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REDBRICK
AND THESE VITAL DAYS

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RED BRICK UNIVERSITY

REDBRICK AND THESE VITAL DAYS

by

BRUCE TRUSCOT

FABER AND FABER LIMITED
24 Russell Square
London

NOTE.—The two main currents of education in this country are described, both here and in *Red Brick University*, as the passage (i) from Harchester, a typical Public School, to Oxbridge, and (ii) from Back Street Council School to Drabtown Municipal Secondary School, and thence to Drabtown's 'modern' university, Redbrick.

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ABBREVIATIONS

used in footnotes to the text

A.U.T., April 1943.—Association of University Teachers: *Report on University Developments.* Draft dated April 1943.[1]

A.U.T., May 1944.—'Report on University Developments, 1944. Adopted by the Council of the Association of University Teachers on 16th December 1943.' In *The Universities Review,* May 1944, pp. 52–65.

A.U.T. (Research).—Association of University Teachers: *Report on University Developments.* Reports from the Science and Arts Sub-Committee on Research. Draft, undated and unpaged.[1]

B.A.C.—British Association for the Advancement of Science: *Report of Committee on post-war University Education.* London, 1944.

Communication.—The Journal of the Association of University Professors and Lecturers of the Allied Countries in Great Britain.

Dobrée.—Bonamy Dobrée: *The Universities and regional life.* Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1943.

F.R. (Fleming Report).—*The Public Schools and the general educational system.* London, 1944.

McN.R. (McNair Report).—*Teachers and youth leaders.* London, 1944.

N.R. (Norwood Report).—*Curriculum and examinations in Secondary schools.* London, 1943.

Simon.—Sir Ernest Simon: *The Development of British universities.* London, undated (1944).

Spencer.—F. H. Spencer: *The Public School question.* London, undated (1943).

T.E.S.—*The Times Educational Supplement.*

[1] These draft reports have been circulated to members of the Association and I am allowed to quote from them by courtesy of the Council, but it should be made clear that, though the Council has approved them in principle, they are subject to re-arrangement and verbal alteration: nothing said in the text of this book should be taken as implying the contrary.—B.T.

PREFACE

Red Brick University, it will have been observed, had no preface. That was not because there was no room for one, or no need for one, but because of the author's desire to sink his own personality and focus attention on his theme.

The policy, however, was not entirely successful. Most Redbrick readers were less moved by the book to a healthy introspection than to excited speculation on the identity of the author. Frenzied fingerings of *Who's Who* and the *Oxbridge University Calendar* failed to reveal any mention of Bruce Truscot—which was not entirely surprising, as that gentleman had carefully examined the same volumes a few months earlier in order to ascertain that he did not exist. Then began a search through the book itself for what is known in academic groves as internal evidence—again with no great success, as the author had also anticipated these activities and had taken some little trouble to cover his tracks. The book appeared to establish, for example, that Truscot's particular Oxbridge was situated on the Cam —but actually the passages in it about both the Oxford and the Cambridge of to-day had been either supplied or approved by members of those universities still in residence. It seemed, again, to suggest that the author was a graduate in Modern History: what he certainly could not be, wrote one appreciative reviewer, was a graduate in English Literature, since a remark made on that subject was at least thirty years out of date. Which conclusion was among the few that extracted a reply from the author, who had, in fact, taken First Class Honours in English some forty years before.

Further investigations were even wider of the mark. Poor Truscot was unmasked as 'True Scot'—an alumnus not only of Oxbridge but previously of Glasburgh, who, balked of a career in his *alma stepmater* (one distinguished critic quite incorrectly described his first chapter as 'bitter'), spent a few disillusioned years in a Redbrick not a hundred miles from Redditch, and then returned to the land of his birth in order to vent his hypothetical spleen upon a system of which he had been the victim. Another story was that Truscot had emigrated, shortly before the War, to one of the Dominions; a third, that he was writing from a well-earned retirement. The general impression was certainly that he had, either temporarily or permanently, taken leave of the scenes of which he wrote, and was discoursing reminis-

cently—perhaps, as one benevolent reviewer surmised, of conditions that in some respects had passed away. Another general impression seemed to be that he was a crusted bachelor: apparently his *saeva indignatio* might have been tempered had a woman's gentle hand been applied to his fevered brow—though one of his acquaintances, from whom the invisible cap that he habitually wears concealed his identity, went so far as to assert, with some confidence, not to say emphasis, that he was in fact a woman.

