Mathematics classrooms.

Dick Bennet for one put more effort and care into this work than we have known him put into anything else. His log book is a model: neat drawings and sketches, measurements, calculations, and accounts of transactions of the Association and of the finished products.

Much of the work was done by Dick and others out of school: rather out of character, so it seemed, for Dick, whose constitutional indolence has constantly depressed his performance in studies, in spite of a tolerably fair I.Q. and propitious home background.

For boys of this group the kind of work that meets with the readiest response is a real job with an immediately useful and practical purpose and demonstrable social utility. Large-scale projects are attractive. A whole form devoted its handicraft periods and extra voluntary time to the construction of workmanlike side-shows for the School Fair, from drawing board to finished product, and later zealously operated the shows to the benefit of a charitable cause.

Another form have spent the winter months constructing their own dinghies with a view to their use in the summer. When we are asked by the L.C.C. to repair and refurbish the craft they provide for the use of school rowing and sailing clubs, we have to hand just the kind of job we are looking for.

I call to mind Arthur Noble, the most persistent truant I have known in many years, whom neither his teachers, his parents, nor the authorities could keep in school beyond a day or two now and then. We gave him the chance of two days a week down at the Boathouse — quite out of order, of course — but Arthur attended school for the rest of the week to earn the opportunity of satisfying his passion for messing about in boats, the only enthusiasm we ever managed to discover in him.

Of the group of which I am speaking, it is often said that they have far more leisure than they know how to fill. The kind of activity that we seek to promote takes up some of this super-abundant free time, in a voluntary way, of course. The person who could best direct it would be part teacher, part youth-leader, with his time so disposed that he would be available to the group, say, for a couple of hours on two evenings a week and at the weekend, with corresponding freedom in the day-time. We are hoping shortly to make such an appointment.

Communication, Co-operation, Calculation and Construction, stimulated by group dynamics, sustained by the security of acceptance as persons and as contributing members of a great community, rewarded by recognition and the status that accrues to those who find and fill a social role.

A small percentage of boys still leave at 15: rather more fail to return for their fifth year: but the individuals we would wish to be rid of as early as possible are very few, and for the most part probably ought not to be in our kind of institution at all. In our work for the less able 'secondary modern' we shall be a good deal more satisfied when the school leaving age is raised to 16. I am sure that a year's added maturity gives these young people clearer insight into the meaning of a saying of Rabbi ben Hillel, who shall have the last word:

If I am not for myself, who is for me? (self-acceptance).

And if I am for myself alone, what am I? (social purpose).

And if not now, when? (social action here and now).

An Exercise in Freedom in a Junior Classroom

G. PRICE

After spending a year as a factory hand (on leaving London University) and ten years on the lower deck of the Navy, Mr. Price taught for two years in a technical college and five years in primary schools. He is now a lecturer at St. Katherine's College, London, and editor of 'Science Club Junior'.

The battle of educational ideas is, of course, no recent affair. Progressive ideas about methods can be traced back at least to Quintilian. It is still something of a shock to realise that Caldwell Cook's *The Play Way*, was written over 40 years ago, or that it is now exactly 30 years since a Board of Education report stated: 'We are of the opinion that the curriculum of the Primary school is to be thought of in terms of activity and experience, rather than of knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored.'

The influence of these ideas has been most marked in the infant section of the primary school. The destiny of the junior school is still very much in doubt, and isolated progress in individual areas in freeing the schools from the 11-plus fetters cannot be taken as a decisive victory.

A common criticism levelled against teachers who work in the spirit of the Board of Education report given above, is that their views are based only on theories, on 'phoney psychology', etc. The following account is an actual record of a recent year's work which took place in an average kind of junior school near the East End of London, in which I taught.

The class was the B/C stream of the fourth year. It was nominally 'mixed', but in fact contained 28 boys and 12 girls, a disproportionate mixture which caused much difficulty throughout the year. Furthermore, the class contained most of the misfits out of the 120 children composing the whole fourth year. My other duties in the school apart from taking charge of this class included setting up a school library and running the consumable stock supply system for the whole school.

On the asset side, I could reckon on a tolerant head-teacher, a sound-proof classroom, a sink in the corner, two empty box rooms adjoining the classroom, a kit of used but serviceable tools and a glue-pot and a most useful expanse of passage space outside the classroom door.

Since no-one expected my children to qualify for a selective school, I was free to use what methods I liked, and I decided from the start to develop by stages a pattern of work which would eventually allow the children to choose for themselves what

they would do and when they would do it; choice being subject to the availability of material, the 'fixed' times for the hall and playground on the time-table, the safety of the children and the rights of others in the class and school. We never reached what might be called 'an A. S. Neill level of freedom'. Probably this is a century away in the state schools. We did, however, move right away from the typical routine of many (perhaps most) schools, and this was accomplished in the following way.

Since the children were unused to doing in school work which required from them a sense of responsibility and personal effort, the free time was initially allowed only in the afternoons. Formal routine work was done in the morning and a choice of activities given for the afternoon sessions. These comprised Art, Woodwork, Puppetry, Project work singly or in groups, Science club, Class newspaper.

Great enthusiasm was shown by the children for this idea and within a matter of weeks, I discovered that some of the class were arriving early at school in the mornings and carrying on with their own particular work, giving it up with reluctance when the formal schedule started. It seemed artificial to stipulate that children should only do Art, for example, between the hours of 2 to 4 p.m. when so many were keen to work out their ideas when they arrived at school. So I decided to give complete days over to their choice of work, noting all the while what kind of work they chose to do.

The rewards of freedom

Popular demand favoured anything practical. Although we had a good class library and a first-rate school library to which my children had easy access at any time, I rarely saw one of my class reading from free choice. Books dealing with practical subjects were often used, but situations had to be devised to encourage children to get something of value out of reading for pleasure. With my non-bookish children, the problem was never satisfactorily resolved.

One of my immediate aims was to give the children in my class some sense of self-respect. I pondered

on the effects on children of arriving each day at an institution not of their own choosing, where the work required of them was often incomprehensible and where failure at it followed as a matter of course. The added drawback of being grouped with others in a similar situation leads to apathy and demoralisation. How can any real learning take place under these conditions?

With these thoughts in mind, I steered some of the handwork going on into a project for a string puppet show to be put on as a surprise item at the school's Xmas party. This idea involved most of the class. Puppets had to be made, clothed (the boys wielding needles and cotton as well as the girls), scenery to be painted, props to be made and many lines of poetry to be learned, since our small plays were based on poems from a recent Puffin book, *A Quartet of Poets*. The idea of combining a number of skills and basic subjects appealed to me and the idea was used throughout the year. Children who would not look at a book, would be prepared to take one home to learn a piece which could actually be used for some other purpose. Later in the year, we set up a permanent puppet theatre using string and glove puppets. Music was introduced in addition to readings and in one play the audience was brought in to sing the chorus of 'My old man's a dustman'. The important aspect of this work was always that of concerted effort for service to others. All the plays were shown to other classes who were invited to sit in our precious corridor outside for the shows. The improvement in the class's morale was definite. As the head commented later, 'The children in your class are beginning to be civilised'.

It would require too much space to give all the details here of what we did in that full and fruitful year. Models of ships, planes, coal-mines, etc., grew and multiplied. Most of them started as flat two-dimensional things rather like those which infants create, but soon developed through the 'solid' stage of the 'sculptured' model and reaching the hollow structured model so that ships were eventually built up from the keel and to scale. Real experience in mathematical concepts was also being developed. Measuring, scale, proportion, volume are all aspects of this work.

During the second term, a most surprising fever of enthusiasm gripped the class. Out of a chance 'find' of some old cupboard doors, someone fenced off a couple of desks and suggested a class shop. For a fortnight, the whole class was involved in setting up and running a store. Dummy cartons,

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empty pots and tins, cardboard money, real vegetables, scales, tills and notices, all appeared as if by magic and business was soon roaring. Everyone bought and sold on my conditions that 'real' purchases must be made, bills made out (spelling and arithmetic!), real quantities weighed and change correctly given. For the first time boys and girls worked together spontaneously on equal terms. I would never have believed that Frank, a problem boy of long standing (he had set fire to a local church at the age of seven or so) would have been content to keep his corner of a class shop in order as conscientiously as a new manager in a Woolworths.

Later the shop became two separate shops and a 'cut-price' war developed between them, but gradually the goods were disbanded and one afternoon the relics were rearranged as a Post Office, which brought many opportunities for arithmetic and letter writing, since the children ran a postal system enabling them to write to other children in the school.

The imbalance between written work in arithmetic and English and the practical work was a real problem, and I used the Dalton plan idea to ease my conscience which still nagged me on this score. I would set work which would have to be done

during the week. The choice given was very wide, I encouraged poetry writing rather than compositions and by the end of the year we accumulated much verse. Most of it was trite, though no more so than the usual set composition; some of it was quite remarkable and many of the children showed that they could be more imaginative and fluent in this form of writing than in the essay form.

Arithmetic situations were not easy to contrive. In any case, children have little use for the mechanical computations we are so often preoccupied with as teachers. One wonders how much even adults use them.

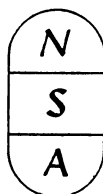
In general, games were encouraged which required the children to read instructions, to work with numbers and to exercise thought. Chess soon became very popular and after noticing several of my class playing in the nearby park after school, I started a school club and tournament in which many of the class took part, though without getting into the finals.

During the Spring, the nature corner blossomed. Shipbuilders had now become hutch and cage makers, the glue pot worked overtime and soon the first living creatures arrived. Mice, frogs, lizards, rabbits and even a blackbird turned up in the class, and the nature reference books were worked hard

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to provide information about our animals, their foods and habits.

Throughout the year I encouraged scientific discovery by extending the nature table to include metals, minerals, magnets, electrical gadgets. The table could be studied and its contents used at any time. Many children did independent experiments especially with candles which were melted down in flat tins to make night lights (making a new candle out of an existing one) and used to make 'Winter warmers', employing the fact of warm air rising. There were many more experiments, some of them original, which I found very useful as editor of a children's science paper.

