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## *Special Number on Teacher Training*



FOR THE DISCUSSION OF NEW TRENDS IN EDUCATION

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# Next Steps in the Training of Teachers

Teacher training is in the news. The substantial increase in the number of school children expected over the next two decades has forced a crash programme of training college expansion on the government which, even if fully implemented, will leave a grave teacher shortage by 1980. New, serious problems of teacher supply have arisen, in particular the substantial and growing wastage rates among women teachers and among untrained university graduates. The three year course has now got under way, and discussion continues as to its direction and character. At the same time the whole pattern of teacher training is, or should be, under review by the Robbins committee, which will be reporting in the Autumn.

Crash programmes are all very well—if they are necessary; but the present crisis of teacher supply should have been clear to the Government many years ago. Such programmes, which are bound to lead to a short-term deterioration of conditions, are only acceptable so long as they are accompanied by firm guarantees that they will last only for a limited period of time, and if sufficient capital and recurrent expenditure is made available to ensure a long-term improvement of conditions. In particular the rapid expansion of Training Colleges should not have the effect of separating them still further from the Universities; it should be planned as part of the whole movement towards integrating the Training Colleges with the Universities as institutions of comparable status and amenities. This could be facilitated by an expansion programme which was concentrated on the larger Colleges sited close to University centres. Such a policy will, we hope, be in line with the forthcoming Robbins proposals.

There is a good case, then, for taking a long, cool look at the whole situation in teacher training. This Special Number is designed to raise some of the issues involved in such an appraisal. The problem of teacher supply is discussed by John Dixon who suggests the need for a radical change in its pattern to meet the new conditions, while Lady Simon tackles directly the key question of the wastage of women teachers. Of equal importance is the quality of the training given in Colleges and Universities. Cyril Bibby and Professor Tibble deal here with new developments in teacher education, while the consumer's angle (to which too little attention is generally given) is represented in the contributions of past and present students. The demands of new forms of school organisation, which represent a new ethos and a new approach, are presented by the head of a comprehensive school and of an unstreamed junior school: how far is teacher training adapting itself to these new developments in the school system? And finally, what of the teacher in his first post? Here Richard Palmer, a divisional education officer in London, indicates how best the young teacher can be helped to develop as a full-time practitioner.

This number is in no sense comprehensive. A great deal more could be written on each of the topics dealt with—and several important questions are not touched on. Its aim is to stimulate discussion on what is a key issue directly affecting both the quantity and the quality of education. There is no doubt that the importance of teacher training—its scope and character, its direction, aims and practices—is now being increasingly recognised.

# Must We Plan for Shortage?

J. L. DIXON

*John Dixon teaches English at Walworth School, a London Comprehensive.*

For teachers the most dramatic news of 1963 must be the decision to increase the training college population to 80,000 by the end of this decade. Let's recall the campaigns of the recent past: in Spring 1961, for example, FORUM was appealing for 19,000 student teachers to be recruited annually from 1966. And now the Minister has promised an entry of over 20,000 for that year, rising to over 25,000 in 1970-71. Has the fight been won? Can we now foresee raising of the school leaving age, a national system of nursery schools, classes below the maximum . . . ? The answer is: No.

The Minister is planning for failure. His predictions are as follows: by 1970 the present teacher

shortage will be reduced to 35,000. In 1975 we shall still be 21,000 teachers short, classes still overcrowded, no reforms possible.

### No solution

At first sight, incredible ! So it must seem to anyone who has not already considered the National Advisory Council's figures published as long ago as May 1962. Their moral was fairly clear : 'The general picture which this report reveals is one of a grave shortage of teachers now, in the years immediately ahead, and in the long term,' said their chairman, John Fulton. One Minister of Education later (and after an A.T.C.D.E. deputation had asked to see the Prime Minister at Christmas) the government has responded to the challenge. But in vain; Sir Edward Boyle's crash programme, announced this February, can only promise continued shortage. The problem he cannot solve or surmount is the 'wastage' of young teachers. To put it quite simply, about 160,000 young women will be starting their teaching career in 1961-70. This is rather more than the total of women teachers at present in the service. But of this staggering total of women entrants, roughly 80,000 will have left education *by 1970* and a further 65,000 by 1980, thus leaving roughly 15,000 of the original entry group still in the schools.

'Wastage' of men is less dramatic, but of growing importance. The key problem is the untrained university graduate. Recently about two-fifths of the young male graduates entering the profession have been untrained. Their wastage figures are even higher than the women's. Yet the N.A.C. and the Ministry expect the number of untrained graduates recruited to teaching to rise during this decade.

### Beyond control ?

The Ministry's answer has been to throw up their hands in despair. 'The root causes of this shortage are almost entirely beyond our control,' said Sir D. Eccles in his reply to the N.A.C. This is a half truth. In one sense, of course, the Minister was right ! He could not be expected to reverse the trend for women to marry young and have children while still in their twenties. He could hardly be expected to line up university graduates—like Parliamentary candidates from the Services — to decide whether they really mean to teach or are just spending a year or two in school while looking around for a job. In this limited sense the wastage is indeed beyond Ministry control. But who decides whether to rely on heavy recruitment of young women and untrained graduates ? Fundamentally, it is the Minister. In this sense he has control, and the question arises : are there more stable sources of supply and has the Minister really examined them ?

### Male wastage

At present the most stable parts of the profession are men with teacher training, whether from college or university. It is sufficient to compare their wastage rates with those of untrained male graduates or of women from training colleges : the latest figures, those for 1960-61, show that for the age group 20-29 wastage of trained men graduates was running at about 4 per cent per annum as compared with a rate of nearly 20 per cent for untrained men. In the same age group the 1960 wastage for men from training colleges was about 4 per cent as compared with about 14 per cent for women.

| | Men from university | | Qualified non-graduate recruits | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Trained | Untrained | Men | Women |
| Entry aged 20-29 Mar. '60-Mar. '61 | 1,502 | 1,101 | 3,515 | 10,545 |
| Wastage: under 25 | 3·7% | 23·7% | 3·1% | 10·5% |
| 25-29 | 3·9% | 17·8% | 4·1% | 17·6% |

(Ministry Report, Table 40)

Unfortunately, of a total entry (aged 20-29) of nearly 19,000 recruits in 1960-61, only 5,000 men were trained, as we see. Is the Minister investigating the best methods of attracting young men to train for teaching ? Has he tried to maximise the number of stable recruits ? When he turned away 3,000 potential recruits last year (according to N.U.S. figures) did he give priority to men applicants ? Has he considered a more flexible system of graduate training designed to attract more men to join the profession and stay in it ? Unless the answer to all these questions is YES, the Ministry cannot evade responsibility for confessed failure.

### Mature recruits

The second main source of stability comes from mature men and women recruits. Here is another subject that needs closer investigation. The wastage rate for trained teachers aged 30 and over is comparatively low, but wastage figures for those who enter (or re-enter) after 30 are not published separately. And again, though we know that in 1961-2 about 2,500 students aged 25+ entered the training college, at least 500 of them were working for qualifications in Further Education, not schoolteaching.

However, the evidence though inconclusive suggests that the 1,056 trained men and 3,736 trained women who in 1960-61 entered (or re-entered) the schools at the age of 30 or over were much more likely to stay on in teaching than the younger women and untrained graduates. The provision of day training places, forced on to a reluctant Ministry by some of the more active L.E.A.s, is just one way of increasing the size of this group. But is enough being done to attract and keep the potential teachers from this age group? Are present students being surveyed to find where greater allowance can be made for domestic problems? Have introductory evening courses been considered, as recently suggested by the Hampstead Association for the Advancement of State Education?

### The trend to early marriage

In a recent broadcast Professor Titmuss pointed out that with the present trend to early marriage and childbearing the whole pattern of women's professional, commercial and industrial training might well have to be changed. Women in the age group 30 - 40 would be seeking training and re-training, for with her family already in their teens, the mother faces a potential career of 20 - 25 years (which modern medicine may well permit the professional women to extend).

We are at a point of transition and it takes men like Titmuss to foresee the revolutionary implications this has. But in teacher supply, as in Burnham negotiations, it is clear that Ministry tactics are still short-term. The facts speak for themselves: in 1958 an extra 12,000 places were planned; in 1959 a further 4,000 had to be added; in 1960 a further addition, of 8,000 places, had to be agreed to; and now in 1963, the pre-election year, another 32,000 places are envisaged! Each time the responsible Minister has delayed, has had to be prodded, pushed and persuaded—has hoped till the last minute to 'make do' with the existing system. It's the epitome of failure in contemporary Britain.

### A rational policy

Must the new hope given by the crash programme die at birth? Is there no rational policy that can offer a real chance for education?

Let's remind ourselves of the size of the challenge. To begin with, two estimates have to be made: the first is the total size of teacher force needed if some of the promises of 1944 are to be honoured, the second is the probable distribution of this force between primary and secondary schools. It is now clear that for the last decade all estimates have been

too low and must be scrapped. Moreover, a further moral has to be drawn. When planners have to deal with three areas of uncertainty—the birthrate, the 'trend' for staying on at school, and the wastage rates for teachers—a flexible ten-year projection is their only sensible basis. We shall look then at two target dates, 1970 and 1975.

### The teachers required

The N.A.C.'s 1962 Report gives estimates for the total force needed (i) to bring classes within the maxima laid down by the Ministry, (ii) to raise the leaving age to 16, and (iii) to reduce classes in primary schools to a maximum of 30. These are the minimum reforms pledged in 1944. The total force required is as follows :

| | Teachers needed in: 1970 | 1975 |
|---|---|---|
| (i) To reduce classes to 40/30 | 363,000 | 398,000 |
| (ii) To raise leaving age | +21,000 | +28,000 |
| (iii) To reduce classes to 30/30 | +63,000 | +64,000 |
| TOTAL FORCE | 447,000 | 490,000 |

As regards birthrate, these figures are much more likely to be correct than hitherto, as the Government Actuary was specially asked for a less optimistic forecast ! As regards staying on, they may still prove an underestimate. No estimate is given of the probable error; it must be of the order of 5 per cent at least.

### The actual need

Now set beside this estimated need for a force of 450,000 - 500,000 teachers the prediction that by 1965 we expect the teachers in primary and secondary schools to number about 285,000. There are only two possible reactions : the first, to throw in the sponge, as the Ministry seem to have done, and the second, to mount a national campaign to save the education system. The primary aim must be to raise the annual net growth of the teacher force from about 5,000 to over 15,000. And is this really so impossible ?

In 1961 over 24,000 new teachers joined the maintained schools, and 19,000 left. Such a wastage rate is not inevitable. Nearly half the teachers who left were aged 29 or younger and, as we have seen earlier, most of these were women or untrained graduates. This is a regular, predictable behaviour pattern. The first and obvious priority then is to recruit more young men to the training colleges and institutes. At present only about 5,000 men are given places in training colleges as against 10,000 women. But by 1965, when 17,000 extra places will have become available through overcrowding, it is quite feasible for men to be given parity with women in the colleges. And the fact that 20 - 25,000 applicants will not be able to get places in British universities this year suggests that sufficient young men with appropriate qualifications could be immediately attracted to teaching.

### The male-female ratio

The technical objection to such a programme is the need to supply more women teachers to cope with the 700 - 800,000 extra children in primary schools expected by 1975, with the underlying assumption that, in junior schools at least, the ratio of men to women must be held at around 50 : 50.

On a long term view there is no reason to challenge this assumption. But which is the more important : oversized classes taught by men and women in ideal proportion, or a reformed educational system temporarily over-weighted with men teachers ? As a parent with a six-year-old son in a class of 42, I for one have no hesitation in choosing the second alternative.

Agreed, this implies two further decisions. First, we must aim to raise the total of women teachers while reducing the wastage rate. The best available way of doing this is to attract mature women to enter or re-enter teaching. A system of day colleges, probably running end-on to introductory evening courses, should be set up with the specific aim of recruiting women aged 35-40 whose family responsibilities are becoming less demanding.

### Women in higher education

In doing so we should be righting two wrongs. The Crowther Report has indicated perfectly clearly how many outstanding students are leaving school at 16 or 17 with the path to higher education virtually barred for ever, and girls suffer even more than boys from the pressures that cause such early leaving. Our society cannot afford to let talents be wasted, and the only hope for such women is a second chance in their thirties. A Ministry team is needed to analyse the factors that would encourage women from this group to train for teaching, and to survey the stresses and problems that would have to be overcome or avoided.