All but one of these guesses were completely incorrect—and I must say, considering that most of them have been made by people skilled in handling literary evidence, that they have considerably shaken my faith in the reliability of present-day criticism. The author of *Red Brick University* is wholly in the busy world, not quite beyond it. He speaks of what he knows; and the eminent professor who wrote to him expressing a fear that he might 'bob up at his elbow at some Faculty or Senate meeting' had ample cause for alarm. Though shortly afterwards Truscot did have the grace to feel slightly ashamed when he heard that his correspondent had himself been credited with the authorship in question.

And now let the somewhat oppressive third person be discarded in a brief apology for the pseudonymity of this book and its predecessor and an attempt to justify it. Though the critics of *Red Brick University* failed to discover much about its author, they did, very effectively, penetrate to the most serious purpose which lay beneath its calm and sometimes even flippant surface. And they at least will understand why it could only have been published under a pseudonym.

In the first place, being not unknown as a writer already, I knew that, if my criticisms were read as coming from me, many readers would give them an added weight which I did not covet for them, while others would discount them in a way no more to my liking. I wanted my view of the modern university, whatever it might be worth, to be considered solely on its merits.

Secondly, I was anxious to put across a body of views with which I need not necessarily be associated professionally. The commonest remark I have heard about *Red Brick University*, even from those who have spoken most kindly about it, has been: 'Of course, I don't agree with all of it, by a long way.' To which remark I have invariably replied: 'No, neither do I.' And with perfect truth. I wrote throughout with a deep sense of responsibility, and I advanced no view which did not seem to me worthy of serious consideration. But among them were some which I put into Truscot's head solely because I thought they badly needed discussion, and, in order to provoke that

discussion, I incited him to enunciate them in a challenging and provocative form. Had I written over my own name, I should have had, in fairness to myself, to state both sides of the case; and this, instead of startling the already over-complacent Redbrickian into serious thought, and perhaps even into some form of action, would merely have lulled him into a more deplorable complacency than before.

Thirdly, I had to consider my colleagues. If I was to say anything of value, I must speak out. The very heart and root of my criticisms is the deep conviction that in certain respects the modern universities are not pulling their weight, and that the responsibility for this lies at more doors than anyone has yet realized. The Treasury has starved Redbrick of money, making it grants so minute that it cannot do a tithe of the things of which it is capable. The schools have starved it of talent, sending all their brilliant pupils to Oxbridge and encouraging even the average ones to go there if they can. Professors and lecturers, though admittedly underpaid, have been content to spend only a modicum of time on research and to regard themselves as fulfilling their duty by doing a bare eight or ten hours a week of teaching. Laymen with little understanding of academic problems have done untold harm by their activities on university Councils. Undergraduates have pursued a narrow course of study, thought too little of the world beyond Redbrick's unlovely quadrangles and rejected all kinds of opportunities of widening their vision. And these are only a few items of the diagnosis: much more was said in *Red Brick University* and more still will be said in the pages which follow. Fortunately the book was published at an auspicious moment: its criticisms were the first slow drops of what has already become a heavy shower and is likely before long to develop into a thoroughly wet day. The worst offenders, of course, have put up large-sized umbrellas and run no danger at all of getting their clothes wet—I mean, for example, the most unenlightened members of Council, the most snobbish schools, the professors who have never done a stroke of original work since their appointment and never will. But there are signs that others are at least feeling the wind, if not the rain, and my hope, when I first sat down to write, was that they would feel it a good deal more.

Therefore I felt it essential to be able to refer, in support and illustration of my various theses, to situations, to institutions, and to individuals, and this in language which should be direct and incisive, without, I hoped, being offensive. Practically all such references as are made in my earlier book I can personally vouch for; only here and there is a trivial detail altered to avoid causing unmerited distress or emphasizing the personal aspect of some allusion. Once my own identity was known, the identity of those of whom I had written

would immediately have been recognized; and not only so, but a good many identities would have been discovered which I had never put there. No good that I could see would be done, and considerable resentment might well be caused, if my colleagues went hunting for each other in the more trenchant of my pages. It seemed a much more healthy and harmless pursuit that they should go hunting for me.