Art work in the form of portrait painting was kept going by a handful of enthusiasts, mainly girls. Most of the children were content to paint models, but rarely pictures.

Geography found its expression in relief scale maps made of papier maché on old blackboards, models of dockyards, airports, M.1s, and villages. The faithful recording of daily temperature involved all the pupils, who took it in turn to build up a large graph over the year. History was rarely done except where a group of children might make up a play, but after a time, these never went back before World War Two. Occasionally an historical model would turn up or something on television would prompt a child to turn to a book for more information. In any case, since children's time sense is so little developed by 10, I felt that formal history was probably best left alone. Sometimes I included an historical account in the literature readings however. Later, I was pleased to hear from a boy who had been in this class, that in his secondary school, one year after, he had come second in his class (an 'A' stream) in history.

Handwriting practice was involved in the various projects going on all the while. A poetry corner and a class poetry anthology were used to display all completed poems on the sole proviso that they had been copied out from the rough drafts first done. Accounts of our animals in the Pets' Corner were displayed on boards near the creatures concerned. I still have the mental picture of John L. writing about his frog with it perched unconcernedly on his shoulder. It was my policy to ensure that handwriting, as a mechanical skill requiring care and pride, should be directed towards being seen and read by others. This emphasis gives point to the need for clarity and good presentation.

One subject was faithfully maintained throughout the year and this may loosely be called 'Literature'. As far as possible I ensured that each day the children should hear some good writing—either

stories or excerpts from famous books. Sometimes I played back their own voices recorded on tape, usually reading their own poems.

Apart from work in and around the classroom, many children were involved at one stage or another in helping with the school library. This was very popular, and children would volunteer to come in after school and even during the holidays to help with it. Eventually, the complete running of the library was left to the children, though with help from myself.

Problems of discipline

Discipline, in the best sense of self-control, remained a difficulty throughout. Anyone who believes that freedom in the classroom solves the problem is quite mistaken. The bitterness arising from suppression and ill-will is completely absent, but new difficulties do arise especially when there are some anti-social children in the group. One boy, Harry, was such a character. Despised and feared by the remainder of the children he demanded constant attention. He was really happy only when jealously looking after the class goldfish or the white mice. I saw him recently after two or three years at his secondary school. Slouching along on his own, apart from the other knots of children, he looked exactly what he is, and was—a severely disturbed youngster who should have had psychiatric treatment early on. Yet I was told that before I could have him seen by the clinic for such children, he would first have to commit some crime. My method of running a class gave Harry more problems than he had had before, since now he had to face up to the task of working in with other children. Under a formal régime he would become completely apathetic, the teacher solving his immediate problems for him.

On the other hand, John P., the school 'villain', developed well under a freer system. He was intensely interested in electrical things, and, as part of a science scheme, he built a crystal set from scrap material which provided the class with B.B.C. programmes for the rest of the year. John was allowed to go on the school journey that year very much against the original wishes of the master in charge. On the children's return, he was publicly praised by the head for having co-operated in helping other children and having worked the hardest to make the holiday a success.

Perhaps the best praise we had was from several parents who thanked the head or myself for having made their children enjoy school for the first time that they could recall.

(continued on page 33)

Discussion

An Inquiry into Mental Health

It is no new thing, of course, for a study group to find that its preparatory work, the attempt merely to find a focus for its study, is almost as significant and instructive (and laborious) as the study itself. This was certainly so with the early deliberations of a group set up by the Council for Children's Welfare to examine the question of Mental Health and the School Child. The rather innocent-seeming hugeness of the title marks the fact that the Council wished to embark upon some study as a part of Mental Health Year 1960, but was not sure where, in this great jungle of a theme, it could most usefully set about making a clearing.

It seemed important, first, to take a cue from members of an earlier group who, looking (under the auspices of the National Association for Mental Health) at problems of strain in the primary school, declared that 'stress is inherent in living'. No study of this kind, in fact, could sensibly direct itself to the removal of natural human discomforts. The aim of the work of such a group must be to discover (and to inquire into ways of removing) stress that is noxious and unnecessary.

To decide this was still to leave much of the jungle to explore. There was, for example, the possibility of inquiring into the connection between particular sorts of home conditions and particular kinds of stress at school. Then it could hardly have been a waste of time (though it might have ruled out the hope of original discovery) to make a cool and detailed study of the harm to mental health that arises from crowded classes, or inadequate school equipment, or too few teachers too frequently changing, or streaming, or the eleven plus, or examinations in general. Again one could have inquired (and the Council, with a large number of doctors, psychologists and social workers among its members, would have been peculiarly well qualified to inquire) into the ways in which stress is being identified and dealt with. Is it being dealt with early enough? Are teachers being equipped to recognise the signs? (A piece of evidence from the training colleges suggested that lecturers there were unable to find time to impart this kind of knowledge because they were preoccupied with dealing with cases of stress among teachers-in-training.)

And behind these particular questions lay one very big general one: the question as to the extent to which sheer social ambiguities create undesirable strains; the extent, in particular, to which our present social values may be in conflict with the inherent or natural or usual traditions, attitudes and values of education. Are we, perhaps, blandly expecting a great many children to live, and to remain mentally healthy while living, in two dramatically antagonistic worlds—the world of school and the world outside? How much mental stress arises from refusal on our part to recognise the inherent lack of balance between our, on the whole, altruistic and idealistic school atmospheres, and our, to a

horribly large extent, self-regarding and self-serving social atmosphere? Does perhaps strain and mental unbalance spread itself within the school system because of a whole unexamined world of differences between school and society? (Is—a not irrelevant aside—the small prestige of the teacher himself due to a feeling that he belongs, out of some sort of weakness or absence of enterprise, to a naïve world set apart from the mature, self-serving society?) Is there, perhaps, somewhere in an inquiry into questions like these, a large general discovery to be made about, in the very widest sense, the mental health of the school child?

In the end it was the group's decision that a field in which they might have real hope of making a clear and practical contribution was that of co-operation between parents and teachers specifically, and in general between them and other people concerned with the welfare of the school child. Somewhere near the bottom of nearly all the aspects of this theme they had considered lay, or seemed to lie, a need for improving and increasing co-operation of this sort. Its absence might itself, in many cases, be a cause of mental strain: and certainly there seemed plenty of evidence that, without it, strain, however caused, is the more slowly identified, or not identified at all.

The group, having now enlisted the help of the National Federation of Parent-Teacher Associations, has embarked on a two-year course of study in which it will be under the direction of an experienced research worker. Its labours seem likely to fall into two parts: first, a study of all the possible means of co-operation between parents and teachers: and, second, an examination of the ways in which co-operation can best be secured between all those who are dealing with the welfare of the school child. The group would gratefully welcome evidence (especially accounts of actual experiments in co-operation) from readers of FORUM. The address of the Council is 54 Platts Lane, London, N.W.3.

EDWARD BLISHEN.

Discipline in Schools

I would like to invite the interest of FORUM readers in the question of discipline in schools. I can do no more in this very short contribution than outline a few points which I think need to be raised, and leave a fuller exposition to later discussion.

The state of discipline in many schools is still unsatisfactory. This may derive to some extent from a basic view of the matter which is, I suggest, inadequate. Discipline, it is frequently assumed, depends upon the interest of the lesson material and the manner in which it is presented. Provided that the teacher knows his or her subject well and presents it in an interesting manner according to the ability of the pupils being taught, then discipline troubles will diminish and become insignificant.

The assumption is that the good teacher, in the sense of one who knows and presents his or her subject well, will in time become the good disciplinarian. Get such

good teachers into our schools and discipline troubles will decrease and fade away. If the teacher has sufficient intellectual ability then he or she will learn a subject and its best method of presentation. But if after a few years of experience, good discipline is not obtained, then the teacher must have failed to learn what he or she should have learnt. It is not usually suggested that control of classes is a matter which can be taught and learnt as an academic subject can be; but good discipline is assumed to follow from ability in a subject, and thus can be taught and learnt indirectly.

It is this view of the basis of good discipline which I suggest is inadequate, and needs to be discarded or amended. If one considers what happens in schools then it appears that discipline in many classes depends much more upon factors of the personality of the teacher in charge than upon the subject taught and the methods employed in teaching it.

This has been noted before in discussions of discipline; but has not been thoroughly investigated. There are some teachers who are able to present to their classes certain traits of personality which enable them to maintain discipline irrespective of whether or not they are good teachers in the sense which I have defined. They maintain good order; but they may teach very little. In contrast with them there are many who have much to impart to the children, but fail to do so as they cannot maintain sufficient good order in their classes to allow them to proceed uninterruptedly with their lessons.

What appears to be required is an ability to admonish children by making hard, harsh, and even nasty-natured reproofs in an authoritative and unquestionable tone of voice whenever misbehaviour occurs. Children find such reproofs very unpleasant, and usually feel that they have no protection against them. They behave rather than incur them. Some teachers find little difficulty in making reproofs of this kind, others may in time learn to do so even if this is not easy for them, while others may have personalities of such a type that they find it almost impossible to adopt or simulate this kind of manner. Acting a part may be quite alien to their nature, or their acting may always be readily recognised. It is, of course, as unreasonable to expect these teachers to change their natures as change the colour of their eyes.

If it is recognised that being a good disciplinarian does not follow simply from having good teaching ability and that the two qualities are not always found together, then it must be realised that the so-called weak teacher will probably be a permanent feature of teaching staffs. For the supply of those who have both qualities is limited, and it is pointless to have those who are simply disciplinarians. And if the present trend continues of trying to induce more highly qualified persons to work in schools—endeavouring to obtain more graduates—then it is likely that the proportion of teachers who do not become good disciplinarians will increase rather than diminish. Excellence of knowledge leads more often to a quiet and unassuming manner of speaking rather than to an authoritative and unquestionable tone of voice.

How then is discipline to be maintained in schools if it cannot be left as a matter which each good teacher will soon learn to obtain? What is needed is that schools build up strong systems of what may be called general school discipline which will be maintained in addition to what is done by individual teachers. Such a general school discipline most probably would have to derive from the authority of the head and senior staff.