The second implication of allowing a temporary reduction in the proportion of young women in training colleges is also bound up with women's right to education. In 1961 there was only one

**Men and Women in Advanced Studies (Autumn 1961)**

| | Univ. | Training Coll. | Advanced F.E. | A Level Sixth |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Men | 63,300 | 11,700 | 24,300 | 66,000 |
| Women | 22,400 | 24,400 | 5,100 | 45,000 |

# The Work of University Departments of Education

J. W. TIBBLE

*Professor Tibble is Professor of Education at the University of Leicester*

University Departments of Education are accustomed to have a bad Press. This arises, no doubt, from their position mid-way between two worlds—of the University on the one side and of the schools on the other. Sling stones and arrows of criticism are liable to come at them from both sides. On the one hand their courses of study are criticised because they lack the rigour and depth of University degree courses; while from the schools voices are often heard deploring the time spent on cloudy theorising which might be better spent on more practical preparation for the craft of teaching. We may well feel that we are the victims of misunderstanding, both of the necessary limitations under which we work and of the nature of our task, as we see it.

The limitations are obvious enough. There are two terms at most for uninterrupted study; our students come to us with built-up loyalties to their degree subjects and think of teaching, to begin with, mainly as passing on the knowledge they have acquired; most of them are meeting for the first time the various disciplines involved in the study of education. It is not possible, even if it were desirable, to have the same goals and standards as are appropriate to degree courses.

The limitations on the practical side are equally obvious. In twelve weeks of practice, even under the best conditions, we cannot hope to do more than help the young teacher to become aware of what is involved in being an effective member of a school staff, to begin acquiring the many necessary skills and attitudes, to feel reasonably confident and at home in classroom and school. In most cases marked changes of attitude are involved—between the way he thinks about the task at the beginning and the way we want him to see it. These changes need time for the maturation of the attitudes and skills involved, and the three terms of the course are not adequate for most students to reach a point where they can go on teaching unaided.

This would be so even if our aim was simply to turn out efficient practitioners, as some of our critics apparently think it should be. But few of us would be satisfied with this definition of our aim; and indeed it would be difficult to justify the existence of these courses inside a University if this were their sole aim. But, as Professor Roger Wilson has written, 'the theoretical studies should be designed to give the graduate teacher the basis of principle in the light of which he may become a constructively critical, rather than an imitative, practitioner of a traditional craft. His theoretical work needs complementing by tutorial consideration of how different lines of analysis meet in the school situation, and, of

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MUST WE PLAN FOR SHORTAGE? *(cont.)*

woman at university to every three men. No doubt this was a kind of inverted compensation for the two to one majority of women in training colleges! But it follows that if in the face of the present drastic teacher shortage young women were not to be given priority for training college places, then they must be found places in other forms of higher education—not deprived of a place altogether. Thus a dynamic policy for training teachers cannot be squared with restrictive and parsimonious plans for university places.

In fact, the days of piecemeal and empirical plans are past. Sweeping developments in the numbers and courses of universities would affect the training colleges and the entry to teaching. Integration of teacher training into a comprehensive university system seems the only rational answer. But the effects do not stop there. Freeing the sixth forms from rat-race conditions and bringing staffing gradually up to Ministry requirements would profoundly affect the attitudes and standards in primary and secondary schools. And the most fundamental change might turn out quite simple. For what would be the effect on the teaching profession, struggling for years against the horizons of shortage, of a clear sense that ahead was daylight and—hope?

course, by substantial practice in and through different kinds of school experience. The latter will tend to become conventional. It is well if the graduate student has plenty of opportunity to meet a wide range of working teachers whose own outlook and practice are not orthodox. It is in this way that the student begins to work out a philosophy of his own, be it ordinary or exotic.'

Recent discussions about the future of graduate training have revolved round a number of crucial issues. One of these is the question of making training obligatory for all graduates entering the profession. At present as many graduates enter untrained as trained.

### Compulsory training ?

There is general agreement as to the desirability of making training compulsory and the last Minister of Education declared that this was indeed the Ministry's policy but that there were difficulties over the fixing of a date because of possible effects both on recruitment and on existing facilities. A Working Party was set up to consider the possibility of introducing compulsion by stages or in forms different from the current practice. In particular, would some form of in-service or school based or part-time training be feasible ? This would have the advantage of not depriving the schools of the trainees' services to the same extent as in the present full-time courses and they would, presumably, be receiving salaries during the training period instead of grants.

The Departments are, understandably, concerned both about the possible dilution of the study element in such alternative courses and also about the effect on recruitment to the traditional courses. They would certainly require additional staff and facilities and if some entrants to the profession can achieve a training qualification while receiving salary instead of grant, it would seem only just to extend this to all.

The present situation indeed bristles with anomalies and disincentives for those graduates who choose to undergo training. (Not least of these, of course, is the risk of losing the eligibility for qualified teacher status which they already have as graduates.) The Departments feel that since extra expenditure will be involved in any extension of graduate training, it would be better spent in providing for the expansion and improvement of the present system both in the University Departments and in the Training Colleges which cater for graduates.

The submission which the Heads of Departments made to the Robbins Committee proposed an extension of the course to two years which would give time for the maturation already referred to and provide for further development and the closer relating of theory and practice. This would involve including within the course and making more effective the present probationary year during which the young teacher is in receipt of salary; it would not, therefore, be appreciably more expensive per student than the present system. It would have the further advantage of implying a closer and longer term co-operation between Departments or Colleges and Schools. In this connection it may be of interest that one Department with the co-operation of a Local Education Authority has for some years operated a scheme in which a number of teacher-tutors take charge of groups of six students for method work and practice supervision.

The further expansion of graduate training obviously raises a number of crucial questions in the field of administration and finance on which we must hope for some guidance from the Report of the Robbins Committee. At present the Departments receive most of the money they need as part of the general grant made to the University via the University Grants Committee. In the present straitened circumstances, competition between departments of the University for the available funds is necessarily acute and recruitment is limited to quotas assigned by the University. The factors determining the size of Departments in many cases have little relation to the potential capacity of the Department, given the staff and facilities to make full use of the resources of its area.

In addition to their function in providing for the initial training of graduates, and in some cases assisting with the in-service training of teachers provided by the Institute, all Departments have heavy commitments in the fostering of research and scholarship in the field of education—and a very wide field it is. This includes the supervision of the growing number of candidates for higher degrees in education and the development of the lecturers' own research interests. The need for larger scale and longer term enquiries and researches, if we are to compete successfully with other countries in the full development of our human resources, is at last coming to be recognised. The recent entry of the Ministry of Education into the field of direct sponsorship and commission of research projects is a pointer. But the money at present available for educational research from this source, from the Foundations, or from University funds, is quite inadequate and most of the projects undertaken are of necessity short term. The Heads of Departments recently met in conference to consider research needs and together with the Directors of Institutes are preparing a memorandum which sets out the needs and makes proposals for a more adequate provision of research facilities. This is a matter of vital concern for the whole teaching profession.

# New Trends in Teacher Training: The Training Colleges

CYRIL BIBBY

*After several years teaching in Lancashire and Derbyshire schools, Mr. Bibby became Principal Lecturer and Secretary of the Academic Board at the College of S. Mark and S. John. He has been Principal of Kingston-upon-Hull Training College since 1959.*

All over the country the teachers' colleges are approaching the completion of their first general three-year course, and in most cases it is already clear that markedly higher standards are being attained, both in academic work and in pedagogy.

Detailed arrangements vary a good deal from area to area and from college to college, but the most common pattern seems to be somewhat as follows. All students are being required to take a course in English (and in some cases Mathematics), and some sort of general cultural provision is usual. Then, for the bulk of their time, students study the theory and practice of Education, together with usually two elective subjects (e.g. Mathematics and Biology, History and Geography, English and Music, Art and Divinity). Thus, in effect, students are taking what could well be (and many of us would say should be recognised as) a three-subject General Degree course, all having Education as one of their three subjects.

Within an overall pattern along some such lines, individual colleges are pursuing interesting new projects in particular directions. Space permits reference to only a few of these developments, and no doubt there are many others, equally valuable, of which the writer is unaware.

### New buildings

So many colleges have fine new buildings that it is perhaps invidious to select one for special reference, but the imaginative breakthrough by Loughborough in the planning of halls of residence is very striking. Two new halls, placed in the centre of a rectangular court of low teaching buildings, are in the form of twin linked towers, the one 22 and the other 17 storeys high, with express lifts. In cross-section, each hall resembles a simple flower, the centre providing a communication lobby, while each student's room forms one of the 'petals'. Thus, at each level, a little sub-community of students is formed, closely linked and freed of the long echoing corridor which is so nearly universal a bane in halls of residence. In effect, this is the Oxbridge 'staircase' plan turned through a right-angle. If so exciting a plan had been produced by an Oxford or Cambridge college, instead of by a teachers' college, it would have been written-up as a major feature in every 'quality' newspaper.

The new buildings of Kingston upon Hull Training College also incorporate several novel features, directed towards dual usage of space, or towards flexibility, or towards potential developments in the future. For example, the fully equipped stage is moveable-backed, so that it can be used for facing the large auditorium, or facing the smaller dance studio, or (with the 'back' stored at the sides) open to both rooms at the same time. Similarly, in the art and crafts studios, a store-room is planned so as to act also as a puppet theatre; while there has also been an interesting conversion of the old gymnasium to a drama studio. All the laboratory furniture has been constructed to plans drafted by the college staff, so as to avoid the rigidity of traditional benches. For biology, the 'working spaces' for microscopy, dissection, ecology and physiology, each have different heights and shapes of bench, different surfacing, differently sized and designed sinks, etc., so as to cater for the particular types of work involved. For chemistry, the benches are lozenge-shaped and so situated as to allow ease of circulation and to permit all students to face the chalk board comfortably instead of half having their backs to it. For physics, all services (water, gas, high and low tension electricity) come up in a small number of 'service units', so placed as to permit a large number of different placings for the working benches (which, being free of service fixings, are fully moveable).

### Radio and television

Another feature at Hull has been the advance planning for educational radio and television. Rediffusion land-lines have been laid, linking up all the buildings (both teaching and residential) and so disposed—with an isolating switch—as to provide for closed circuit television at any future time. Leaving aside ten outlets installed primarily for residential purposes, these land-lines provide 27 points, at any or all of which either radio or television receivers can be plugged in. At present, the college is equipped with six television-radio and ten radio-only sets,

which have been plugged in at positions so selected that no tutor will have to take his class more than one or two rooms along a corridor in order to receive broadcast programmes.

Bede College is also very interested both in educational television and in the educational use of films, especially in connection with the teaching of English, Divinity and Education. One group of students is making a film in a modern school, and there is serious critical study in both these fields. Two other colleges experimenting with the educational use of television are Avery Hill and Brentwood. The former has a closed circuit with a neighbouring comprehensive school, and the two colleges are co-operating in a careful series of co-ordinated experiments. There have been observations of young children at free activity, and demonstrations of teaching methods by tutors to large groups of students, and it is already clear that there is considerable educational potential in this technique.

### Film criticism

The new training college at Nottingham is paying particular attention to film criticism. A high quality film is retained, and repeatedly projected, over a period of three or more weeks, with discussion and analysis in small groups. Emphasis is laid less on the historical and technical aspects than on plot, characterisation, sociological implications, etc. Film making is being carried out on 8mm. material, and already several 'shorts' have been completed.

At Eastbourne Training College, the study of film is offered as a one-year course to a limited number of students, as an alternative to recreative courses in drama, dance or art and crafts. The group studies in detail some of the outstanding classics, with reference both to their sociological implications and the historical development of the art of film. The college has recently appointed a full-time tutor in film and drama, and it seems likely that, before long, this will be offered as a main field of study. Also at Eastbourne, the Chelsea College of Physical Education is shortly to begin a post-graduate course. In order to avoid the implication of the mere acquisition of physical skills, and to emphasise the relation of the subject both to the creative arts and to the natural sciences, the college uses the title 'The Art and Science of Movement'— which, although perhaps rather cumbersome, is a useful reminder that something different is being attempted.