The somewhat considerable precautions which I took to preserve my anonymity were planned in a none too hopeful spirit. Having myself indulged, among other things, in historical investigation and literary criticism, I believed that those of my acquaintances with like experience would unmask my identity with comparative ease. The solution seems so simple—when you know it. After all, I have been in the thick of things for a generation and on almost every page of the book there must be remarks I have made, illustrations I have used, anecdotes I have related, in conferences, at Senate meetings, and in casual or convivial conversation. Only one or two of these needed to be recalled and the secret would be out; and once it was out in one University it would spread. My great hope was that the existence of a real Bruce Truscot would be taken for granted and at each of the modern universities it would be assumed that he came from one of the others.

That hope had no substance, but the thing which I had not dared to envisage came off with a success that I should have considered impossible. The book was published in the early July of 1943—a time of the year when professors and lecturers have just settled down to a three-months' vacation during which they can meditate to their hearts' content on their sad lack of leisure. In my own mind I gave the secret a life of three months exactly. On the first day in October when I walked into the University refectory, some facetious colleague at the High Table would greet me with a 'Hullo, Truscot, how are you?'

Parenthetically, I may say here that if he had I should have asked him what in the world he meant, and I should have no hesitation whatever, if asked point-blank whether or no I was the author of *Red Brick University*, in answering 'No'. I hold that, while it is a social and a moral duty to give a true answer to any question which may properly be put to one, there is no kind of obligation either to answer, or to answer truly, a question which no-one has the right to ask. The author of *Red Brick University* is a personality created by me and given the name of Bruce Truscot, and he is no-one else. Let us assume that my legal name is Robert England. In writing the present book I have from time to time referred to its predecessor to see if the two were consistent. But I have not consulted Robert England's opinions for the same purpose: in fact, as I have said, Robert

England does not share all the opinions of Bruce Truscot, nor does he always approve of his provocative manner or of his unacademic picturesqueness. Some years ago, our popular seaside resorts used to be visited on Saturdays in the season by a gentleman rejoicing in the pseudonym of Bobby Bud, an emissary of the *Daily Tale*, which published his photograph beforehand and was prepared to pay out a substantial sum of money to the first person who recognized him and challenged him correctly. To win the money, however, you had to use an exact form of words, such as: 'You are Mr. Bobby Bud and I claim the *Daily Tale's* prize.' If you so much as omitted the Mr., I understand, the individual would ask you what you meant by it, since he was merely John Jones, who was looking for Bobby Bud himself. A similar experience would have been the lot of anyone who had inquired of me after the health of Bruce Truscot. The freedom of the individual must include freedom to evacuate his personality and to assume another if he so wishes, provided the purpose is legally and morally unexceptionable.

However, I need not have troubled. None of my colleagues even once challenged me. Rather, they invited me, as a knowledgeable person who sits on various inter-university committees, to swell the pool of guesses as to Truscot's identity with a few of my own. I did my best—and at least it was good a best as anyone else's: once or twice I even ventured suggestions which were distinctly warm. There was one curious fact which I noticed in going from one University to another: a psychologist, perhaps, could explain it. At no University was it ever considered possible that the author could come from there. At Bristol the Common Room debated if he was from Leeds or Liverpool. At Leeds they gave perfectly good reasons why he must come from Birmingham. At Sheffield or Manchester some allusion had been found which made it clear that he was writing of conditions at Bristol. It was not simply that Truscot had carefully gathered his material from all sources instead of confining himself to one or two. There was a kind of wishful belief that the place where lectures are so uninspiring, where the lay element in the Council is so reactionary and where in twenty-two weeks of vacation a professor produces a single article and three-twentieths of a book must be somewhere other than here.

It seems likely, then, that Truscot will remain Truscot until the whole of his work is done or any good reason arises for unmasking him. Apart from my publishers, who have smiled good-humouredly at any inquirers and uncomplainingly forwarded me stacks of letters, only six people, so far as I am aware, are in the secret. One is my literary executor; one, an editor for whom I have a very high regard;

two are acquaintances who most kindly procured me the up-to-date information already referred to; and two are intimate friends, who knew the tricks of my style so well that, without having any previous information or suspicion, they were able to penetrate the Truscotian disguise. Even these last, however, said that it was some time before they did so, ascribing chance phrases to pure coincidence until the number of them was so great that they could only form what they rather unflatteringly described as a 'most unlikely' conclusion. Apparently the idea that I was capable of writing a book devoid of critical apparatus had never occurred to them.