This authority is usually recognised and accepted by school children, and normally they obey those who exercise it. The general discipline would then support the so-called weak teacher who needs aid. Children in schools should have cause to realise that, although the directions of some teachers may not be given in a compelling manner, yet strongly supporting these members of staff there are those in authority whom it would be unwise to disregard.

In many schools at present there is very little general school discipline strongly maintained by the head and senior members of staff. Individual teachers are left to do their best with their classes, and it is hoped that they will soon learn how to keep order. In such cases children soon discover that they may disregard the directions of some members of staff without any very serious consequences. Disorder soon prevails in some classes, and the nation's money, and the children's and the teacher's time, are wasted.

M. J. BAKER,

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School for Girls, Essex.*

Liberal Studies in Further Education

The spade-work has all, or nearly all, been done now. The illuminating suggestions of Newman, Arnold, Eliot and Leavis have been followed up and to a large extent confirmed by the statistical evidence and practical recommendations of such works as the National Institute's *Liberal Education in a Technical Age*, Mrs. Silbertson's *Youth in a Technical Age* and the *Crowther Report*.

It is, we may take it, pretty generally agreed that the educational system for our industrial and increasingly technological society needs to include some guidance on topics other than vocational or academic work, particularly for adolescents, and probably in Further Education establishments. Though Crowther's recommendations need more discussion in detail, the first three suggestions seem satisfactory in general terms: an appreciation of the adult world: guidance in human relations and morals: and a development of physical and aesthetic skills. Such suggestions seem to have a two-fold objective. First, they are likely to produce better human beings, broad-minded, tolerant, mature members of a democratic society; and secondly they are likely to produce better engineers, scientists and technicians.

Yet Mrs. Silbertson's book, published as recently as 1959, shows how grim the reality of the situation really is, not merely in courses and student-numbers, which are likely to rise, but in the whole approach to non-vocational subjects.

Here, in fact, there is enormous uncertainty and confusion about the appropriate approach and appropriate subject-matter. Over-ambitious schemes of work crumble all too readily in the face of indifferent teenagers, uncertain whether they are children or adults, while, on the other hand, tough, 'Let's be realistic' courses tend to produce such illiberal topics as Accountancy and Industrial Relations.

We have then, I suggest, passed beyond the reactionary clamour of 'Why liberal studies?' It is time that we began thinking seriously about 'How?' What we need to be talking about now is the approach to liberal studies, not the reason, and at the risk of appearing dogmatic it may be worth setting out how liberal studies was tackled in an Art College where I taught for a year.

The function of the Department of General Education and Liberal Studies was to broaden courses within the College and to liberalise specialised education. For the sake of convenience our activities can be discussed under two headings, *theoretical* and *empirical*, though in practice there was no such division, which was discouraged as defeating the main educational intention of producing not merely qualified persons but educated ones.

The theoretical side is devoted to providing as many systematic academic disciplines in formal subjects as is possible, so that students were able to acquire knowledge and also in some cases badly-needed G.C.E. qualifications. Such courses varied with the needs of individual classes and students. Some of them were optional, but all students had to attend compulsory English and Art History lectures. Altogether a full-time staff of two, with some part-time help, were able to run eight or nine such courses throughout a year.

On the empirical side the department's two main aims could be defined as expansion and integration. The intention is to expand students' interests by treating intellectually of the enormous range of experience not merely necessary for the students as artists or art-teachers, but as adolescents growing up in a complicated and confusing world. There was no set syllabus here. Note was taken of students' interests, current affairs and such authorities as Leavis and Thompson's *Culture and Environment*, and the teaching method followed was largely that of the informal seminar, with the lecturer acting as chairman of a discussion group. A whole variety of activities grew out of these classes: music recitals: poetry readings: a series of very formal lectures on the Mass Media: factory and theatre visits: the formation of a Drama group and a Jazz Club: the first number of a College magazine.

By integration is meant the attempt to unify all activities as part of the same process of living and learning. This was achieved by the treating of all subjects as being capable of the same intellectual approach, whether Rock 'n' Roll or the Renaissance. Thus the relationship between History and Art was indicated by a course on the History of Building, while advanced students prepared short theses on the History of Art, in which private research clearly brought out the triple claims of language, history and aesthetics.

One should perhaps stress that liberal studies did not mean G.C.E. with some fun and games thrown in to keep the peace. The year's work was planned as a comprehensive whole in an attempt to educate the whole man, and at the same time provide the opportunity for examination qualifications for those who wanted them. The time devoted to empirical studies outweighed the theoretical, and was the more rewarding to teach in.

No one would pretend that the course solved all or even most of the problems. As one might expect, it is inclined too much towards Art, and I understand that some Science lectures are now being introduced. Perhaps the empirical approach needs systematising for one can foresee recurring topics, the Mass Media, music, modern drama, which could be built in to subsequent courses. But the need for flexibility surely outweighs most considerations of this kind. In Liberal Studies, if anywhere, should it be truthfully said that the syllabus represents only a starting-point.

DENNIS BUTTS,
Lecturer, Leeds Day Training College.

Grammar School Protest

Will you permit me to register in your journal an emphatic protest against Dr. Pedley's superficial, unbalanced and intolerant review of Frances Stevens' book, *The Living Tradition*? He disparages everything in it—its style, its contents and her attitude. Dr. Pedley has signally failed to enter with sympathetic understanding into what Miss Stevens has tried to do and done so successfully. I judge her book, as do all the reviewers I have read, to be a valuable sociological study based upon extensive first-hand 'field-work'.

It is saddening to me to find Dr. Pedley allowing himself to be so overwhelmed by his antipathy towards the grammar school as to dismiss Miss Stevens' book so cavalierly. I would have expected him to be able to rise above his feelings of antagonism and to give us the 'cold, rational examination' of the book expected from a fair-minded reviewer. As it is, however, by conveying to his readers the impression that the book is completely devoid of merit he has done Miss Stevens a grave injustice.

R. W. CRAMMER,
Lecturer in Education, Newland Park Training College. Formerly Headmaster of the City of Leicester Boy's Grammar School.

[Dr. Pedley writes: *What in fact I had to rise above was my personal sympathy towards Miss Stevens. I have written no criticism more reluctantly—but a reviewer must above all be honest with his readers, and not just tailor his views to the 'done' pattern.*

Mr. Crammer really ought to have more self-respect than to descend to the smear tactics of the political demagogue. For the record, let me simply say that in countless lectures and writings I have proposed ways of preserving and enhancing the best features of the grammar school, and of developing it as an essential link between compulsory, comprehensive education on the one hand and higher education on the other.]

Is Jack as Good as His Master?

ELLEN B. ROBERTS

Miss Ellen B. Roberts, who writes here on the educational system of New Zealand, has been head teacher of a county school in Britain. She has been teaching for a number of years in New Zealand, where she has had experience in infants' schools, and as senior woman teacher in primary and intermediate schools.

'We want children to be healthy and physically vigorous, and, if possible, happy to live their lives fully as children, and to grow up into men and women generous, self-disciplined, and emotionally stable; willing to shoulder their responsibilities and equipped to do so; able to give and take freely with others but still possessing their own inner resources; attractive and interesting as persons; mentally alert and clear-headed and with a good grasp of the tools of learning and some understanding of their natural and social worlds.

'They should have creative interests of some kind, and good, if simple, standards of taste; a firm appreciation of the values of their society and a readiness to defend them, as well as an awareness of their shortcomings and a will to do something about them; and, finally, we would wish them to be people of integrity and courage with enough moral toughness to do unpleasant duties, and a readiness to make sacrifices for ends bigger than themselves.'

These words could have been spoken by real educationists in any part of the world. Actually, they were spoken by Arnold E. Campbell when Chief

Inspector of Primary Schools to a refresher course. This man is now Director of Education here in New Zealand and it is his philosophy that permeates the school life.

Coming here as an exchange teacher five years ago, the thing that struck me most forcibly was the passionate desire of all New Zealanders for the right of every child to equality of educational opportunity, equality to develop to the full such powers as he possesses. This emphasis on the equality of all in a land where there is an apparent absence of class distinction has led to interesting and exciting developments in the educational field.

Most children attend a kindergarten from the age of three and at five enter the infant department of a primary school, being under the direct care of an infant mistress and the benevolent supervision of the headmaster. Note here that the position of head-mistress of an infant school is non-existent as there are no independent infant schools. In two years the children progress by social promotion from Primer 1 to Primer 4, during which period they learn to read extremely well with the aid of 'Janet and John' Readers (soon to be revised and adapted to the specific needs of New Zealand children).

Formal arithmetic is deferred until standard 1, the lowest class in the junior school, but much practical grounding is given in the infant department. At seven, the age for compulsory education (although most children and their parents are clamouring for admission to the infant school on the child's fifth birthday), the child enters the junior school and progresses via the familiar standard classes to standard 4. Now we have a major difference between here and 'home', the name by which all Kiwis refer to Great Britain.

Comprehensive education

In the urban areas all children regardless of academic ability move on to an Intermediate school. These are usually built centrally so that they are fed by the pupils from three to five junior schools. Most of the children are now ten and the main purpose of these Intermediate schools is to cater more satisfactorily for the widely differing needs of individual children. There are, in addition to all the academic subjects, specialist teachers in physical education, music and art, homecraft, dressmaking, woodwork and metalwork departments where all children showing manual dexterity have more scope in developing their particular talents.

After two years at the Intermediate school, all children can, and most children do, enter the High schools. The disadvantages of this double break are more apparent than real, the Intermediate school

DISCUSSION (continued)

Interchange of Teachers

Has the idea of teaching exchanges within the British Isles ever been taken seriously? Within our own islands we still have tremendous differences of customs, occupations, language and historical background.

How about an exchange, say, from London to the Shetland Isles? Belfast to Guernsey? Inverness to a Cotswold village? Swansea to Harrogate? The administrative and financial problems could not possibly be as great as those already successfully dealt with for overseas exchanges. Also a great many married men teachers could take part in such a scheme, particularly where housing could be exchanged for the period.

MARION L. GEVES.

having survived a period of intense criticism, and having fully justified itself.