Another specialist college, this time in handicraft, has also been setting seriously about the task of strengthening the basis and widening the implications of its specialism. All students at Shoreditch take Handicraft (Woodwork, Metalwork and tech-

nical drawing), but this is being presented in such a manner as to demonstrate that the traditional dichotomy between the 'academic' and the 'practical' studies is fallacious. Thus, History is taught through the study of the things man has made, Geography through the occurrence of natural resources and the location of industries, and so on. Science is receiving fully equipped laboratories specially designed for studying the properties of materials (tensile strength, hardness, creep, impact, metallic microstructure, the structure and diseases of wood, modern adhesives, etc.). There is already close co-operation with the botany department of Royal Holloway College, and it is intended to build up similar contacts with the physics department. With developments such as these in specialist colleges, the schools should receive teachers much more widely cultured and firmly based than the old stereotypes of 'the gym mistress' and 'the woodwork master'.

**Research developments**

Several colleges have also been developing research work of high quality. That of Loughborough in the physiology of exercise is well known, but some lesser known ventures are also worthy of mention. At Kingston upon Hull, the training college has conducted two major and one minor archaeological digs and, although space does not permit any details here, there are clear indications of the quality of the work. The first excavation, of a 'lake village', received the co-operation both of Cambridge University Department of Quaternary Studies and of the British Museum Radio-Carbon Dating Unit. Following this, the Society of Antiquaries has made a research grant to promote archaeological investigations by the college, and a report on the work to date was presented at the Rome meeting of the International Congress of Prehistoric Archaeology. Papers on the work have also been read at the universities of Oxford and Birmingham and to various other societies.

Some extremely interesting archaeological work has also been done by Alsager Training College in connection with the important recent researches on the Dead Sea Scrolls. Twelve Divinity students (six men and six women) first took part in a fund-raising effort and secured enough to go out to Israel for several weeks. After nine days in Jerusalem, during which they visited all the main archaeological sites, they joined the Allegro expedition, camping for three weeks on the shores of the Dead Sea. Their task was to comb the cliffs, looking into all the caves they could find in order to see whether they were worth prospecting in the hope of finding further scrolls. This experience of joining in an archaeological investigation of world importance must have been very exciting and one can visualise twelve

(*continued on page* 93)

# The Student's View of Teacher Training

*This section contains articles both by present students in Training Colleges and University Education Departments, and by recent students who have had a few years' teaching practice, and who look back on their training in the light of their experience. Each writes as an individual, but each has to some extent generalised from the experience and outlook of their fellow students or teachers*

## THE UNIVERSITY COURSE IS INSUFFICIENTLY RIGOROUS,

says TOM JUPP

*a student now at a University Education Department*

The postgraduate training year lasts nine months. We spend four months in the Department of Education and three months on teaching practice. I have found the teaching practice of great value: only about 15 periods are taught a week, there are opportunities to observe, and you are observed and criticised yourself. Each training practice offers an opportunity to experiment, to become self-critical and to make mistakes which have no lasting consequences. Most students would agree with me, saying it is wonderful to get out of the Education Department into a real school.

Nearly everyone is critical of the course, usually in a general way: the various subjects are considered badly taught or not worth teaching; there are complaints at lack of contact with the staff. This sort of talk is often just, but is also the result of a general feeling of frustration. I think this arises because a student feels that his intellectual academic skill is disintegrating because no rigorous demands are being made upon him, and that no comparable practical skill is being given in exchange. This is partly the problem of leaving university. Perhaps people who choose teaching unconsciously assume that they can perpetuate the atmosphere and attitudes of university throughout their lives. And there are other internal factors, such as the feeling—hardly ever admitted—that teaching is a second rate job; something you end up in because the other alleys seem less inviting. Many of us have a morbid dread of being too like the people who taught us. This is typified for me by one particular remark. I had said how important it was for student teachers to think about some major issue because we were going to influence generations of children. The person with me looked around the common room and said 'they are never going to influence anybody'.

The above attitudes should be used as a starting point for the training year. If everyone is not overflowing with enthusiasm, I think most people are here because they hope to become enthusiastic, and are prepared to be single-minded. But the year seems to be failing to give a felt realisation of the breadth and importance of teaching. Most students already realise the importance of their own subject, occasionally to a point of bigotry. The organisation of the year reinforces this by separating everyone into subject departments. Furthermore the few tutorials on the non-specialist subjects are usually given within the subject department. This subject specialisation gravitates towards the sixth-form master cum university lecturer concept of the teacher. The teaching of methods within a subject department may be very good, but there is no real consideration of the backward or difficult child.

### Critique of the curriculum

The curriculum, as opposed to the organisation of it, does not ignore the wider aspects of a teaching career. Most of the final examination is upon subjects common to all students: the psychology and philosophy of education, the organisation of education in this country and abroad, and health education. But these subjects are presented almost exclusively through impersonal lectures and seminars, too large to bear the name. The best teaching and work goes into the most familiar subject, precisely where one is most unfamiliar there is the least meeting of minds. No real demands are made for reading or writing about these subjects. Consequently many people regard them as vaguely interesting subjects which are really irrelevant to the main point of the year, and only give them attention because they

appear in the exams. And so the exam seems disproportionately biased towards the non-specialist subjects.

I do not regard these subjects as at all irrelevant, in fact they seem the correct basis for training. They could be very intellectually demanding, and if one does not start teaching with a firm theoretical grasp of them, they are likely to be completely forgotten. But they are not taught well and there are some bad omissions. Often the lecturer seems to keep his subject unnecessarily facile or to talk in out of date terms, because he is unwilling to assume his listeners have any knowledge. There is a great deal of interest in educational sociology among many students. Everyone pays a certain amount of lip-service to the importance of background in education, for instance, but nothing sociological is in the syllabus. It is apparently of vital importance for us to know the exact administrative evolution of the various types of schools, but nothing about the people who go into them. And it seems to me it would be relevant to do something sociological about teachers, as well. The kind of psychology taught — behaviourism — does not cover this field. Equally we hear nothing about educational research into such matters as the economics of education.

Finally it seems to me that a number of very important issues for the future of education in this country are inadequately dealt with. Perhaps because they have unfortunately tended to have a political flavour. Such matters as mixed education, private education, the comprehensive school, junior colleges, are dealt with fairly in the aims and philosophy of education and sometimes in tutorials. But we are not forced to think deeply about them, which would be the case if we had to write about them. But there seems a general reluctance to demand such written work. It does not seem to me inappropriate for postgraduate students to write essays.

I have been trying to judge the effectiveness of this year as a preparation for teaching. In fact all I can really do is show how far it measures up to the expectations and wishes of the students. Of course, it is a useful year, but many of us feel it could be more useful. The course is not vigorous or self-confident enough. Many people feel no real demands are being made upon them, and this spreads a certain malaise. The postgraduate teacher's training sometimes, not always, seems more a way to an extra increment on the Burnham Scale, than a vital professional qualification and training.

## TRAINING COLLEGES MUST ESTABLISH THEIR OWN AIMS

D. CALDWELL

*now studying at a Training College*

In spite of a superficial appearance to the contrary, there is a certain logic behind our education system. Having reasoned that it is possible to label children academic or not at an early age, it follows that there must be two kinds of teacher produced to serve each category. Thus, there must be two different kinds of training, one, via the University—studious, academic, designed to produce teachers capable of guiding the 'high fliers' in the grammar schools; the other in the Training Colleges churning out people who will be able to restrain the 11+ rejects and perhaps, as an incidental, drive home a few facts into their dull, unexciting brains. Perhaps this is oversimplifying the position, but it is true that a great number of students in the Training Colleges are aware of their poor relation status vis-a-vis their counterparts in the Universities. The feeling of second class student is just as real on the level of higher education as it is in the schools.

This situation is underlined in two main respects. First, there is the physical isolation of most Training Colleges from the University campus — the almost monastic retreat of one section of the student body all of whom are going to be teachers. This makes for little informal communication with other students, especially those who are training to enter fields which ought to be of particular relevance for teachers, e.g., social workers, youth leaders, social scientists and so on. Secondly, there is the difference in 'status", demonstrated by different qualifications and different rates of remuneration, very often for the same job.

### New approaches

We have in fact, 'created' an 'inferior' type of education and the immediate aim of the training colleges ought to be directed towards redressing the balance. There are children who have particular needs because they have been subjected to formal methods of teaching which have failed to connect with them. The need in the Training College course is to stimulate the students into thinking about teaching methods designed to help these children to restore their confidence. This aim will not be achieved as long as students are thinking in terms of delving more deeply into their own academic subject, i.e. by more reading and more writing. It can happen when new approaches are used, by use of

tape recorders, discussion, films and so on. By imposing high academic standards on the Training Colleges we are merely reinforcing teaching methods which have already proved to be valueless from the children's point of view.

If the approach of the Training College is roughly similar to the secondary modern school, that is to say, a sort of, 'you've failed to get into University (grammar school) but with more attention to academic work you might "raise your standards" enough to make a success yet (transfer to grammar school)', then it will be a self-defeating process. There must be a swing away from academic examinations towards personal assessment—in the College which I attend this is in fact going on and working, but in many the idea has hardly yet been talked about. There should be more emphasis on work in the education field rather than on a specialist topic, but the opportunity should also exist for a student, should he feel the need, to pursue his own interests up to University level.

### Universities and colleges

The problem is to get students at the Training Colleges aware of a new approach and to evaluate success in different terms—in terms of what is going on in the secondary modern classroom rather than what outside society approves. I think there has to be a separation of the student as a would-be teacher from the student advancing his own knowledge. This would function most efficiently if there was a means of allowing students to attend University lectures, leaving the Colleges to devote more time to education, since there is also the difficulty of the staff attempting to perform both these functions and not quite reconciling the divergent aims.

The danger lies in the Training Colleges trying to ape the worst features of University tradition without exploring the possibilities of establishing their own aims. In this we are fighting our own educational heritage, our own grammar school vision of educational achievement. If the Colleges can succeed in demonstrating that there are measures of success other than the academic, then these values will be more easily imported into the classroom with a consequent release for a great many children. This should be the job of the Training Colleges—some have accepted the challenge but many are still trying to 'right the wrong' of failure to get into a University; to turn out teachers who will attempt to do exactly the same thing to their children in secondary modern schools.

I have been a student at both University and Training College and it strikes me that there is a positive potential in the latter student community which is hard to find in the former—students whose personal experience of 'failures' could be used to good account in showing the way to get through to the 11+ rejects — instead of being reinforced by driving yet harder at largely academic pursuits.

MICHAEL ARMSTRONG,

*now teaching at Wandsworth School, London, pleads for*

## MORE TIME FOR TEACHER TRAINING

There is a familiar conflict, in the training of teachers, between understanding and experience. No one can teach effectively without some understanding of what he is trying to do; but no one can understand what teaching is without some experience of it.

At the post-graduate department of education where I was trained, many students felt that what they needed was primarily to gain experience, chiefly through teaching practice. But for myself, teaching practice was the least satisfying part of the course. Throughout it I was oppressed by my lack of understanding. I had seen very little teaching before I began to teach. One morning a week during the first term we watched teachers in a secondary modern school and for a week and a half at the start of the second term I observed the classes that I was to take over for the rest of the term. After that I taught on my own, watching other teachers' lessons only occasionally and unsystematically.

### Association with the schools

The help, advice and criticism of the teachers at the school and of my tutor at the department were valuable, but they were not, in themselves, enough. I needed to know more about how an experienced and successful teacher set about his job. I would have liked to have spent half a term, preferably a whole term, in a school where the methods propounded and discussed in the department were practised, where I could have watched one or two good teachers closely and frequently and begun my own teaching as their assistant. At present it is almost impossible, both during and after training, to acquire any systematic insight into the work of the good teacher. Even when a teacher writes about his own work one is usually acutely conscious of what is left unsaid. If my own experience is at all representative then it is clear that departments of education should be in a much closer association with individual schools, schools which should be staffed and equipped to specialise in the training of teachers.