Since 1936, when the old Proficiency Examination was abolished, every child leaving primary school has been able to attend any school of his choice provided that there is accommodation in it. Changes in the secondary school curriculum were necessary to cater for the practically minded child as well as the academic élite. It is interesting to note that in these High schools many of the prefects and captains of teams come from the children who are not academically inclined. To quote Dr. C. E. Beeby, a former Director of Education: 'We have seen that the secondary school now has to cater for all types and levels of intellect and the criticism is sometimes made that the brighter child is suffering as a result because he is not adequately extended. I think this criticism is often exaggerated and I know that very many schools are doing better work than they have ever done before with the brighter pupils in the upper forms.

'In England the problem is solved by creaming off the academically brightest pupils at the age of eleven. The idea of drafting children at such a tender age into schools that will determine their own future careers is not one that naturally appeals to us. We have chosen rather to face the problems of catering for all types in the one school.'

The country child

Perhaps the most successful of all the educational services provided in response to New Zealand's passionate desire for equality of educational opportunity are those for the country child. Even those living in the most remote areas far from any school have all their lessons provided by the state through the Correspondence school, which does a wonderful job. Children are sent regular assignments of work from the age of five, and many of them can and do progress to school certificate and university entrance level. A new Technical Correspondence school has been instituted since the war. No money is spared to give country children living in less remote areas transport to school where possible, and boarding allowance is available where this is considered desirable. It is interesting to note that the sole charge teacher in a rural school is usually a man and it is often he who drives the school bus.

Special schools and classes

The handicapped child is indeed fortunate if he lives in New Zealand. As his initial inequality is so

obvious, the educational system does all in its power to compensate as at home. Because the blind, deaf, dumb and crippled children have needs that they share with all children, special training is given to minimise the effects of these handicaps. These educational services owe a great deal to their British counterparts, yet they do have a distinctive New Zealand flavour.

Generally speaking, the New Zealander strongly resists any move to set him apart from his fellows. He feels most secure when part of his own community group, and the group will accept him and usually do its best to help him in any way possible. If at all possible then, the child who is in any way handicapped physically, mentally or emotionally is allowed to remain in the normal classroom. When this is impossible, then the child often attends a special class attached to an ordinary school. Only when it is found impossible to cater for his needs in either of these two ways does he attend a special school. At home in England these occupation centres for the intellectually handicapped come under the care of the medical authorities, but here the service remains with the educational system.

Another example of this desire to keep children under one roof is seen in the many speech clinics attached to the schools. Here fully trained speech therapists do a wonderful job to remedy speech defects, many of which are brought to the notice of the therapist by the child's class teacher. The clinics have a delightful atmosphere and are well equipped to interest children of all ages.

Cerebral palsy schools also do a good job and are staffed by teachers, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, and visiting medical officers. At one school a member of staff is herself cerebral palsied. Many children more mildly affected attend ordinary schools. At a local High school speech day it was a boy suffering from cerebral palsy with university entrance accredited who carried off the English prize to the greatest applause of the day.

There are seven Health Camp schools throughout New Zealand. Originally these camps were established to care for delicate children, cases of general debility or malnutrition and for recuperation after serious illness. Although these functions remain, the camps have now extended their scope and take some children without specific physical disability who, in the judgment of the school medical officer, would benefit from a stay in the country, either because of emotional strain or behaviour problems at home.

Visiting teachers have been appointed as a link between school and home and to help children whose handicaps are social and emotional.

Special classes cater for the intellectually handicapped child, and occupation classes have been started for children who at one time would have had no schooling at all. All these services and many more are provided in a country where the total school population is only just over half a million.

The Maories

One child in every eleven of the school population is classified as a Maori, but most of these attend schools together with their white brothers and sisters. Provision is, however, made for Maori schools in predominantly Maori centres where some emphasis is placed on Maori arts and crafts. In fact, a large number of schools here are inter-racial. Given the same opportunities as their 'pakeha' classmates, many of these children equal their attainments. Their scholastic aptitudes and achievements, however, do vary from district to district influenced by many and varied factors, the two most obvious being their bilingualism and biracial contact.

Some of these children speak and hear mostly Maori until they attend school. Then they not only have to adapt themselves to a different way of life, but have to learn a new language before they can make a start with formal school subjects. It is a high tribute to the zealous work of the teachers concerned when the Inspectors report on 1960 a definite improvement in the quality of written English in the junior classes. Moreover, though standards vary from school to school, numbers of senior pupils show skill in speaking of current affairs, in running their school councils, and they write naturally and easily in good idiomatic English. It is an indication of the social equality afforded to the Maoris that the head prefect of a city school of over 800 boys, dominantly white, is a full-blooded Maori. Although qualified teachers of Maori are rare and the textbooks available are not the most modern, children can and do take Maori as a subject for School Certificate.

It is noteworthy that the curriculum followed by Maori children is basically the same as that for white children, although in the early stages certain adjustments are made.

Here then is a sketchy outline of an educational system basically English but adapted courageously to the demands of a new young country.

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Teaching and Discrimination—A Classroom Approach

TONY HIGGINS AND DON WATERS

Mr. Higgins has been senior history master at a London grammar school, and, since 1955, he has been teaching in a secondary modern school in Croydon. He has been chairman of the Society for Education in Films and Television since 1956 and is co-author of 'Family Viewing', the Council for Children's Welfare report on early evening television. He was a member of the working party which produced the report on 'Film and Television in Education for Teaching'. Mr. Waters has been teaching at a secondary modern school in East Ham since 1949. He has supervised the making of 15 films by children and has himself made eight documentary films. He is Public Relations Officer of S.E.F.T. Both Mr. Waters and Mr. Higgins are concerned with screen education in their schools.

"What is required today is as much a training in how to see as a training in how to read."

"What is involved is an attention to all the details of expression in the work."

". . . to reveal the underlying assumptions, the hidden values and the elements of appeal and persuasion . . ."

These are some of the most important points made by Paddy Whannel in his article on 'Teaching and Discrimination' in last Spring's issue of FORUM. By describing in detail some work undertaken in the schools, we hope to show how Mr. Whannel's proposals may be put into practice.

An essential preliminary is that children should have some elementary knowledge of how films or television programmes are made. They need to realise, for example, that a camera can be placed at any distance from or any angle to its subject; that pieces of film can be cut and stuck together, so that any two pictures may be placed in juxtaposition; that there need be no natural relation between pictures and sound, since any sound at all can be placed with a given picture. Knowledge of this kind can and should be taught quickly and simply, for it is the beginning, not the end, of a course of film and television study. What matters is not that a child should know that a film-maker has certain tools at his disposal, but that he should realise that these tools are being used to say something to him.

What kind of thing do war films say, for example? We choose these as our first example because children and young people see many of them, and we believe that the teaching of discrimination must be closely related to everyday viewing experiences. An extract from John Ford's 'They Were Expendable' (one of many extracts

available for study in schools) might form the basis of the work. It shows an attack by two American motor torpedo boats on a Japanese cruiser. After the commander of one boat has been ordered to attack it, the crew of the other (which is being repaired) complain that the other guys get all the good jobs. Their commander agrees to let them also attack, the damaged boat is hastily prepared, and the two boats destroy the cruiser.

After one showing, most children will remember only the excitement of the attack. After two or three screenings and some questioning from the teacher (and these things are essential if our aim is to train children to see), they will notice the details of expression in the work, the underlying assumptions and the hidden values. They will notice, for example, a certain style of acting in the 'Can do?' 'Can try, sir' exchange at the opening of the extract, and in the old man who waves his bottle of whisky at the crew as the boat slides down the slipway. They will realise that they have seen this character many times before—he is the old-timer who dispenses home-spun wisdom as he cooks beans and bacon for the cowboys. They will also notice other features of the traditional western—the music of 'Red River Valley' which swells up on the sound track as the boat slides into the water, and the romance of the low angle shot in which a man standing high up on the boat is silhouetted in brilliant sunshine against a background of palm leaves. It is in the attack scenes that the resemblance to westerns becomes strongest. What matters here is the director's selection of what his audience shall see. What do we see? Conventionally heroic faces, beautifully composed pictures of waves fanning out from the boat's stern, puffs of smoke, waterspouts, a torpedo leaping from its tube. What do we not see? We do not see men afraid, men in agony, men dying. The violence is remote and

stylised: it is part of a romanticised, unreal picture of war.

This study needs to be complemented by extracts from other war films. 'Paths of Glory' also includes a sequence showing men about to go into battle; shot in semi-darkness, with close-ups emphasising every facial detail, two soldiers discuss whether the bullet or the bayonet causes the more painful death. In 'A Time Out of War', a few soldiers from North and South in the American Civil War agree on a truce for one afternoon; the slow rhythm of the editing emphasises the sanity and peace of their afternoon, and the distant rumble of gunfire, the body dragged from the river, contrasts it with the insanity of war. 'Children of Hiroshima' is remarkable for its horrific account of what the first atom bomb meant to those who suffered it. Some general discussion of moral responsibility will certainly follow a showing of this extract, for at least one member of the class will say 'Them Japs deserved it. Look what they did to our men in P.O.W. camps'.

A discussion of responsibility, that of TV producers to their audiences, might also arise from 'Vox Pop', in which Alan Whicker questions passers-by in St. James Park about their knowledge of Parliament. This might be approached via a discussion of news and current affairs on television. ('Suppose you are responsible for the news. How would you decide what news to present?'). This will certainly reveal that there is a strong tendency to present news and current affairs in an entertaining fashion, and that entertainment need not always be combined with a responsible approach.

In 'Vox Pop', it is again selection of detail which is important. All the people interviewed were totally ignorant of what had been happening in Parliament. Or were they? Were these people a random sample or were they, as one fourth year boy put it, a 'load of goofs' chosen for their entertainment value? How do you know whether a television producer is giving you a truthful picture? As another boy said, 'You don't know. You have to trust them'. He had learnt something of enormous importance.