### Theory and practice

But if the departments should incorporate schools, the schools should be far more attentive to the

departments. It is still a commonplace in a staff room to hear education departments scoffed at for their 'theorising', their irrelevance to teaching experience, as if experience were sufficient in itself. Yet unless it is rooted in the study of education, experience is fruitless. Every teacher needs to have some understanding of the nature of children, of the society which forms their environment, of the aims and purposes of education, and no amount of experience can guarantee such understanding. The study of education is a necessary and necessarily large part of a teacher's training.

It is, however, so broad and ramifying a study that it cannot be adequately fitted into a one-year course. A choice has to be made of what to sacrifice, the detailed insights or the overall picture. At my own department it was the overall picture which suffered and I am certain that the choice was the right one. We were given a few general lectures on the psychological and sociological background, on the history and philosophy of education, but the most interesting and important work was done in seminars devoted to specific issues, such as delinquency, the philosophy of 'progressive education', psychometrics.

It was in these small groups that I found my ideas about education changing and reforming, and the knowledge and understanding I derived from them have coloured all my subsequent thinking. Moreover, the lack of any examination gave me the opportunity to read and to write in considerable detail about those aspects of education which most interested or disturbed me. Much of my study was 'theoretical', but, so far from being irrelevant, it has provided me with the only sure criteria I know for evaluating my own work as a teacher and analysing my own mistakes. Nevertheless, I regret that when I left the department I still knew so little, for it has been difficult since to find enough time for further study. Much of the knowledge of psychology and sociology I need, for instance, I am still struggling to acquire. The choice between the detailed insights and the overall picture ought not to be necessary.

### More time needed

Thus my predominant impression of my own year's training is that it was too short. More time is needed to observe other teachers and to become accustomed to the experience of teaching; more time is needed to think about education. Perhaps the first two years of teaching should be incorporated into a teacher's training, during which years he would divide his time between teaching, observation and study, retaining his connection with a department of education. Or perhaps he should have a year out of school for further training after teaching for two or three years. To both solutions there are objections and it may be that they would only further discourage graduates from entering the profession. But without more time a graduate's training is bound to be relatively superficial; valuable certainly, but valuable enough to make him wish for more.

## MY TRAINING IN RETROSPECT

M. BENINGTON

*M. Benington took his General Certificates of Education at Huddersfield Technical College, taking the Advanced level while employed as a Laboratory Assistant. After National Service he entered Training College. He now teaches in a Derbyshire Village College but leaves his post in September to read for a B.A. degree at Leicester University.*

Merrily crowding around the manure cart, 4P boys toss muck on to the Rural Science plots. Released from thrall (Technical Drawing, plan view of seed box, etc.) their carefree laughter distracts me from my work. Laughter because muck-spreading is better fun than Technical Drawing.

In Training College it was similar. At first, like 4P boys and their lessons, we students would cut lectures, forgetting that we had come to learn. The course enabled us to gain a necessary qualification; but this should be obtained with the least possible effort.

### Self-discipline

As the course progressed, however, we soon found that the student was the only loser if he missed lectures. In seminar discussions lack of preparation or knowledge isolated one from the group : one was unable to follow subsequent lectures or get satisfaction from writing the required essays. One of the seminar topics we discussed was 'Discipline and Freedom', but we had recognised the need for self-discipline and had learned to exercise it within the considerable freedom offered us in the number of lectures we attended long before we came to discuss the topic.

College life was very enjoyable; sport on Saturdays, a generous number of private study periods, long trips to Cleethorpes and Nottingham on school practices, good food, and delightful rural surroundings provided an ideal environment for leisure and study. But how successful was it in preparing students for their future profession ?

For example, my first task as a probationary teacher was the preparation of a syllabus for the subject I was to teach throughout the school. The next was to take stock of apparatus and order necessary additional equipment. In neither of these tasks had the college offered any explicit instruction, although we had learned to consider fundamental

ideas and relate them to educational problems. Now I was required to work out the application of these principles in a real and urgent situation.

### Guest speakers

The college course consisted substantially of Education and Special Subjects. Education lectures were held twice a week and were followed by discussion in small groups. In addition, guest speakers were sometimes invited. Once Professor Zangwill gave a lecture on aspects of perception; the BBC lectured on the use of TV programmes in schools; and a local headmaster spoke about organising school visits. By far the most useful of these lectures and discussions were those dealing with psychology and philosophy. It was unfortunate that, in my second year, illustrative experiments which had been planned in conjunction with the psychology course were cancelled, for students of other years assured me of their great interest and value.

In the organisation of education lectures and discussions we found a useful and satisfying introduction to the problems of present-day education. But it was not so with the history of education. Although of some interest and although it provided a useful background to other aspects of educational theory and practice, we felt that the detailed study of history was an irksome burden; and for the Institute to examine in the details of obsolete Education Acts was intolerable !

### Education seminars

The education seminars were the most valuable part of the whole course, and those on aims and those on psychological principles were to have a direct bearing on my first task, the preparation of a syllabus. The lectures and discussions on educational principles would have provided an excellent foundation for study in methods of teaching; but little time was made available for this. The time for supervised teaching was short enough, just six afternoons ! Small groups of students would prepare, deliver and criticise lessons under the guidance of a tutor. Methods of presentation and the suitability of the lesson for the class, were discussed, and the rightness of our decisions was confirmed in the classroom. By this once-per-week effort of guided preparation with its criticism, far more of the methods available and of the correct teaching level for the particular class was learned than in our teaching practices.

Perhaps the greatest value of the teaching practices, however, was that supervisors insisted that lessons were to be designed with reference to the principles of psychology, for the habits of careful preparation persist. At one school the master would talk over the lesson he wanted; if the student accepted the suggestions he would step into the master's shoes and use a lesson that was the result of many years' experience. In this way a technique was learned and tested. But in general the students' attitude to teaching practice was, 'Leave me alone and I shall learn by my mistakes'; an attitude so reminiscent of rats in mazes that colleges should eradicate it. To be able to teach a range of concepts and skills a teacher should be familiar with many teaching methods. The College training should give instruction and practice in a variety of successful methods; then, if he need the teacher may use the many years ahead to develop techniques of his own.

The Ministry of Education regards the special subject courses as cultural. In this pursuit I revised theorems which had been forgotten before doing National Service, and have again been forgotten since leaving College. One special subject course seemed designed so that an impressive examination paper could be answered. This course became academic, ugly and useless, and very little of the philosophy and content of the subject was learned. On the other hand, the second subject was excellent. No attempt was made to revise formal school studies, indeed these were frowned upon. Instead a completely new approach to the study was attempted and achieved. Adult ideas and techniques introduced then have been struggling for juvenile interpretation ever since.

In addition to these special subject courses, short series of lectures were tried when I was in my second year. Thus we could attend six-week courses in Logic, Lettering, The Psalms set to Music, the Use of a Library, and a host of others. By means of these the students' minds were to be opened to the glories of learning. As no register of attendances was kept, these compulsory courses were attended in direct proportion to their attraction.

### The probationary year

Although not part of the training college course, the probationary year deserves comment. In this year duties more onerous than in any later year may be undertaken. Children with no previous knowledge of the subject want to take an external examination at the end of the year : much of the syllabus content may be unfamiliar and may require study before lesson preparation begins. The syllabus must be organised, equipment ordered or constructed, and the fatigue that is characteristic of the first year fought off so that books may be marked before evening school begins. Thus the probationary year is perhaps the heaviest in the teacher's career. One wonders if head teachers are always aware of the burden the new recruit carries. If the young teacher survives this year, it is little wonder that he looks back on his Training College course with regret.

# Discussion

## *A Step in the Right Direction*

The 1962 Summer number of FORUM reported the abrupt termination by Essex County Council of an experiment in modifying the 11 plus procedure at Harlow. I am happy to be able to report that by December 1962 this decision had been reviewed and altered.

A new Harlow Divisional Sub-Committee for Education was established in the Autumn of 1962. One of its first actions was to consider the whole question of selection for secondary schools in the area, and to make recommendations to the County Education Committee. A statement issued in November disclosed that the County Council had approved the immediate reintroduction of the modified 11 plus procedure. Harlow children will again be able to enter secondary school and pursue courses leading to 'O' and 'A' level G.C.E. without taking the full 11 plus.

The Harlow Division contains only new secondary schools. Of these five are bilateral and one is comprehensive. Full advantage can thus be taken of the flexibility inherent in such schools.

Each secondary school is associated with contributory primary schools. Parents can claim admission to the school serving their area, on their children's behalf. It has not proved possible to abolish the 11 plus altogether. There are parents who may wish their child to attend a secondary school outside their 'area' yet still in Harlow. Other parents—and teachers—hanker after the place 'won' in an old-type grammar school. In both cases the children concerned will have to take the full 11 plus examination, and pass, before obtaining their first choice of school.

However, once again Harlow can experiment with transfer procedures, and the majority of children and teachers in the area will delight at the opportunities presented by the lifting of the deadening influence of the old '11 plus'. Some may regret the need to retain the first part of the examination—usually known as 'the Intelligence Test'—but success or failure in scoring high marks in this part of the examination will not hinder a Harlow child from going to a school which offers a wide range of academic and non-academic courses.

This is a step in the *right* direction! SHEILA HILLER
*Harlow, Essex*

## *Comprehensive High Schools in Fife*

My first reaction on reading Kenneth Macrae's article (FORUM, Vol. 5, No. 1) was one of disappointment that it did not deal with the up-to-date position in Scotland regarding the establishment of comprehensive schools. However, having been asked to write just such an article on the latest Scottish developments in comprehensive education and having failed miserably to collect the data I am forced to agree that the apparent position of a general trend towards comprehensive education in the Glasgow Education Authority's area, and some few tentative efforts in the rest of Scotland, is true. From time to time general news programmes tell of the opening of a new comprehensive school, but in default of more information we must assume that these are multilateral schools.

Another emphasis in Kenneth Macrae's article was on the democratic tradition in our rural secondary schools. While these may be relatively democratic and non-segregated in comparison with English grammar schools, not enough was said about the fact that such Scottish schools were multilateral with rigid lines of segregation *inside* them. I well remember the headmaster of a Junior Secondary School (an ex-teacher in a multilateral Secondary School) saying misappropriately enough at a meeting in Fife at which Robin Pedley spoke, and apropos his teaching days at that school: 'We knew looking down into the playground who were the Junior and Secondary types!' Perhaps this would lead us to conduct an argument on the conviction of the teachers operating any system.

Only this year Fife has proclaimed the plan for the Junior High School variation of comprehensive education. This will operate in all areas of the county, but it is obvious that it bears all the marks of a plan dictated to teachers by the Education Authority and not necessarily supported by teachers on educational grounds or from conviction of the superiority of the comprehensive principle.

This has been shown by discussions throughout the county on the problems of displacement of teachers in posts of responsibility. While I'm sorry to bring the discussion down to a parochial level, nevertheless it is the only one I know well and, quoting the previously mentioned discussions, one headmaster actually claimed that under the new regulations pertaining to the Junior High School reorganisation, fewer children would have the chance of 'O' level than under the previous Jun. Sec. bilateral Sen. Sec. scheme, because previously *he* was liberal enough to promote all likely pupils to the Senior Secondary. Only after being strongly pressed would he admit that *numerically* more children would get into the 'O' stream. His attitude was that a widening of the categories *presented* left the *intelligence categories* unchanged. I quote this to show how reluctant this headmaster, and he represents many more, is to change his attitude to the question of fixed categories of intelligence. This shouldn't surprise us for Scotland has produced more than its fair share of psychometrists to balance its one Neill.

What I'd like to pose is 'Can a comprehensive system of secondary education be operated prior to the conviction of teachers that this is necessary?' A favourite jibe of teachers in this area is that the social tail is wagging the educational dog, but can a system of education desired by parents be effectively operated by teachers who are unconvinced of its worth? It is too early to say how liberally the new Junior High Schools will be

# Teachers for the New Large Schools

JOHN BROWN

*John Brown taught in junior and senior boys' schools and became headmaster of a village school in Wiltshire before the war. After the war he became the first head of Kimberley School, Notts., before becoming a tutor at the City of Coventry Training College. He was then for seven years head of Archbishop Temple's School, Lambeth, later being appointed first head of Sedgehill (Comprehensive) School, Lewisham. He has been Hon. General Secretary and President of the London Head Teachers' Association.*

What kind of teacher is required for the new large schools which have become such a prominent feature of the educational landscape during the last ten years ? The simple answer is that our requirement is the same as in any other kind of school : we want good teachers. But the simple answer is seldom complete and there is certainly more that must be said in reply to the opening question.