The details of expression are also important, and two or three screenings may be necessary before a class notices them. Alan Whicker's opening question, 'Are M.P.s really pulling their weight?' is accompanied by a picture of an M.P. whose immense weight is being pulled to the House of Commons on a motor scooter. A shot of ducks quacking on the lake is interpolated while one of the interviewees is advocating a 13-month calendar and a decimal coinage. The latter has become respectable since this item first appeared on 'To-

night', but to many young people the idea is 'nutty' because it comes from a 'nutty' character, and the ducks reinforce their impression. From this point, discussion might be broadened to include other television programmes in which ordinary people are used, or even manipulated, to provide entertainment 'Beat the Clock', for example, or 'Candid Camera'.

Indeed, one of the most important tasks for Screen Education is to see that children maintain a firm respect for the human personality by helping them to develop their own protection against the Mass Manipulators. Television advertising is a rich and fertile field for these mass manipulators, and it should be subject to ruthless and frequent examination in the classroom. There is a tendency to dismiss TV commercials as a joke. 'All that Brand X stuff—who believes that? And after all, some commercials are entertaining—those clever ones about Thingummy's bitter lemon, quite intelligent really.' The people who spend £80 million a year on them take them rather more seriously, and so should we. Particularly sinister is the increase in recent years of the 'depth approach'. It is very important that children should be introduced to the techniques of the depth advertisers, that they should understand how the commercial may be playing on hidden desires and fears without the victim being aware of what is happening.

'What is a Mum?' says the soft persuasive voice against the soft persuasive music. 'A Mum is someone who saves up for a new hat and then buys a cricket bat.' A bit more of this ensures unconscious identification on the part of the Mums in the audience, and it then transpires that a Mum is also someone who uses a particular brand of washing powder. It's just one way in which she demonstrates her love for her children. 'And it shows,' adds the soft voice. That is very important, for we do like people to know about our fine qualities, even if we do not admit it.

All this may sound ridiculous when dragged into the open, but the whole point is that it doesn't work in the open. And it does work. People don't go through these thought processes consciously—not unless we subject them to open discussion. The classroom is the place to begin the habit. Children should be encouraged to dig up the depth tricks from the commercials. They can do it as a piece of home research. Look for the commercials that tell you nothing about the product, but somehow imply that buying it is likely to result in desirable personal advantages: success in a job, more girl/boy friends, improvement of unhappy family relationships, respect from friends/family/neighbours. Look for

the commercials which play on certain human feelings: snobbery, ambition, love of power, desire to be manly.

Some of them are not difficult to find:

'Don't be alone out there.' (Well, who doesn't want friends? Perhaps this fizzy drink will help.)

'He's the kind of man who has this kind of car.' (Maybe the hair cream did help him to get it? Just a little bit?)

'In the world of men . . .' (such a powerful voice) —and what boy doesn't want to be a man? Couldn't this cigarette/cider help?

'It's smart to drink X.' (Yes, well, of course, we are rather sophisticated people.)

Perhaps a word of warning might be appropriate here. We are trying to persuade children to exercise a clear, cool judgment, to subject these things to a fair and intelligent examination. The aim must be discrimination, not automatic rejection, for we do not want to produce a generation of unthinking cynics.

In this, as in many aspects of Screen Education, open class discussion is perhaps the best way to provoke thought. The British Film Institute can supply a reel of American TV commercials which can be used to introduce the work. More important, it can be used for close study, for it is not just the content, the spoken message, of a commercial which matters. Children must understand how the film techniques—the camera angle, the smooth tracking, the voluptuous music—are employed to reinforce the punch.

This approach to commercials may also get the children to think and talk about the philosophy which the TV commercial preaches: the supreme importance of consumer goods as the chief maker of happiness. One fourth year boy put it succinctly: 'I'm sick of *things*'.

Discrimination results not only in the rejection of the false and shoddy, but also in the greater enjoyment of the good. This does *not* imply the abandonment of Jazz for Brahms, the Cinema for the Old Vic, and television for a do-it-yourself fretwork kit. The Popular Arts can provide rich experiences and there is still much of quality in films and television. A training in how to see, an attention to all the details of expression, deepens and informs enjoyment. There is no more intimate contact that children can make with the medium than is provided by making a film of their own. Many schools have experimented with this approach to Screen Education. Some have had only limited success, but others have discovered in film-making one of the richest of educational processes, not only in increasing the children's understanding of film, but also in

giving them the unique experience of collectively making an artistic statement in a popular art form.

Children need some knowledge of film form, and both they and the teacher must respect the craft of film-making. Given these conditions, children will learn more in a few months about the disciplines and opportunities of the medium than could possibly be discovered in any other way.

Perhaps this can best be illustrated by taking some examples from the story and script stages of the film-making process. A group of ten children might form the story and script team. All the class have written stories, based as far as possible on their own experiences and environment. The story team's job is to sift through them, looking for ideas on which the final story will be based. All the stories must be examined carefully in the light of several criteria: interest, credibility and filmic quality, as well as sheer practicability.

One boy is enthusiastic about the story of two boys who play about with the school tape-recorder but are trapped because they inadvertently record their own voices. But as another boy drily observes, 'It's not much good making a silent film about something where the whole point is in the sound'. Eventually, they decide to use an idea which involves a boy having a bad dream because he has not done his homework. A great deal needs to be done to the story, and this involves endless hours of discussion. Characterisation and credibility, for example, must be examined in the light of the children's collective experience. What kind of a boy is this? Would that kind of boy do this kind of thing? What sort of friends would he have? What would his classmates think of this action of his? How would a teacher be likely to react? How can we get the boy from that situation to this one with credibility?

It may be only a slight little story but in the course of working it out the children are making all manner of statements about themselves, adults, and life in general. They are, moreover, doing it unconsciously and therefore honestly and without inhibitions—much more so than if you tried to persuade them to make a film about 'juvenile delinquency' or some other overtly 'social' topic.

In the scripting process they will carry all this an important stage further. They must re-think the whole story in purely filmic terms; they must consciously use all the instruments of the film-maker. With the help of rough blackboard sketches for each shot, they must make the whole film in their minds. At each point in the story, at each second,

(continued on page 33)

The Nursery School in Contemporary Society

J. HELEN WHEELER

Miss Wheeler was head of Highter's Heath nursery school from February 1947 until the summer of this year. She is now a lecturer of education at the Cheshire County Training College, Crewe, where she is training students for nursery and infants' schools.

Educationally we live today in exciting times. Few of us can have envisaged that the concept of 'secondary education for all' would have been implemented to the degree it has in the comparatively short period since the 1944 Education Act, nor can many of us have foreseen how strong would be the development of technical education within two decades. What a pity it is that nursery school education has not taken a comparable step forward! Lip service to the educational and social rights of the young child is not enough. Public opinion must be well enough informed to become convinced of the strong contemporary case for nursery schools.

Opposition to this basic form of education is founded on two fallacies, (1) that nursery schools are a waste of public money and (2) that nursery schools take responsibilities from parents. The needs of the primary school cry out to be met, but money spent on nursery school education, so far from being wasted, gives the primary school teacher a chance of doing more satisfactory work, for not only should the child have become more independent in the nursery school, but he has also been developing positive attitudes to learning through an environment rich in opportunity and specially planned to meet his particular needs. Play is fundamental to the young child's growth, both physical and mental, and the play opportunities of the good nursery school are well in advance of those in any home, rich or poor.

Increased national consciousness of mental health and the accelerating alarm at the rise in juvenile delinquency are other factors that ought to make people more aware of the formative importance of the first five years, thus focusing attention on the nursery school.

With the post-war rise in the national standard of living, nursery school teachers have been given an opportunity comparable with that of nursery school teachers in U.S.A. and Canada, where from the beginning nursery schools were envisaged as research centres in child development. In the years immediately preceding the First World War, when the McMillans and their predecessors began the English nursery schools, the physical and social conditions under which the working class had to exist were so appalling that it was essential to approach mental

health through physical health. The McMillans found it the rule, not the exception, for two-year-olds to have rickets, and standards of personal cleanliness were very low. No wonder, then, that the nursery school day began with washing, and that all children stayed at least to a mid-day meal and had an afternoon sleep. By tradition, then, nursery schools in this country have a strong link with the School Health Service, but in these more economically stable times it is possible to concentrate on prevention rather than cure. Great emphasis is still laid on hygiene, but the present day nursery school teacher is able to give far more time than her predecessor to a study of child development, and it is a study of the *whole* child, and every facet of his growth.

The head of the nursery school must know every child as a personality in his own right, and she must study him in relation to the other children in the school. She must also have a picture of him within the context of his family. This will require careful interviewing of at least one parent when the child is admitted, and this is a very subtle thing. In a friendly, stable environment parents are often relieved to have someone to talk to. Grandma's advice may be marred by prejudice, and the neighbour's helpfulness may be tempered with inquisitiveness, so it is often a relief for a parent to be able to turn to the head of the nursery school as a more objective and knowledgeable listener. The nursery school head has an unparalleled opportunity for the study of parental attitudes, on which she can often have a strong influence.

It is increasingly common practice for the new child at the nursery school to have his day gradually lengthened to meet his individual need, and for his mother to be with him in school at first, gradually withdrawing as both of them learn to trust the new environment. As the mother shares her child's new experiences and helps him to assimilate them she will find, for instance, that the modern nursery school has its children divided into 'family' groups of mixed ages. Ten is often the number in the group since the Ministry's staffing ratio is one *member of staff* (not of course one qualified teacher) to ten children. (The staff is likely to consist of qualified teachers, nursery nurses and students training to be

nursery nurses, and the ancillary staff are there to supplement the work of the teachers.) The child in the 'family' group gains from his contact with younger and older children, and this especially applies to the younger child's language development. The children are encouraged to use the whole building, not just the room where they belong, and in dry weather they have the choice between indoor and outdoor play, just as in some homes.

In these days of shared housing, grandmothers are frequent visitors to the nursery school, and this is all to the good, since they too need reassurance. It is a great pity that fathers, unless self-employed or shift workers, are usually less accessible. Fathers are parents too, and I would like their employers to be broadminded enough to release them to spend a morning in a nursery school when their children are admitted. Inevitably, there would be those whose pleasure was spoilt by embarrassment at being 'among all those women'. Indeed, the nursery school community would be much enriched if there were more men in it. They come as visiting students and they come to deliver stores and do repairs. It would be excellent if appropriate men — and there are a few such — would teach part-time in a nursery school, developing, for example, the woodwork and the gardening, and answering the children's increasing number of mechanical questions, which could be a very valuable stimulation in a technological age.

Confused by the day nursery, there are still many educated people, including some doctors, who think that nursery schools are for the children of working mothers only. This of course is very far from true. Especially in these days of small families, parents are increasingly recognising the value of the nursery school per se, and welcome the widening of relationships that it brings. The demand for nursery school places far exceeds the supply, and the fair administration of the waiting list is one of the nursery school heads' most exacting duties.

Most nursery school teachers have strong views about the evils of mothers going back to work when they have children under two and a half, and about mothers going out to work for long hours even after that. We are ever at pains to convince mothers of their incomparable importance to their own children. At the same time, we must recognise that the working mother is here to stay, and for a variety of reasons, of which the housing shortage is by no means the least. In these days of labour-saving devices, the young mother genuinely has less to do than her forbears, and she wants to be a person in her own right, with interests wider than the home. Women are increasingly unwilling to wait until their children are five before renewing their employment.

Until the 1944 Education Act is implemented in relation to nursery schools, it is therefore inevitable that private nurseries should be on the increase. Especially is this likely to be the case in view of the intensive recruiting campaign for married women teachers. There is little data on private nurseries, but we know that even though there are good ones the standards of some are very low because of a lack of qualified people on the staff and because of inadequate space and limited equipment. In any case, the inevitable fee is bound to exclude many children.

Since nursery schools are permissive rather than obligatory, it is obvious that they are particularly vulnerable under Block Grants, the full effects of which are only just beginning to be felt. Constant vigilance and a missionary zeal are the only safeguards. As the service becomes an expanding one rather than a static one, the supply of teachers is likely to be improved.

Threat of dilution

It is shortage of teachers that lies behind the latest Ministry circular on nursery education, Circular 8/60 of 31st May, 1960. This reiterates the policy of previous circulars in refusing to sanction any nursery expansion. Even an empty infant classroom cannot be used as a nursery class. Replacement only is sanctioned, and this can occur, for instance, when a lease expires. The Minister declares himself 'anxious to ensure' the continuance of 'the excellent work being done in nursery schools and classes'. Nevertheless, he calls attention to the White Paper on Secondary Education for All (December 1958) with its five-year programme, and to 'the urgent need to reduce the size of classes in both primary and secondary schools'. Few people would question the desirability of either, but these reforms are not incompatible with the idea of training more nursery school teachers, who fortunately are nearly always infant trained as well. Nursery school training and experience sends them on to the infant school with immeasurably more to give than they would otherwise have had.

Paragraph 19 of Circular 8/60 is the one to which nursery school teachers take the strongest exception, for it is a threat of dilution of the teaching profession. It reads as follows: 'The Minister holds strongly that in the long run teachers in nursery schools and classes should be qualified. During the present shortage of teachers, however, he regards it as inevitable, and has accepted in Regulation 16(3)(c) of the School Regulations, that some teachers in charge of nursery classes and assistant teachers in nursery schools should have no teaching qualifications. The regulations provide that such a teacher

must have "completed a course of instruction in the care of young children" and the Minister would regard this condition as satisfied if she held the certificate of the National Nursery Examination Board and had in addition, after a period of experience in nursery work, taken a refresher course provided by a local education authority to fit her for added responsibilities.'

My nursery school has for many years been recognised as a practical training centre for N.N.E.B. students, and as one who has had experience of it, I yield to no one in my admiration for the loyalty and ability of many nursery nurses, but where nursery nurses are employed in nursery schools and classes it has been the intention that they should be *ancillary* to the teaching staff, and it is a matter for profound regret that in some parts of the country shortage of nursery trained teachers has led to the appointment of nursery nurses in lieu. This practice cannot continue without grave risk of a fall in nursery school standards, and it is an ironic position when one considers that many nursery school teachers were three-year trained long before three-year training was envisaged as general practice for teachers. Nursery schools have led the way to more progressive methods in the primary school, but this cannot continue if paragraph 19 is widely implemented. How realistic is the last clause about refresher courses in these days of shortage of accommodation and shortage of teachers to do the training?

Part - time attendance

Whilst recognising the need for the continuance of full-time nursery education, the Minister in Circular 8/60 nevertheless encourages the development of part-time attendance, a feature begun experimentally in the last decade, first in London and Bristol and latterly in Birmingham and a growing number of other places. A child in part-time attendance comes either for the morning or the afternoon and does not stay to a mid-day meal or to rest. In view of long waiting lists due to lack of expansion of the service, it was felt that part-time would provide half a loaf, and half a loaf would be better than no bread. It also met the case of parents who wanted their children at home for part of the day.

Part-time and full-time may proceed alongside one another in the nursery school or class, or accommodation may be wholly given over to part-time, as in the original L.C.C. nursery centres (i.e. part-time nursery schools).

Nursery school teachers are divided in their views on part-time. Some think that so far from being a

mere half loaf it is the nursery education of the future. Others are more tentative or definitely opposed, pointing out, for example, that many children have regained a positive attitude to food through the nursery school meal, which inevitably takes place in a calmer, more objective atmosphere than in the many homes where mothers communicate their anxiety or sense of rush.

Probably there is now a place for both full-time and part-time in nursery education, but it part-time expands we should insist that it is for sound educational reasons and not as a matter of administrative expediency. Circular 8/60 says, in paragraph 12, 'the effect is to provide, without any additional staff, accommodation or expense, a better introduction to school life for twice the number of children'. The Minister should think again, for it is only a matter of common sense that there will be additional wear and tear on equipment and an increase in the amount of expendable material such as paint and paper that is used. Nursery children have to be brought and fetched, and part-time children are in school for two and a half or three hours only. It is therefore obvious that the scheme is impracticable unless the parents are near to the school, or can work on a rota with other parents, or have cars available. Where part-time and full-time places run alongside, part-time children have the possibility of later becoming full-time; in fact, the children in my own school regard it as a progression.

Flats in converted houses and the ever increasing number of high density block flats are other contemporary factors that should give strong impetus to nursery school expansion. Lack of adequate play facilities for these children, not to mention lack of fresh air, will undoubtedly leave a permanent scar. People should exercise their civic responsibility in finding out if the Development Plan of their own Local Education Authority has taken flat life into consideration in siting new nursery schools.

We who are the protagonists of nursery school education are challenged to see that neither Block Grants, or apathy, or any other cause shall have power to stop the implementation of the 1944 Education Act in relation to nursery education. To quote the Act, 'a local education authority shall, in particular, have regard to the need for securing that provision is made for pupils who have not attained the age of five years by the provision of nursery schools or, where the authority considers the provision of such schools to be inexpedient, by the provision of nursery classes in other schools'.

The need is undoubtedly there. Can we rest content while it is being overlooked? Dare we run the risk of letting it be forgotten altogether?

Some of these books or series

Infants

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STARTING SCIENCE

Secondary

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PRACTICE IN FRENCH INTERPRETATION
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Book Reviews

English in the Junior School: some recent books on language, poetry and drama.

A Survey by ERIC LINFIELD

As education is a continuous process despite changes in the child's environment, the primary school must provide the basis on which effective English teaching can be developed at later stages of the child's school career. English operates in every field of learning, since it is the language for all education in this country, so this basic work is especially important. Consequently, books, which are used to assist the child and the teacher in this extremely vital aspect of the primary school programme, must be viewed in relation to long-term English language and literature work and to the needs of the individual child and its role in society. This means a discriminating use of text-book material and expert guidance by the teacher, and these conditions are rarely accomplished by accepting one book as the sole guide, or by ploughing through pages of English exercises and comprehension tests. Books for English teaching are essentially tools, and can never form the entire basis for maintaining and expanding our linguistic tradition and for increasing knowledge of our literary culture.

Finding myself very much in agreement with Mr. Kitson's article in the last issue of FORUM, there is no need to elaborate on the many functions of English teaching in the junior school. One has to

remember that techniques and skills are involved as well as the encouragement of the natural growth of language as a means of communication, reflection, expression and understanding. The latest research on the value of oral work as an essential preliminary for accurate and lively written work indicates the trend for textbooks to follow^[1]; indeed it is obvious from many of the new books concerned with techniques and skills that this knowledge has had effect. For convenience, I have subdivided the reviews into three sections: language, poetry and drama, but my comments will often overlap these divisions.

Changes in children's book production in the last ten years have affected textbook production too. Indeed, with better design and layout, and with greater concern for type-face and illustration, books for use in school would be a more useful name than textbooks. Most of the books which I am going to mention are very attractively produced, and some are really first-class. It seems very important that school books should be attractive to the child.

(i) *Language*

Two books which I have found especially useful in my own practice of English teaching in the junior schools are *English in the Primary School* by J. Cutforth (Blackwell, 8s. 6d.) and *The Teaching of Written English* by P. Gurrey (Longmans, 12s. 6d.). These seem essentials and now I would add David Holbrook's *English for Maturity* (Cambridge, 21s.). The last two are really concerned with secondary work, but they give valuable clues for a successful approach to written work with the majority of our junior school population. All three authors regard English teaching as an awakening, full of significance and meaning, and not dead,

TEACHING AND DISCRIMINATION— A CLASSROOM APPROACH

(continued from page 28)

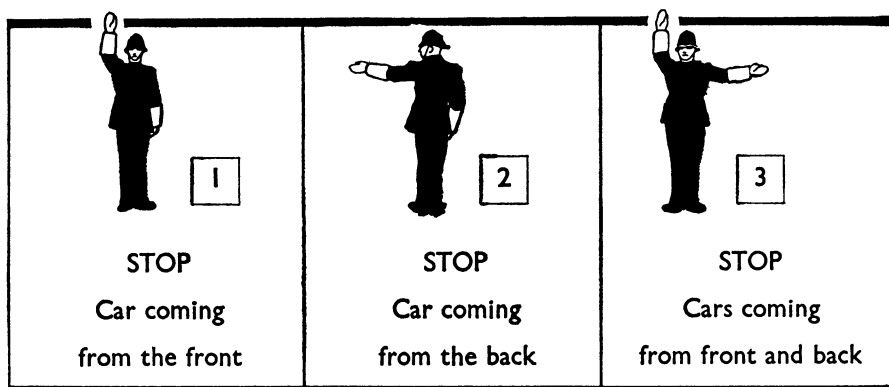
they must decide what is the important thing—what they wish to direct attention to, and why, and in exactly what filmic way. Is it the boy's eyes, looking wildly around? Is it the satchel slipping from his shoulder? The deserted nature of the street down which he is fleeing? They have to decide at each moment what they want the audience to feel, what attitude they want the audience to have towards the character and situation, and how this can be achieved with the camera and actors. This is the very stuff of film, and nowhere can children learn it better than in the painful but incomparably satisfying process of creating a film which is uniquely their own.