Is it too much to ask that the young men and women who seek posts in comprehensive schools should know what a comprehensive school is before they come to us ? University departments of education and teacher training colleges would not send people to practise or teach in any other type of school without ensuring that the young hopefuls knew something of the nature of the establishment in which they were to exercise their craft. Perhaps the tutors find it more difficult to enlighten their charges about the comprehensive school because their own knowledge is rather sketchy; nor is this surprising, since such knowledge must almost inevitably be secondhand. An extreme example may illustrate what I have in mind. Some time ago a training college sent a party of students to my school for 'observation'. We are used to such visitors and we have a programme carefully planned for them, beginning with an introductory talk about the school organisation by the person responsible for that organisation. But I was dismayed on this occasion to discover that the party was expecting to spend only an hour and a half at my school before moving on to a small primary school. As I explained to the training college principal, this was rather worse than the attempt of the traditional American tourist to 'do' Europe in a week and the United Kingdom in 12 hours.

My dismay was not relieved when, after ten minutes of my introductory talk, one student asked, 'Is this a comprehensive school?' When I replied that it was, she remarked brightly, 'Then you must have two streams !' This was a severe blow to my professional pride, for I have long cherished the illusion that I can hold the attention of my classes; but here was a young lady who obviously had not been listening to 'Sir' at all, at all ! Worse, she had not done her homework, perhaps because she had not been

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DISCUSSION (*cont.*)

administered and how free promotion through the grades will be, but I have heard the ominous news that in one Junior High the headmaster has asked feeding primary heads to categorise the next intake as H—Highers, O—O level, and S1 and S2. This last being a new sub-division. Given the attitude of, I fear, most teachers, promotion stage categories may tend to become permanent labels throughout the secondary school.

So far the discussion has assumed the ultimate rightness of 'O' and 'H' level as goals to be aimed at. Not everyone agrees with this and I'm glad to say that one Headmaster is prepared to throw the baby out with the bathwater, totally rejecting the stultifying effect of all exams. on schools at any stage. In a less revolutionary way and in fact in an attitude of careful practical empirical conservatism many Junior Secondary teachers feel that the gains won in developing a non-academic, non-examination approach are being jeopardised by the hunt for 'O' level passes. These teachers have genuine claims to have found a way of restoring the confidence of 11 plus rejects, to use their own terms.

These are some of the issues exercising our minds in one corner of Scotland. I now feel I must refrain from criticising Mr. Kenneth's MacRae's article which probably generalised as far as was possible at this time.

FRANK WHITTAKER
*Guardbridge, Fife*

given any homework to do. We all know what we should think of a teacher who took a class to see a Shakespearean play without first introducing the pupils to the play : is it any better to waste the time of students by letting them loose on a comprehensive school without first describing for them the nature of the beast ?

### The solution

As I have suggested, this lack of knowledge among the students may result from the modesty of the tutorial staff who hesitate to lecture on a subject with which they are not personally acquainted. The solution for this problem is easily available. They will always find the Heads of comprehensive schools willing to talk about their schools; they may even find that the aforesaid Heads can find time to visit the training college or department and address the students on the nature, opportunities, challenges and problems of a comprehensive school. The students will, of course, need to be warned that comprehensive schools vary among themselves as much as any other type of school and that they are in all probability learning about only one comprehensive school; but they will be saved from several misconceptions. They will learn — I trust — that fundamentally the similarities between comprehensive schools and other kinds of educational establishment are greater than the differences. Comprehensive schools exist for the purpose of educating boys and girls between the ages of eleven and eighteen, just like other secondary schools. That is why I have always rejected the application of the word 'experiment' to my school or, indeed, to any comprehensive school. The craft we practise is the craft of the teacher, the oldest craft some of us know : it is the craft for which we were trained; in our comprehensive schools we are not 'experimenting'— we are teaching.

This is where we came in : the teachers we want in our comprehensive schools must be good teachers. They must be people who want to teach : by that I mean we want people who have deliberately chosen teaching as their life work; we do not want the misfits who have failed to become something else and have decided that they 'might as well take up teaching' because it seems a soft option. They must be people who have proved that they have minds capable of hard studying or, at least, have grown for themselves the confidence that comes from sound achievements in their own chosen line of study or skill. But they must also be free of the fallacy that academic distinction is enough to make a teacher. They should be aware that the art of teaching is compounded of endless patience; of the humility that is prepared to believe that the pupil's failure to understand may arise as easily from the teacher's failure to explain as from the pupil's stupidity; of readiness to work at the planning of the lesson as distinct from the preparation of the content of the lesson; of a readiness to go on seeking to improve one's teaching skill — for at least the first 40 years.

But there are some features of the teacher's qualities and qualifications which are of especial value in a comprehensive school. I have already said that it is useful if the teacher knows what the comprehensive school is for, and what it is about; but this does not include—in my judgment—any sociological implications. I speak for myself here (and it must be clearly understood that the whole of this article is an expression of my own opinions, for which my employers, the London County Council, are in no way responsible) but I do not think I am alone in believing that any artificial attempt to 'mix' children of different backgrounds and interests is doomed to failure. It is true that the comprehensive school provides an environment in which children of diverse types can meet; and it is pleasant to find that drama and rugger, cricket and music, together with other expressions of the human spirit, know no frontiers. But this breaking down of barriers is not, for me, one of the primary purposes of the comprehensive school; perhaps it is one of the things that shall be added unto us.

### Equality of opportunity

The comprehensive school exists, in my view, to provide equality of opportunity for all children, an equality denied them under the tripartite system which determines their future — almost irrevocably — on the result of one (admittedly fallible) test taken before the eleventh birthday. Of course the word 'equality' can be misunderstood. It is nonsense to say that all children are 'equal'. Obviously a boy who can pass in eight subjects at 'O' level of the GCE is superior in that respect to a boy who cannot be expected to understand the question papers of that examination. What matters is that the boys are equally *important* and that the educational facilities provided for them shall be equal. I do not see how this can be achieved except by educating them in one building, with one and the same group of teachers.

It follows that any teacher seeking a post in a comprehensive school should feel quite sure in his own mind of the importance of the individual child, regardless of the child's 'intelligence quotient'. We cannot have the attitude (and would anyone dare say that this attitude is unknown in grammar schools ?) which expresses itself in some such groaning declaration as 'Oh, hell, I have a double period with 4 C this afternoon !' No teacher can conceal such an attitude from the citizens of Form 4 C; some of them haven't

even the grace to try. It does not seem to occur to them that 4 C's opinion of such a teacher may be as valid as the teacher's comment on the class; but I hope that teachers who cherish this attitude will stay away from comprehensive schools.

### Teachers' qualities

Teachers must therefore be prepared to teach children of a wide range of ability. This does not mean that the same teachers will be found teaching GCE candidates and almost-non-readers; most of us have special gifts (and weaknesses) in one direction or another; and in all the comprehensive schools known to me there is a group of teachers who have chosen to devote their skill and patience to the education of those children who have always found learning difficult; and the worth of such teachers is above rubies. The ideal arrangement, it seems to me, is the one adopted by the heads of departments whom I am proud to call my colleagues. Their qualifications and experience fit them for teaching the pupils who are academically most bright; but they have also chosen to take at least one class of below-average children.

There is one other quality of the good teacher which is especially valuable in a large school: accurate time-keeping. I do not mean here merely the sound virtue of punctuality—punctuality for school and for duties; that is fundamental, and the only appropriate treatment for the persistent offender is the firing-squad. We all know how, even in the smallest school, a teacher can be a nuisance by failing to finish his lessons at the right time. His next class is waiting for him down the corridor and another class may be waiting at the door of the room he cannot bring himself to vacate. In a school of 14 classes this is a nuisance; in a school of 64 classes such self-centredness may be well-nigh disastrous, for the nuisance grows by geometric rather than arithmetic progression. Basically, I suppose, this weakness stems from a kind of professional conceit; the teacher affected cannot imagine that anyone else may have anything to teach which can be nearly as valuable as the pearls of wisdom he is dispensing; or it may simply be due to a failure to plan a lesson properly.

Finally, the pastoral qualities of the good teacher need to be specially well developed in the large school. There will inevitably be the same proportion of less co-operative pupils — so that their numbers will be larger, particularly in the less able classes. The teacher will need all the human insight and patience, and all the firmness of purpose, he can bring to his task. But this is not — most emphatically it is not — to suggest that problems of discipline loom large in the comprehensive schools. In 28 years as a headmaster I have known as many schools as most people; I know quite a few comprehensive schools fairly intimately and can judge them as objectively as most people; I would say confidently that their 'tone' is often as good as in schools of 10 or 20 times their age — and one-fifth of their size.

To sum up, the teachers we should welcome in the new large schools are men and women whose qualities and qualifications include versatility, adaptability, flexibility of mind (and if that list seems repetitious, the desiderata are important enough to be worth repeating); sound academic attainment and (preferably) professional training; a humane, unsentimental appreciation of the worth of the individual child; humility; firmness of purpose; the ability to recognise and accept one's place in a complex organisation; unflappability; physical toughness above the average.

I realise that this amounts to saintliness — a kind of Albert Schweitzer combined with Robert Falcon Scott. But I have known many saints in the teaching profession, although they would almost certainly be both amused and aghast at the description; and I remain an optimist. If you have any of these qualities (none of us has all of them), you might like to try your hand at teaching in a comprehensive school. You will find it the most exciting, and perhaps the most exhausting, kind of work that even the teaching profession has to offer.

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## NEW TRENDS IN TEACHER TRAINING

(*continued from page* 84)

lucky schools whose teachers of religious instruction will be able to infuse into their lessons the reality which comes from first-hand experience and which is so often so sadly lacking from elementary teaching.

Five years ago, people were asking whether the extension of the training college course to three years would prove worth while. The evidence is clear that the opportunities offered by the extra year are already being vigorously exploited; and, although we must still wait for any definitive assessment, it is not too bold an assertion that the teachers' colleges are going to give the community full value for its extra investment.

# Unstreamed Schools and Teacher Training

T. ADAMS

*Tom Adams had considerable experience of teaching in secondary modern schools before taking the Diploma in Psychology of Childhood at Birmingham University in the late 1940's. He then lectured in Education at Borthwick Emergency Training College, since when he has been teaching in primary schools and is now Head of Taylor Junior School, Leicester.*

The idea that it is no longer necessary or desirable to stream children into homogeneous intelligence and attainment groups in the junior school or in early secondary school classes is spreading rapidly. Schools are being reorganised on the basis of social grouping or into groups intentionally based on a wide spread of attainment. As the headteacher of an unstreamed junior school I have had a number of young teachers come into this school straight from college. Nearly all of them have been well able to deal with the problems presented by this kind of school organisation. On the whole they have been able to come to terms with them rather better than teachers who have had several years of teaching in a streamed school.

That they have been able to adjust so well to the situation is remarkable but more so when we consider that their training has been directed towards working in streamed schools. I feel, however, if they had received training which had been in some part specifically directed towards working in an unstreamed school, their period of accommodation would have been shorter and they would have been able to contribute even more to this new and challenging situation.

This specific training presents a difficult problem to any teacher training establishment which may feel that it wishes to prepare teachers for an unstreamed school, as very few of the staff can have had experience in such a school. Furthermore it may be impossible to find a school organised on these lines in any particular area. The following observations on the training of teachers to work in such schools has the object of constructive suggestion and not that of criticism, however unattractive may be the prospect of 'teaching the teacher's teachers how to teach'.

I suggest that the fundamental difference between streamed and unstreamed schools is a shift of emphasis in the educational philosophy on which the school is based. It is most important that the student should be made aware of this. In the past it was thought sufficient to separate children into groups of similar academic background or attainment, to find educational material thought to be suitable for the group, and next to explore methods of teaching this. We in unstreamed schools tend to try to isolate from the child's cultural and intellectual inheritance all that is particularly relevant to his age and environment and to discover means of imparting as much of this as possible to each individual child. The method used is to vary the speed of teaching and the means by which it is to be taught rather than to vary the material.