AN EXERCISE IN FREEDOM IN A JUNIOR CLASSROOM

(continued from page 19)

Looking back over that eventful and hectic year, I would say that the kind of approach I adopted is not only possible, but essential for young children. The role of the teacher changes but the demands on his or her knowledge and time increase geometrically as the children become stimulated and interested. To come to real fruition, this approach would need smaller classes, a relief from the selection test, bigger classrooms, more material and equipment and finally, the best qualified teachers obtainable. We have a real contribution to make to educational practice in the junior school. We shall fail to make it if the money for reforms and improvement is not forthcoming.

**These policemen are doing more than control the traffic,
they are helping the children to READ!**



ACTIVE READING

BY J. E. MILES, B.Sc. (ECON.)

(Senior Lecturer in Education, Special Course for Teachers of Handicapped Children, Birmingham University)

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artificial or contrived; they serve as significant guides to the whole field.

In the upper classes of junior schools, the following three books could be used very effectively with the more able children, and A. F. Alington's books contain so much interesting and imaginative material that some of it might be adapted for the less able too. The books are *Expressive English* by A. F. Alington (Blackwell, Book I, 6s. 6d., and Book 2, 7s. 6d. Teachers' books, 1s. each) and *Understanding and Enjoyment*, Book I, by N. C. Martin (Oxford University Press, 4s. 6d.). The Alington books introduce a series of topics such as Space, Food and Drink, Water and The Streets and thoroughly explore these themes as sources of inspiration, as centres of interest, as avenues for poetry, drama and for information research, in fact combining many of the functions of good English teaching. This series is significant and important as the beginnings of a schoolbook approach to creative English work at the top junior and secondary level. *Understanding and Enjoyment* presents some well-chosen extracts from ancient and modern literature, as diverse as Genesis and the Kon-Tiki Expedition, again on a theme basis and attempts some very worthwhile comprehension of them. The themes of Truth or Fiction, People, Explanations, or Mainly for Information (Animals) indicate its unusual approach and the extracts have an obvious quality as literary expressions.

The next group of books range over the complete junior field and are mainly concerned with stimulating the young child to write. They contain some very useful suggestions and ideas, but I feel that their use by children must be carefully guided. Every teacher and every child has differing needs in books for English practice and usage, so small sets of books for group or individual work are more valuable than complete class issues. The titles are as follows: *Something to write about* by J. C. Gagg (Heinemann, 2s. 6d.), *Towards Planned Composition*, *Easier Planned Composition* and *Planned Composition*, all by Robert J. Hoare (Odhams, 2s. 6d. and 3s. 6d. each). These books include some very familiar material but they also suggest some new topics; all teachers would find them useful in part.

Finally, in this section, there are two series of general English textbooks on a more traditional pattern, but teachers find them useful. *Heritage English*, Books 1-4, by A. J. Merson (Longmans, various prices from 3s. to 4s. 6d.) and *English: a comprehensive course* by Walter Reynolds (A. and C. Black, in two series; Blue and Red for the more able and less able children; limp covers, various prices from 4s. 6d. to 6s. and manilla covers, 3s. 6d. to 5s. 6d.). Such books seem extremely diffi-

cult to review in a short article as a detailed analysis of contents is required; one does need to understand the purpose of this type of book before passing judgment.

Books which are aimed specifically at spelling and vocabulary work are *Aids to Spelling* by E. W. Chandler (Heinemann, 2s. 6d.) and *Word Perfect* by R. Ridout (Ginn, 1s. 9d. to 3s. 6d. each). These prove useful as occasional aids to English assignments, and many children enjoy working at improving their own vocabulary in odd moments of the school day.

(ii) Poetry

The junior child should be in constant contact with good poetry; wherever possible there ought to be a poetry section of the class library with a wide choice of books of poems. Several new and extremely useful anthologies of Junior Poetry have appeared recently, and although these are numbered as usual Books 1, 2, 3 and 4, each class library needs at least one of all four books. Some poems are more suitable for older Juniors than for younger children, but the choice should be made available to the child. Anthologies and selections of poems remain very personal matters, so the Junior child might be encouraged to compile his or her own personal anthology in a loose-leaf book which he takes with him throughout his Junior career. Here is the list:

Oxford Books of Verse for Juniors, chosen and edited by James Britton (Oxford University Press, prices from Book 1, limp 4s. 6d., boards 5s. 6d. to Book 4, limp 6s., boards 7d. Teachers' companion, 5s. 6d.).

This excellent series introduced a much wider variety of poems including many by living poets, and pointed the way to a deeper and more creative appreciation. The next two sets have a similar function, and they have the additional attraction of recordings of poems to accompany the text. The Blackwell records (a set of four) contain the entire selection of poems in the books, but in the Schofield and Sims series, the teachers' books recommend existing commercial recordings of poetry.

Blackwell's Junior Poetry Books, edited by Evan Owen, illustrated by Kathleen Gell (four books, 4s. 6d. each, long playing records, 24s. 9d. each).

Poetry and Life, compiled by N. Grisenthwaite, in four books (Schofield and Sims, boards, 5s. each. Four teachers' books, 5s. 6d. each). Both these two sets are very attractively produced, and I think that Miss Grisenthwaite's selection continues the poetic emphasis made by the Oxford series.

It is very encouraging that we now have a *Junior Book of Modern Verse* (Harrap, price not announced), compiled by two Cambridge teachers. It

FROM THE HOUSE OF GRANT

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The New Ideal Readers form a very fine collection of folk tales, stories and verses, old and new, which are at the same time attractively appealing and educationally sound. A well-known artist has designed a wide variety of delightful illustrations which are produced in colour and in black and white. The discriminating selection of stories, verses (many of which are original) and illustrations, go towards making a set of readers of very wide appeal. While directing much of their skill towards arousing and capturing interest the authors have in no way overlooked their principal aim—the graduation of vocabulary and sentence structure.

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THE HOUSE OF GRANT

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seems a very stimulating selection, and will appeal to the upper Junior classes.

Round the World Poetry, a new and unusual anthology of poems from other countries in translation and some English poems (University of London Press, in four books, limp, prices from 3s. to 4s.), chosen by Boswell Taylor and Stella Mead will have a dual function of increasing poetic awareness and international understanding at the same time.

Exploring Poetry, edited by E. W. Parker (Longmans, probably 5s. each) includes many of the old favourites and some modern poems too in a very well-designed series.

Finally, there are two well-known and well-established series and two others, worthy of special commendation.

Poetry for Pleasure, chosen by Ian Parsons, with new covers, in four books (Ginn, 3s. 3d. or 3s. 6d. each), a pioneer set of poems which broke away from older traditions.

The Enchanted Way, four books (A. and C. Black, manilla, 2s. 9d. to 3s. 6d. each).

Hurdy-Gurdy by James Reeves, illustrated by Edward Ardizzone (Heinemann, price not fixed, about 3s.).

Poems and Pictures, a poetry work-book, planned by Ian Serrailier (Heinemann, 3s.). This represents a stimulating new trend in school-book production.

Children will benefit from having all these selections available to them for their choice.

(iii) Drama

Child-drama, spontaneous play-making and using dramatic expression as an essential aid to learning are often confused with putting on a scripted-play for class, school or parents' amusement and entertainment. The need for scripted-plays arises mainly at the later stages of the primary school, either for play-reading groups or for putting on shows.

Kenneth Nuttall's series *Let's Act* (Longmans, in four books from 3s. 6s. to 4s. 6d. each, teacher's book 4s. 6d.) provides excellent material for child-drama in the last two years of the junior school, with ideas on miming, improvisation and speech-work leading up to some simple scripted plays. These ideas work, too.

The young child's environment includes much unfamiliar speech as the result of modern mass-media. As a result, speech is often becoming slack and slovenly; this is aggravated by the lack of conversation in many homes now. Eric Newton's four books, *Speech in the Making* (University of London Press, prices from 3s. 9d. to 4s. 6d. each limp, 5s. each boards, teacher's book 5s.) brings a fresh and original approach to speech education, rather than the artificiality of much speech-training. These and

Speaking and Moving (Oxford University Press, four volumes, 3s. each) by Frances Wilkins, can help with an effort to improve speech in the junior school but, above all, the children must be encouraged with as much oral work as possible, as all efforts at teaching English fail if children cannot express their ideas in speech.

Finally, here is a list of some useful scripted plays, as source material or for equipping the school drama library.

Round the World Plays, two books of playlets based on Stella Mead's *Round the World Stories*, by Gladys Cooper (University of London Press, 2s. 3d. each).

More Plays for Performance by R. Hadlington (U.L.P., 3s. 6d. each).

Playtime, 2; edited by Boswell Taylor (U.L.P., 3s. 3d. each).

Three plays from Heinemann's Junior Drama Library; *Deerslayer* by N. L. Clay, *The Pirate's Hat and other plays* by Wilfrid Vaughan-Jones, *The Royal Astrologers* by Willis Hall (3s. 6d., 5s. and 5s.).

The field of books for English teaching in the junior school grows vaster year by year; I am sure that the discriminating teacher will be able to use much of this material to the benefit of the articulate citizens of a democracy.

[1] *The Anatomy of Judgment*: M. L. Johnson-Abercrombie, Hutchinson.