There is a tendency during training in psychology and child study to look at the child in isolation. More student work might be directed to the study of the child in his environment. In other words to ask the students to prepare 'Child and Environment Studies' rather than 'Child Studies'. These studies should contain a discussion of the environmental as well as the psychological factors that condition the child at a particular point in his life. They should lead to suggestions for controlling the school environment to make up deficiencies in the child's background, and also to the extension of the positive values that the child has drawn from its home and family and the society in which it lives. Stress should be laid on the role of the school as a social unit and on the fact that a child's attitude to school is eventually determined by the school's attitude to the child. The school is a closed society so inevitably there is a social factor of overriding importance in education. There can be no doubt that the unstreamed school gives the child who would be in a 'B' or 'C' stream the feeling of being equally valued which many lack in a streamed school.

In the near future it may be felt desirable that sociologists as well as psychologists should be appointed to the staffs of Training Colleges. As an interim measure perhaps more extensive use might well be made of such books as: *The Uses of Literacy*, Hoggart; *The Economics of Education*,

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Vaizey; *Education and the Working Class,* Jackson and Marsden.

During the great battle which raged over the programme of the third year in training great emphasis was placed on the necessity for students to undertake a study in depth. The consequence has been the imposition of an arid academic study on many students as most colleges have neither personnel, resources or money to undertake such studies in any but the most academic fashion.

What we need in the unstreamed junior school is a teacher with a broader based background able to take part in such fundamental activities as Art, Handicraft, Music, Drama and Dance. These should be part of a basic course. In the desire to exploit the potential of varying individuals in an unstreamed school we need a much wider junior course.

In most unstreamed schools there is no educational competition between child and child. The reasons for this are obvious and it has been found that, as an incentive, the value of such competition is overrated. The student should be made aware of the considerable research on the factors that influence a child's effort in the learning process and of how these factors can be used in the classroom.

In order to develop the student as a person and also to help with his understanding of the children he will teach, means should be found of ensuring a closer contact between the students and the homes and families of the children which they will be teaching. We are vitally interested in the individual differences between children and, in order to promote better understanding, actual visits by the students to the homes of the children under instruction should be encouraged. Any other way in which a student can come into contact with people from the 'other world' in an informal way would be most helpful.

One of the necessary aims of the unstreamed school is to make the child aware of its own progress. It should be made obvious to the child that what is important is his own progress and not his progress as measured against that of another child. Students ought to be shown methods of recording individual progress by means of standardised and other test procedures, how it is possible to inculcate self-assessment and awareness of progress and how to use this as a drive to greater effort in the individual child. It is assumed that the alternative methods of grouping classes will be mentioned and that 'non-streaming' as a system of organisation will be discussed. An evaluation of the various methods of forming unstreamed classes should also be attempted.

Students' teaching practice might be arranged so that, during his three years in college, he has experience in teaching both really backward childrden and very bright ones. This, of course, further complicates an already elaborate procedure, but would surely be worth while for those students who have not taught an unstreamed class. At the moment it seems possible for a student to leave college having taught children of only one stream. In order that students have experience in teaching the whole range of ability wherever possible during a spell of teaching practice they should take a group of children drawn from all streams in the school for some activity in the three 'R's. The student should be encouraged to try various methods of teaching this group such as class teaching, grouping, and individual work. Where there are unstreamed schools students should have experience in them.

It is very important that students should have actual experience in teaching slow or non-readers and also in teaching basic numbers. They should be shown the methods of diagnosing the various difficulties or problems which the child may have in the three 'R's and the necessary techniques to overcome them, the emphasis to be on individual differences all the time. In my experience it is not sufficient just to show a student methods of teaching reading or number unless this is followed by work with children. The perfect scheme would be for each student to have practical experience of using all the various methods of teaching reading and number with groups of children in an infant or junior school over a sufficiently long period to allow progress to be assessed. This is necessary because, in an unstreamed school, the problem of the weak readers is tackled with a great sense of urgency. In an unstreamed class there is a real necessity to raise the attainment of the slow child; it is therefore important that the student should have techniques of remedial work at his finger tips as part of his skill, since in such a school every teacher must be a teacher of reading.

What about work with the brighter children ? We will assume that students have a good grasp of methods of teaching by class or group instruction. It may often be desirable to extend the brighter children in the unstreamed class by assigning them to pursue an investigation or undertake a topic with minimum teacher help. This I feel to be difficult for young people who may not themselves, throughout their educational career, have had adequate experience of independent study.

In order to cover this I believe it to be desirable for each student during his time in college to carry out some extra-curricula study of a topic in which he may be interested. It would be better still if there were no limits set to the subjects to be studied. In

(*continued on page* 99)

# Teachers in Their First Posts

RICHARD PALMER

*After some years of teaching biology in school and university, Mr. Palmer became a lecturer in a university education department and later served with the School Broadcasting Department of the B.B.C. Since 1947 he has been an inspector of schools under the L.C.C.,[1] recently as Staff Inspector (Primary Education). He is the author of several books, including* Living Things *and* School Broadcasting in Britain.

There are many immediate and obvious reasons why young teachers must be helped to succeed—not least because they form an increasing proportion of the teaching strength on which our children's education depends. But in the case of the young woman teacher there is a further reason, often overlooked. It may be called *teacher conservation.* A young woman trains for teaching; she teaches perhaps for three years; then she gives up to start a family : this has become a typical pattern. Will she come back in ten or fifteen years time ? The answer may depend on her experience in those three years of teaching. Was it a period of frustration and partial failure or one of shared enthusiasm and a growing sense of professional skill ? This is something which all who guide young teachers in their first posts — and especially head teachers and local inspectors — can help to decide.

There is a refreshing growth of interest in this important problem of helping the young teacher, exemplified by the pamphlet published jointly by the N.U.T. and A.T.C.D.E.,[2] and a more recent article describing a survey of young graduate teachers in secondary schools conducted by Swansea U.T.D.[3] The present article may supplement Mr. Chazan's paper in some directions, for I shall be concerned especially with young teachers in primary schools.

Difficulties they are bound to have; and it needs to be remembered that there are often other sources of strain during the first year of teaching besides those arising from adjustment to teaching responsibility. The young teacher may be away from home for the first time, or living in digs instead of in a college community, or sharing a flat, or encountering the joys, distractions and problems of the first year of marriage. It follows that even those young teachers who promised well at college may need a good deal of help, support and encouragement from senior colleagues.

### The right school

The first step towards success is to be placed in the right school. Avoiding long journeys which will add to the strain of the first year, placing secondary teachers where they can take their main subject a good deal of the time, ensuring that primary teachers have the age-group for which they are best fitted, placing weak teachers where they will get sympathetic help : these are all pieces in a jig-saw which local inspectors and staffing officers have to fit together every summer term. In some authorities, young teachers are invited to visit the authority at the Council's expense towards the end of the summer term. Any provisional allocation can then be adjusted, if necessary, after discussion with the teacher; more important, the teacher can then visit his school and perhaps even make the acquaintance of his future class and take away schemes of work and other information to study during the holidays. A fear of the unknown, so unnerving to all of us, is replaced by a happy anticipation (or, at worst, a philosophical acceptance) of the known.

A warm welcome on the first day of the new term can mean much. Some heads make a special point of this, perhaps including a few words during the first assembly. Perhaps a more important thing is that the head and staff should keep the young teacher very much in mind during the first day or two, to see to it that he feels welcome and appreciated in the staff room, and that the small routine difficulties that may worry him unduly are smoothed away. Young teachers may be expected to have to ask more than once about some aspects of the routine of the school; they should have cheerful encouragement to do so without feeling embarrassed or inadequate.

It is important that information supplied by the college about a young teacher's special interests and talents should be passed on to the head and that the head should fill this out himself in an early discussion with his new assistant. It is surprising and regrettable how little some primary heads may know of their young teachers' capabilities. Thus they may fail to discover or remember that a teacher is gifted at say country dancing or pottery, and they may even be uncertain what were her main subjects at college. It might be inappropriate to call upon these

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[1] It will be appreciated that the London County Council is in no way responsible for any opinions here expressed.

[2] N.U.T. and A.T.C.D.E.: *Teachers in their First Posts,* 1961.

[3] M. Chazan: *First Year of Teaching, Times Ed. Supp.* February 1, 1963.

gifts in the first few weeks, but they should be known and remembered and, in due time, a way should be found of using them, both for the benefit of the children and so as to give the teacher status and confidence and a sense of achievement.

### The right class

Perhaps the best single source of help to a young teacher is to be given classes which do not offer too many difficulties. In the secondary school this will mean a right balance of subjects, few in number, of which the teacher has made a special study, and classes reasonably balanced in age and ability, not all from the lowest streams and the most difficult age-groups. In the infants' school, the reception class would rarely be suitable, with its problem of settling children happily in school. What of the junior school? Here many would agree that a class in the lower half of the school is most often suited to a probationer; but not, as a rule, a first-year class. Such a class may seem easy to the teacher, but it demands special skill if it is to get what it needs. This suggests that a second-year class may be suitable. In many schools nowadays such a class may be unstreamed. This will demand good group and individual teaching, but it is wonderful how well some young teachers, with good guidance, respond to the challenge and stimulus of an unstreamed class. There will be some dull children but, if there is more than one unstreamed class in the year-group, the head may be able to help by ensuring that those who are difficult as well as dull are not given to the probationer. Moreover, it may be possible to arrange for the few dull children to be taken, part of the time, as a remedial group, by the head or by a supernumerary teacher. What if the second-year is streamed? Then the young teacher might be given an A or B class in a three-stream school, but hardly ever, one hopes, a class which contains all the dullest children in the year-group. Unfortunately this does happen, and far too often. Undoubtedly heads have many problems to face in their deployment of staff, including, on occasion, the problem of placing three or four new teachers at once. Then the placing of one or more may be far from ideal. Experienced teachers have a real contribution to make to the solution of this problem. They should be willing to take any class — and proud of their ability to do so — if this will help the head to deploy his staff to the best advantage, and, in particular, to ease the problems that a young teacher will have to face.

It has been said that a first-year junior class is rarely suitable for a probationer. This is far too little realised. In consequence, a great deal of reading backwardness is being *created* at the bottom of the junior school by young teachers who lack the training and experience to carry forward the teaching of reading from the point which the children reached in the infants' school. Incidentally, although young junior teachers are bound to lack adequate experience in the teaching of reading, there is no reason why they should lack the training. Yet there is reason to think that this is something which many colleges have neglected in the training of their junior teachers, or which they have failed to provide in a sufficiently concrete form. It is to be hoped that this deficiency, where it exists, has been remedied in the three-year course. The increasing provisions of infants'/junior courses may also help to solve the problem.

### Help and advice

The young teacher will need plenty of help and advice on methods and much of this must come from the head and experienced members of staff, though an inspector can often give some concentrated help in the course of a visit. The young teacher's lesson notes should be fairly full and the head (or, in a secondary school, the head of department) should be prepared to give time to discussing them. It is often helpful if the young teacher is encouraged to add to the record of a series of lessons some sort of assessment of what was in fact achieved and the probable reasons for success and failure. In some schools this is the standard method for keeping lesson records, even by experienced teachers. There is much to be said for it.

The head will need to observe some lessons in order to assess and help. This is something which some young teachers find embarrassing, so it is best that such visits should be unobtrusive, friendly and informal. Certainly to the children it should appear that the head is just dropping in to share something with them, or that he has come to observe their progress rather than the teacher's. Where the head regularly visits every class for a few minutes each day, a rather longer visit to the probationer's class provokes no special interest.

The head will also need to give an eye to the children's books, including marking, to the teacher's records of children's progress, the attractiveness of the classroom and the ways in which this reflects the children's own activity, and to make a personal check from time to time on standards. There are right ways and wrong ways of commenting on all these things and on lessons seen. It is always best first to find something to praise before introducing the inevitable points of criticism and advice. Young teachers, like older ones, can more often be steered in the right direction by praising everything which tends that way rather than by constant criticism of

their shortcomings, though this does not mean that adverse criticism can always be avoided. It goes without saying that it should never be made obviously in front of the children, which may do great damage to the confidence of a young teacher and her relationship with the class.