Aspects of Mathematics

Mathematics in the Making, by Lancelot Hogben. Macdonald (1960), 320 pp., 50s.

The Language of Mathematics, by Frank Land. John Murray (1960), 264 pp., 21s. (Student's Edition 15s.).

Counting and Measuring, by Eileen M. Churchill. Routledge and Kegan Paul (1961), 219 pp., 18s.

Building up Mathematics, by Z. P. Dienes. Hutchinson (1960), 124 pp., 16s.

Professor Hogben's book is likely to sell in large numbers whatever any reviewer may say. However, it is as well to put on record that *Mathematics in the Making* is ill-written and vulgarly designed. The text is heavy and clumsy in expression (with occasional bursts of humour of a singular sort). The photographs and line illustrations, many of them extremely well drawn, are thrown on to the pages with little respect for balance, significance or clarity.

This book is not quite a history of mathematics and not quite a straightforward account of current mathematical techniques. It is mathematics discussed in a historical context. The amalgam might be successful in other hands but Professor Hogben interprets history

with too many quirks of prejudice for his statements to be entirely reliable. A more serious limitation is implied by the reference in his foreword to the history of mathematics as 'a facet of the history of the technique of human communications'—as if this were the best that could be said.

However, this book is more likely to be looked at than read. It is stuffed with illustrations and some of them are ingenious and apt. Teachers will want to have the book for the best of these.

The Language of Mathematics does not examine such an extensive stretch of mathematics. It deals with elementary levels and is written for students in training and non-specialist sixthformers. It aims to help mature readers whose mathematical understanding is in some way stunted. A part of this task it does very well. Dr. Land has a good clear expository style and he succeeds in showing how mathematics has applications in a wide range of familiar and unfamiliar fields.

The design of the book is quite superb. The team who worked on *Mathematics in the Making* could take this as a demonstration of the effectiveness of simplicity and the value of a careful integration of illustration and text.

Where it fails (and if the claim had not been made so precisely there could be no complaint) is in conveying the real texture of mathematical thinking. It makes too many concessions by withholding close argument and mathematical proof, and it does not show that the aspects of mathematics which it treats have common ground in the nature of the mental activity involved. Buy it, though, for the good things in it.

The other two books under review are directed at improving the teaching of mathematics at elementary levels. *Counting and Measuring* deals with the basic number work in infants' schools. The first section synthesises current views about the nature of the number concepts and the psychological processes through which these are attained; the second attempts to translate these theories into classroom practice. Much of this is very valuable, especially the stress which Miss Churchill places on the levels of understanding and the dangers of hurrying the transitions between them. She also sees clearly that the kinds of activity and experience provided for the children should encourage 'relational' thinking and that the teacher must be selective in her choice of materials. These are important points and cannot be repeated too often.

Miss Churchill fails to support her claim that an understanding of the historical growth of the number system is needed in the classroom; she unwisely refers to the four basic processes as 'counting operations' (which is to blur the distinction between the operations and a particular method of evaluation); and she does less than justice to the function of the Cuisenaire and Stern materials. Nevertheless, infants' school teachers will find a good deal of useful advice in this book.

No space remains for an adequate appraisal of Dr. Dienes' book. This book is very strongly recommended to teachers of mathematics. *Building up Mathematics* is

conspicuously readable and stimulating—illuminating even when wrong-headed. It is an important addition to the small number of books which influence the understanding of mathematics and the business of the mathematics teacher.

D. H. WHEELER.

The Approach to History

Teaching History in Secondary Schools, by E. M. Lewis, Evans (1960), 214 pp., 12s. 6d.

History the Betrayer, A Study in Bias, by E. H. Dance, Hutchinson (1960), 160 pp. 12s. 6d.

Miss Lewis's book is the first to appear on its subject since Dr. Strong's in 1958, and attempts to be rather more ambitious in scope. While suggesting nothing revolutionary, she supplies many valuable suggestions for visual aids and methods of work to the practising teacher, and as such her book is more direct and helpful than, for example, the I.A.A.M.'s list of rather vague suggestions in their *Teaching of History*. In fact, her lists—books for teaching modern history and civics, pictures, historical novels, gramophone records, museums, wall charts, films and film strips, and collections of historical plays for children may well be the most valuable part of her book; concisely listed in ten pages, they should be of use to even the most informed history specialist.

A serious criticism must, however, be made of Miss Lewis's constant reiteration that her book is intended mainly for secondary modern and comprehensive school children, 'though I think that teachers in the lower forms in grammar schools may also be helped by it'. Throughout the book, as in Dr. Strong's, this emphasis recurs. 'The most suitable history for the secondary modern school . . . (is) the study of social conditions and the tale (sic) of great events.' The trend of progressive history teaching in comprehensive schools is to have a common syllabus throughout a school and a common examination at the year's end (see G. Rudé in *New Trends in English Education*). Suitably presented, any kind of history can be understood by all but a handful of children, and we are making great strides in raising the standards of *all* children, not just a few. Yet Miss Lewis, whose book is full of helpful suggestions and common sense, implies repeatedly that beyond the recommendations for history teaching laid down in her book lies a kind of 'real history', to be taught only to the élite of the grammar school.

Mr. Dance has given us a little book full of provocation and interest, in which he suggests widening the syllabus to include more socio-economic history and much more about extra-European countries. As a member of many international conferences and an enthusiastic supporter of the UNESCO scheme for bias-free textbooks, he is admirably fitted to show us the prejudices incorporated in textbooks of all countries and

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their evil results. 'When we speak of civilisation . . . we give no thought to the civilisations of the East.' 'Most of the people of the world are "coloured": yet there are no world histories in any language which give one-fifth, let alone the just four-fifths, of their space to the great "coloured" civilisations.' And so on.

The book examines critically the bases of the serious historian's assumptions about his subject and its uses. 'We have to re-assess our basic values. History is a medium of education, and we are educating not a leisured class, but people who will have to . . . live in a (new) world.' So why teach Caractus and not Al Hazen? Or Titus Oates and not Buddha?

Valuable and convincing as are Mr. Dance's polemics, however, I find it impossible to accept his answers to our dilemma unreservedly. Would an agreed UNESCO set of texts be really of great value, or would they be, as Mr. A. J. P. Taylor suggests, full of platitudinous 'B.B.C. values'? Is Mr. Taylor not right to say 'What we need is more chaos, more disagreement, not less'? And second, how can we possibly teach all that Mr. Dance wishes? Would we not be in danger of spreading our already perilously thin veneer of knowledge to the vanishing point? If children are to be taught something of the *whole range* of world history would they receive any lasting benefits from so inevitably sketchy an approach? Or cannot traditional syllabi be modified rather than scrapped, so that children do learn their country's history in some detail as one among many lines of human progress, while not being entirely ignorant of other people's development?

But in his basic approach and his realisation of the need for profound changes in our attitudes Mr. Dance is undoubtedly right. We *are* at a crossroads, we *do* teach the traditional things too much from inertia, and changes *are* long overdue. I hope that this book is read and discussed very widely.

DAVID RUBINSTEIN.

More on Mathematics

Primary Mathematics. An Introduction to the Language of Number, by J. S. Flavell and B. B. Wakelam. Methuen. *Basic Book 1* (1960), 128 pp., 5s. *Teacher's Book 1* (1959), 44 pp., 6s. *Basic Book 2* (1960), 128 pp., 5s. *Teacher's Book 2* (1961), 79 pp., 6s.

The authors of this series recognise the fact that although the great majority of primary school teachers must undertake the teaching of mathematics, relatively few of them are specialists. The basic books abound with interesting and stimulating mathematical activities for the children, and the teachers' books support this work with a lucid and often fascinating exposition of the principles involved and the methods of applying them.

The emphasis on notation is particularly to be commended, as is the advocacy of class discussions, for which the books provide ample and intrinsically interesting material. The early introduction of simple algebra and geometry is another valuable feature.

As could be expected from the breadth of their canvas, the authors have missed a little detail here and

there. I should like to have seen an early introduction to simple graphs, and in citing the bank as a model for counting money, use could have been made of the common practice of weighing money as an alternative. (Teacher's Book 1, page 22.)

However, the authors more than atone for any omissions by the inclusion of such fascinating little items as the Method of Duplation. (Book 2.)

It is to be hoped that the intended production of Topic Books will soon be realised, for the brighter children, stimulated by the variety and interest of the work, will soon gallop through the work in the Basic books.

To sum up, this series has been produced by teachers who understand the problems facing the general practitioner in our primary schools. They tell us not only what we should teach, but why and how. They have shown us the way to shake off the shackles and spurious security of the computational approach and given us the material and guidance to make the teaching of mathematics to young children an exciting experience and a sound training for our pupils. The series is destined to have a profound and beneficial effect on the teaching of the subject in primary schools.

E. HARVEY.

Two New Studies

Values in the Comprehensive School, by T. W. G. Miller. Oliver and Boyd (for University of Birmingham Institute of Education) (1961), 118 pp., 12s. 11-plus '*Rejects*', by S. S. Segal. The Schoolmaster Publishing Co. (1961), 112 pp. 7s.

We have space only to draw attention to these two important books. The first is the published version of what has been in the last year or two the most thumbed thesis in the Birmingham University library. Dr. Miller, an Australian, was concerned to make an impartial assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of the comprehensive school. He made a comparative study of the relative achievements of comprehensive, grammar and modern schools in the promotion of values in their pupils, particularly with respect to school itself, the subjects taught, vocations, leisure activities and morale. 'Overall', writes Professor Peel in his foreword, 'his results showed clearly that comprehensive education can achieve something not gained in grammar and modern schools.' The morale, interest and 'sense of belonging' all appear to be enhanced. 'In short,' he concludes, 'Dr. Miller's monograph vindicates the idea of comprehensive education for the promotion of its pupils' values.' All interested in the comprehensive school should obtain a copy of this first experimental survey.

Mr. Segal is, of course, well known to FORUM readers. In this short book he has included a mass of practical advice and suggestions, based on his own experience, on the organisation of remedial work with backward children in the secondary school. The book will be of great value to the practising teacher concerned with this vital sphere of work.

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