### The Problem of Discipline

The most noticeable way in which a young teacher can fail is in class control, because this disturbs other people. It often reflects failure in some other direction, for example, in planning lesssons to maintain interest throughout, or in making material preparation for a lesson in such a way that there are no awkward hitches for want of this or that when the lesson is about to begin. A good head will give useful advice on this sort of point as well as on the routine of class management, the use of the voice, and on ways of anticipating and quelling disorder. There are also more direct ways in which he can help; for example : giving the young teacher support and backing in dealing with really difficult children, helping with the more backward children by taking them himself at times or getting a supernumerary to do so; or, if the teacher is obviously overwhelmed, taking a lesson sometimes to give her a rest or sharing the work for a period or two. It is far better that the head should give an eye unobtrusively to a really noisy class and find frequent excuses for dropping in, than that he should sweep in and take over. All heads are tempted to do this at times; as good professionals they cannot bear to have a class in this state; but it can undermine the ultimate responsibility of the teacher for the class.

Most young teachers surmount these difficulties in time and it is best that they should do so in the class they are first given and not suffer defeat. Occasionally, however, indiscipline goes beyond the point of no return when the whole school knows that the teacher can be 'played up'. Then a change of school may be the only remedy. Some young teachers make a fresh start after a term or even a year of failure and eventually do very well. What the local inspector has to judge very carefully in consultation with the head is whether the point of no return has been reached. If it has, a speedy move is essential.

### Discussions and courses

Some colleges and institutes of education run discussion groups for their former students in which their difficulties can be aired. Such discussions could be valuable, but tutors would need to be cautious in listening to complaints from those young teachers who are inclined to blame everything on to the school. Tutors would need to bear in mind that they are hearing only one side of the case and that their support, real or apparent, may sometimes be the worst possible thing for a young teacher who is really at fault. In London, the L.C.C. provides regular courses for junior teachers in their *second* year, each course lasting for three days in school time. There is good reason to think that this is just the right time for such a course, when young teachers have got over their worst difficulties and are ready to take a new step forward in ideas and methods. Certainly they respond in a most lively way to what is put before them and return to their schools with fresh enthusiasm.

Finally, one must welcome the suggestion of the N.U.T./A.T.C.D.E. pamphlet that a Working Group should be set up to continue the study of young teachers' problems and the fact that representatives of local inspectors, who have a key role in helping young teachers, are likely to be associated with its work. It is good to know that thought and investigation on this important problem will continue, with the three bodies most concerned, the teachers, the colleges, and the inspectors, in friendly collaboration.

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## UNSTREAMED SCHOOLS AND TEACHER TRAINING

(*continued from page* 96)

others words studies not specifically in subject fields should be allowed and, in fact, encouraged. I feel that in any case such a study could be very important in the student's own development. Having pursued such a study the student will certainly be better equipped to deal with the children's own individual work studies in which the teacher's role is something akin to that of a tutor.

It must be realised that the teacher in an unstreamed school is in a very exposed position. It is not possible any longer to cover up deficiencies in technique by highlighting deficiencies in the children. Students will need to be aware of the new knowledge of the learning process and of techniques of instruction which are now available. They will have need of this knowledge when they really come to grips with the full impact of non-streamed teaching.

Finally I would like to emphasise that we are only at the beginning of devising our techniques for teaching unstreamed classes. We are convinced that new and more powerful techniques will be devised. We would welcome students with open minds, new ideas, the desire to experiment and the ability to evaluate new ideas.

With such people in our schools new horizons of knowledge can be opened up and the wide gap between potential and actual achievement narrowed.

# Wastage of Women Teachers

LADY SIMON OF WYTHENSHAWE

It is generally agreed that the chief cause of our over sized infant and junior classes is the wastage of women teachers caused by early marriage and maternity. The Eighth Report of the Advisory Council on the training and supply of teachers says 'Since wastage of women teachers is estimated to increase as fast as recruitment, women will be leaving service almost at the rate at which they are entering it'. The situation has got worse in the last few years, as the age of marriage has declined. The Ministry wring their hands but confess that they are impotent to do anything about the situation. They have just started some temporary Training Colleges for girls leaving school and intending to train for primary education, but what guarantee have they that these will not follow the same course as their older sisters, of two or three years in service and then retirement to marry and to start a family? When a woman teacher does this she does two contradictory things at the same time — reduces the supply of trained teachers, and increases the demand for them five years hence. The only hope the Ministry expresses — and it is only a hope — is that these women will return in 15 or 20 years' time when their family no longer needs them. About two-fifths had returned by 1961.

### Refresher courses needed

But even if the percentage of 'married women returners' is increased most of them will need refresher courses before they feel competent to face a class again. No section of the education service has changed so much as the 'Infants' and a training twenty years old is not good enough for today's task.

But many women would be able to go on teaching part-time before their youngest child is five if more Nursery Schools and Classes were sanctioned by the Ministry. The argument that this would reduce the existing teaching force is obviously false. One trained infant teacher with a nursery assistant could release 29 mothers for part-time teaching (30 children in a class) — surely a good bargain?

A special corps of domestic helps for married women teachers could free the mothers of the daily housework, and as she would be earning she could pay for this service.

Could not the Ministry appoint a Committee of married women part-time teachers to advise him how to get more back into service? Transport might be mobilised. Married women part-time teachers cannot afford to teach far from their homes because of the importance of their being there when their children return. Special buses as for school children could be run for mothers living in a suburb and teaching in schools in the centre of a city — this would be important also in country areas — and again the teacher would pay the fare. But if the Minister feels that the problem is insoluble, is there not something that we can all do?

### Marriage the chief object?

From time immemorial we have brought up girls to consider marriage and maternity as their chief objective, and as, until now, there has been a shortage of men of marriageable age, they have concentrated on getting a husband as soon as possible. It is ironical that now, when the balance of the sexes is almost equal and will soon show a surplus of men, the age of marriage is still falling. Girls do not seem to have grasped the inference from statistics even if young men have done so.

The women's revolution, which started about a hundred years ago, gave women the right to a good secondary education, and later a university one. This was followed by a bitter struggle to enter the professions. They had always been welcomed as teachers and hospital nurses, but the medical profession and the civil service were barred. For the most part, and in spite of well-known exceptions, these pioneer women were single women and resignation on marriage was still enforced by employers until recently. It was only in 1928 that the Manchester Education Committee decided after a struggle to allow its women teachers to continue to teach after marriage if they wished. The 1944 Act made this mandatory. Now we realise that we cannot carry on, not only in schools but in the business of the country, without married women workers.

### Dual role

Our schools are dependent upon married women — full-time and part-time, as are our hospitals on married nurses. We are in sight of a time when the only women available for any job will be married women with children. We — mothers and fathers and teachers — must alter our attitude to the future of our daughters. We must prepare them for the dual role which they will have to play as a mother and a worker outside the home. Even if they do not return to teaching until their youngest child reaches school age, they should be prepared to do so then. It should be put to them as a matter of moral obligation. They, as well as their brothers, have been

# A Play Centre in a Poor District

R. B. BASTIN

*Mr. Bastin teaches at the Elliott Comprehensive School, London, having had experience in different types of secondary and junior schools. He has run a Youth Club for two years, and also has experience of play centre work.*

I had often heard of Play Centres as places where children could go when their mothers were at work; where they could play safely under supervision all day during the holidays or after school until their mother came home. It is a way of eliminating that loneliness and insecurity of the latch key child that so often leads a child astray. During a school holiday I offered myself as an assistant.

### Initial impact

At literally one hour's notice I was asked to present myself to help the staff of one of these in a poor district. I arrived in the afternoon at a typical four-decker school board building towering above an area of very poor housing and smoky factories. I walked in and asked a smartly dressed man (whom I took to be the head of the day school catching up with his paper work) if he could direct me to the play centre. He directed me to a hall in the middle of the building where I found a motherly woman looking rather helpless in front of a horde of children between the ages of four and seven.

It seemed that the supervisor was away trying to get some extra staff and that two ladies were coping with 50 or so infants and between 60 and 70 children from seven to 15 years old. I was asked to go round to the yard to look after the boys playing football. At the back of the building I fetched six or seven off the lavatory and about the same number off the high wall surrounding the playground. I arranged them in two sides of more or less equal strength, in spite of their strong objections to playing against a wiry boy of fourteen. In any such crowd there will be some for whom kicking a goal is less of a thrill than kicking over the end wall for the joy of climbing over for it. As the ball sailed over the high wall about twenty threw themselves at it, grabbing at the smallest hold, kicking vigorously until they managed to straddle the top. Every foothold seemed to be well known and each had its proprietor.

### The cure

This only stopped when I announced that anyone who kicked the ball over would have a short period of suspension and that each day there would be an official ball fetcher. After this about half of the younger ones lost interest in the tactics of the field and began to play marbles in the dust at the far end of the play ground. This was a great relief for the numbers were now reduced to manageable proportions on the small triangle of asphalt about 60 yards across at its widest.

One cannot watch all the groups at once and it was not long before I found myself apologising to the smartly dressed man as he hauled some boys off

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WASTAGE OF WOMEN TEACHERS (*cont.*)

educated at the public expense — except the small minority that goes to independent schools. They have received grants to enable them to go to a Training College or a University again from public money, for even those students whose parents' income preclude their receiving the full maintenance grant do not pay the whole cost of their education as these institutions are heavily subsidised by public funds. Is it honest therefore to take all this from the public and not feel bound to repay it by doing what they are trained to do for more than one or two years? The attitude to girls' education must be changed. We are all, as parents and school teachers, guilty — our daughters must now be prepared for the dual role that society demands of them.

School teaching is the easiest career to combine with looking after a family because the hours and holidays for children are the same as for the teacher, but the arguments used above apply to all women who have been trained to a profession — doctors, welfare workers, housing managers, etc. Many more posts must be offered on a part-time basis for women who are also in charge of a home, even if the children are away at school all day, and experience gained over ten years in the Manchester Training College for older women has shown what reserves of vitality there are in women of 40 plus who have brought up and launched a family and then start on a course of two — now three — years' professional training.

In conclusion, it must not be thought that wastage from the teaching profession is entirely due to the marriage of young women teachers. In 1960-61 wastage of untrained male graduates was also considerable, but, whatever the cause, in their case it cannot be paternity.

the lavatory root again. "Garn," they said, "he's only the schoolkeeper." I soon began to know their names by asking each one as he got into some little mischief. Nearly all got this attention in due course.

They were a typical working class crowd, eager for affection or any substitute for it; even anger. Little boys came as I tried to referee the game and put hot hands in mine for the security it gave them. Some were strident, "Can I be ball fetcher today?" "Sir said I could be it." Some shouted names at me from the lavatory and then waited long enough for me to see who it was before running away. When I met the girl's group it was even more apparent how insecure they were, how much they needed affection and attention.

### Tea time

A message came at 3.30 to tell us that it was tea time and everyone lined up in the hall. Each was given a piece of paper towel and sent in turn to the wash-room. When the last of them was chivvied out we all went upstairs to the dining room where bedlam broke loose. I was just a beginner and so I took only the minimum action necessary to prevent breakages and injury. Lemonade was spilled on the floor, partly eaten sandwiches were dropped and we were largely ignored as we remonstrated.

After tea we gathered in the hall for team games and, a few at the time, the children began to drift off home or were collected by mothers.

### Team games ?

The next day things were more normal with the supervisor there. I was asked to watch the football once more and seeing my role as a sort of games leader at a holiday camp, I suggested a few team games such as tunnel ball and relay races but this was not approved; the trouble with having school teachers at these centres was always that they wanted them organised like a school. The programme for the day was unvarying for the rest of the time that I spent there; the children came and stood around the playground until the doors opened and then everyone came into the hall. Mothers who brought their children paid the dinner money first and left, then everyone else sitting on the floor was called in turn. A whistle was blown continuously for silence but it had little effect.

Meal times were much better while the supervisor was there; behaviour was good and the order was well maintained by the painful shrill blast of the whistle. One mother told me that her child enjoyed the day there except for that whistle. The meals were good and well served, in fact they were exactly as for the school.

### Indoor games

One wet day I had to take inside games and there was plenty of choice; there were chess sets, draughts, lotto, quoits, snakes and ladders and some rolling ball games. All went well for forty minutes and after that even the giving of sweet prizes for the bingo did not keep them at it. We were all relieved when the sun came out and dried the playground enough to get outside.

There was a quite different attitude of the parents to the staff in such places to that found in schools. There was more contact with the homes than is found in secondary schools and even than that of primary schools. Brothers and sisters, parents' occupations and problems were known to the staff and solicitous enquiries made where possible. Parents often bring cakes or chocolates for the staff and are in doubt whether the staff does the job voluntarily or not.

### The need for training

Women who run these centres are housewives very largely, sometimes from the area, but often middle class people from other areas. Few have had any training for the job they have to do. Clearly their task is very different from a schoolteacher's and in many ways it is more difficult. The age range is greater than most classes and the emphasis is on freedom and enjoyment rather than learning. As anyone who has experience of informal education in youth clubs will know, the main task is to combine creative work with the freedom and enjoyment that the children want. How to get the children to act plays, or learn folk dances, to do basketry and leather work without feeling that it is just like school again ? I am sure that this task needs great understanding of children and much help could be gained from a special training course such as is now given to youth leaders.

Clearly also, they are fulfilling the needs of such areas and deserve better than the Cinderella treatment that they get at present.

## Book Reviews

### *Prophet with Honour?*

*The Comprehensive School*, by Robin Pedley. Pelican (1963), 212 pp., 3s 6d.

Is it possible that an editor of FORUM be an exception to the general rule that prophets are not honoured in their own country or their own day? Some who have watched our emergent comprehensive education with anxious concern may reasonably hope so; for we have long realised that educational facts about comprehensives must sooner or later break through the barrier of political prejudice; and with the probable return of Labour government before the end of 1964, the time may be about due; and this little book may be the popular instrument.

Its first main contribution to the debate will be its news about O and A Level results. The author's personal enquiries from some fifty 'tripartite' L.E.A.s, when added to other evidence, indicate that of the whole intake into local secondary education about 10 per cent gain five or more O-Level passes; in Anglesey and the Isle of Man (our only two fully comprehensive areas) the corresponding figures are 14 per cent and 16½ per cent respectively. Similarly, in the tripartite areas about 5½ per cent get two or more A-Levels; in Anglesey and Man the figures are 7 per cent and 8½ per cent. This confirms the less generalised evidence of individual headmasters who have been telling us for some time past that when their little local grammar schools are taken over by comprehensives, there is a heart-warming upsurge in the number of academic successes won by the children of the district as a whole. Within a year or two, therefore, it ought to be impossible for anyone to argue that the comprehensive's social benefit to the 'middling' children is given at the cost of academic damage to 'the best'.

But the administrator (and for that matter even the socially-minded ratepayer) may fall back appalled by the sheer building cost of rehousing our whole secondary school population in buildings for 900-2,300 children. It is at this point that Pedley's forecasts may prove most valuable and correct. After all, he was writing about the 'Leicestershire' three-tier end-on comprehensive system as early as in 1944. And maybe Leicestershire would not have started their Wigston and Hinckley experiments if Pedley had not deployed his arguments to the Midland branch of the Association of Education Officers in May 1955! The second main contribution of this book may therefore be the chapter showing the enormous number of local variations that can be made on the general basic pattern—not indeed without substantial new building, but at any rate without such a programme as would be financially out of question.

If I may venture a minor, and not very risky forecast of my own, I would say that we shall not raise the school leaving age by law at any time before the notorious 1984; but we shall meet the clamorously

increasing pressure of more and more adolescents voluntarily demanding more and more of what 'school' has to offer. Primary school, then, for all little children; junior high school for all young adolescents until they decide; senior high school (or call it grammar school if you must) for all who decide to stay on voluntarily—this is a not unreasonable pattern. And in many counties and county boroughs, existing buildings could be expanded to meet it without crippling expense. Under our 'prophet' this may well be the arrangement towards which we shall advance in the next quarter of a century in that locally-varied and pragmatic manner which has been typical of British educational advance for the last several generations.

RICHARD ACLAND.

## *Children and Work*

*School Leavers,* by Thelma Veness. Methuen (1962), 252 pp., 25s.

*Home School and Work,* by M. P. Carter. Pergamon Press (1962), 276 pp., 50s.

*Working Mothers and their Children,* by Simon Yudkin and Anthea Holme. Michael Joseph (1963), 199 pp., 21s.

*School Leavers* is the outcome of a team investigation to see whether the 'official' values of the older generation are shared by young people emerging from the schools. The inquiry concerned boys and girls in various types of schools and areas in 1956, when they were in their last or next to last year at school.

The main conclusion is that these young people do seem remarkably like us. A large number of them approve of ambition, though there seem to be marked differences in 'ambitiousness'. There is interesting information about attitudes towards jobs and about aspirations in general.

It is a pity that Miss Veness borrows Riesman's terms 'tradition-directed', 'inner-directed' and 'other-directed' for labelling reasons for choosing jobs. These terms have for years meant what Riesman intended, namely character-types produced by societies at different stages of development. The connection is merely in the words, not in the meanings. However, the suggestion for a diagnostic test of orientation to work on the basis of these and other categories is useful.

Technical school boys emerged as the most ambitious group, with grammar school boys next. A third of the modern school boys and over half the modern school girls registered little or no ambition at all. Is this the effect or the cause of these pupils' low status in the educational hierarchy? If the latter is the case, says the author, we must look back into childhood experiences that produce ambition. 'If the former be true, we should all look critically at this fate we offer to 70 per cent of our children when they are only 10 years old.'

The mechanics of this research are laid open for inspection in a sensible way; and the leavers themselves often come to life with engaging comments.

Whereas Miss Veness has it that parents, schools and other organs of society have cause for congratulation, Mr. Carter in *Home, School and Work* gives us a less pleasant picture of pupils leaving Sheffield secondary modern schools at 15. This book effectively documents what its author calls the inconsequentiality of many school leavers. Instead of blaming relegation at the selection stage or earlier, Mr. Carter looks critically at schools, employers and particularly the Youth Employment Service. School seemed to influence many of these youngsters so little. Work often made even less demands on them. Further education seemed as much an imposition as an opportunity. There were so many details about going to work that they were unaware of. The Youth Employment Service is most directly in the line of fire—not for any want of intentions in its officers, but because it works on a shoestring.

The book is expensive; and it is marred a little by the continual use of numerical data in the text; and though sometimes amusing, its style lacks economy. The reader is denied the help of summaries and conclusions. The author's habit of referring to these young workers as children might seem odd to many people. However, the book goes so thoroughly into the business of getting ordinary school leavers started in worthwhile jobs, that anybody who has anything to do in this field will find it valuable reading.

*Working Mothers and their Children* shows many reasons why increasing numbers of mothers go out to work and why the trend is likely to continue. The vast majority of pre-school children are shown to be adequately cared for, but many schoolchildren of all ages are apparently left to manage on their own, not only after school but during the holidays as well. There is remarkably little evidence of adverse effects on children where adequate substitute care or supervision has been provided. The authors make proposals on how children's needs can be met, and how industrial and social policy can be more helpful. There has been prejudice and inconsistency in people's attitudes on these matters, which the authoritative picture this book gives might do something to correct.

E. A. ALLEN.

## *Science in Education*

*The Supply of Science Teachers,* Joint Committee for Science and Education (1962), 19 pp., 1s.

*The Place of Science in Primary Education,* British Association for the Advancement of Science (1962), 93 pp., 5s.

*Practical Work in School Science,* by J. F. Kerr, Leicester University Press (1963), 142 pp., 5s.

Three recent Reports may be reviewed together, in the order of their publication. Each has a particular value in the current critical reappraisal of the role and relation of scientific to other aspects of our national education.

*The Supply of Science Teachers* is a brief assessment of the facts of the present situation in terms of numbers of pupils and science teachers (qualified and unqualified), in comparison with future needs in schools and in further and higher education, together with proposals for a new national policy. After drawing attention to the needs of those in our schools who will not specialise in science as well as to those who will, and to the universal need for regarding science as one of the ways of exploration of human experience with which all persons should become familiar in however simple a way, this Report surveys the present (1962) situation in detail. It concludes that to meet existing needs *and* cope with the effect of raising the school leaving age to 16 whilst reducing the secondary school class size to 30, *and* to meet the demands from expanding sixth forms, we are in all some 50,000 science teachers short. Proposals for meeting this situation are terse and to the point, and should be a prime concern of every political party. We may at least hope that, as far as the expansion of teacher training is concerned, the recommendation will be anticipated in the forthcoming Robbins Report.

*The Place of Science in Primary Education* is an invaluable summary of the September 1961 Conference (B.A. and A.T.C.D.E.) on 'Approaches to Science in the Primary School', and could well be made compulsory introductory reading for teachers' work-groups or training college staffs proposing to develop this aspect of education, if for no other reason than that it provides abundant substance to the concept of exploration in learning generally. Here are nine stimulating papers (apart from the preface and discussion and summary) which between them highlight the basic issues in *any* exploratory (as opposed to instructional) process. Not only are 'finding-out' processes amply illustrated but several writers go a fair way to meet the proper objections of slowness, lack of direction and non-organisation of the kinds of knowledge gained.

But for your reviewer the core of this matter lies in teacher training (including in-service training) and the paper dealing with this strikes at its very centre: '. . . the training colleges are under an obligation to tackle some of the psychological and curricular problems with which the schools will be faced if we add more science to their programmes', and 'Acceptable solutions to some of the problems could be arrived at through teams working together—teams of investigators made up of lecturers, practising teachers and groups of students, who would undertake classroom trials and enquiries, perhaps the same enquiries in several areas organised by different colleges'. Training of *this* kind would indeed be training by participation in solving the learning problems presented *by* the child, and would lead inevitably to a new confidence and competence by the teachers who experienced it.

*Practical Work in School Science* is a fully documented factual survey Report, sponsored by the Gulbenkian Foundation, on the nature and purposes of practical work in grammar school science, as perceived by teachers, students (past scholars) and the enquiry team. This Report serves as a starting point for countless essential discussions which must accompany the reappraisal indicated above.

The Report shows that in spite of the considerable amount of practical work being done much remains unintegrated with theory, and that after 'O' level much is directed to 'showing how' or 'verifying that' rather than to 'finding what': in short that the exploratory element fades rapidly. Coupled with the widespread absence of demonstration work of all kinds this suggests an even deeper failure to conceive learning in science as embodying inescapably the scientific exploratory process from which Science springs.

Much of the Report is concerned with a full presentation of the factual findings of the Gulbenkian study, but its final paragraphs point unambiguously in the same direction as the Beloe and S.S.E.C. Reports, to greater autonomy for practising teachers in establishing and evaluating their own procedures. This, coupled with new ways in training, *could* provide a climate of learning in which science, as a way of exploring human experience complementary to other ways, could be progressively established in *all* our school curricula.

Taken together these three reports challenge, rightly, our basic assumptions as to the meanings of 'science', 'science teaching' and, not least, the means whereby we shall attain more clearly defined and agreed ends. A trio to be strongly recommended and carefully digested.

A. G. JOSELIN.

## *Comprehensive Art*

*Athene*, Journal of the Society for Education through Art. Vol. 10, No. 4, Spring 1963.

This outstandingly well-produced and interesting journal may be obtained from the Secretary of the S.E.A., Morley College, 61 Westminster Bridge Road, London S.E.1. Of the several articles of interest to FORUM readers one, in particular, stands out: an address by Kenneth Jameson to an international art conference last year. Mr. Jameson has been since 1956 head of the art department 'in the largest comprehensive school in the capital'. 'During my time in my comprehensive school,' he writes, 'I saw near miracles take place. Boys discovered within themselves abilities and enthusiasms which they did not know they possessed; and they would never have discovered them if they had not been able to explore for themselves, within the *one* school, the wide range of activities (upwards of one hundred different courses) offered there.' In the Art department there were nine specialist teachers and studios; painting, pottery, modelling, sculpture, drawing, printing crafts.

'And the sequel to this story took place only the other day,' he adds. A number of boys and girls, the first pupils to have passed right through the five-year course at some comprehensive schools, appeared before a panel selecting would-be Art students. 'They were, without any doubt, the best quality potential art students we have ever seen,' writes Mr. Jameson, adding 'it seems that in art these schools are very sucessful.' Much of the material on exhibition at the conference came from English comprehensive schools.

B.S.

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