It would be mere self-indulgence to describe the curious situations into which my pseudonymity has led me. On several occasions I have been urged to read the book and even lent copies of it. Only narrowly did I escape being given it as a Christmas present. Again and again Truscot has been asked to address meetings of teachers or students—invitations which, owing to congenital dumbness, he has been forced to decline—to his very sincere regret, as he believes he could make his points more forcibly by word of mouth than in print. He is especially grateful, however, to the B.B.C. and to a professional association which allowed him to broadcast and to speak through an intermediary. He apologizes to many correspondents, both appreciative and critical, for delay in answering their letters, due to reluctance to post his replies in the town where he lives. This will explain the curious fact that his letters have been most frequent during conference weeks in London. Once he received several in a single day, which he answered immediately, for it was the season of external examining and he was able to post his replies successively in Edinburgh, Redbrick, and London. Perhaps an academic Holmes, had he received all those letters, could have settled the Case of Identity, but fortunately no two of them went to the same place.

Let the last word in this preface be, not Truscot's, but mine. Some months ago I had a long letter from a young officer in Burma who had been one of my 'students' (as we call undergraduates at Redbrick) a few years previously. He had just been reading a book which had made him feel quite homesick, so vividly did it recall the old days at the University. 'I should like you to read it too,' he went on. 'I expect you can get hold of it somewhere. But I ought to warn you that it draws a very unflattering picture of a professor, and I shouldn't like you to think that was why I wanted you to read it. Don't worry: none of your old students would ever think that the author was drawing *you*.'

Which is certainly the most curious, probably the most unexpected and perhaps the most charming compliment I have ever received.

INTRODUCTION

Redbrick and these vital days.' Vital days, indeed. I am writing in July 1944, almost exactly one year after the publication of *Red Brick University*. What a year it has been! On their three European frontiers the Germans are being steadily rolled back, while the first cracks are appearing on the perimeter, and even in the centre, of their innermost fortress. The five-year triumph of might over right is drawing to a close, which will be delayed only by the time necessary for accomplishing the task that awaits us in the Pacific. Vital days for civilization and the rights of man. Vital days, too, for the men who are enabling us to save them. For on the soil of France, in the Apennines, in the liberated South, in Africa, in Burma, in India, at the outposts of the Empire, in prisoner-of-war camps, in billets and barracks, at home, in planes cleaving the sky, and in ships of the Royal Navy and the Merchant Navy all over the world, are millions of British boys and girls snatched by the War from shop, bench and desk, their future careers still before them, sometimes thinking wistfully of what they might have done with the years they have sacrificed for their country, but for the most part content to dream of reunion and the brighter days of opportunity to come.

If these months of rapidly approaching victory are vital for us, doubly so are they for them, since here at home are being forged the possibilities of their future happiness. And of the happiness, too, of millions more, belonging to an older generation, who fought in the war that was to have ended war and some of whom are fighting again in this. Will they live to see a world genuinely free from want and fear, and, if so, will it be a world well furnished with houses, schools, cradles, jobs, provision for leisure and old age? So far as the schools are concerned, we shall know the worst within a year or two, and with luck we may be glimpsing the best not much later. Vital days, indeed....

And already much is happening. It was by the purest chance—but the coincidence points to a suitable starting-point for retrospect—that *Red Brick University* appeared only a few days before the Government's White Paper on Educational Reconstruction. A week or so after this came the Norwood Report on Curriculum and Examinations in Secondary Schools. Both documents, at many points, broke clean through the front of education's most stubborn enemy—

conservative tradition. The White Paper represented the initial result of two years spent in discussions and negotiations between the President of the Board of Education and numerous interests to be affected by the Education Bill of which it was the precursor. It was published well ahead of the Bill so that ample opportunity should be given for a more general discussion than had hitherto been possible, not only by professional educationists but by the people of the country whom the proposed reforms were to benefit. It was welcomed, almost unanimously, as an earnest of great things to come:

'A general advance in education is planned. It is greatly conceived; it is long overdue. . . . The President of the Board of Education has . . . produced a scheme which will enable the community to accomplish not merely a general but a signal advance.'[1]

'These proposals . . . make possible the greatest and grandest educational advance this country has ever known; . . . they offer a framework within which can be created an enlightened and genuinely democratic system of national education.'[2]

After five months during which the Government's proposals were freely discussed throughout the country, and among the Forces overseas, the long-awaited Education Bill was introduced into the House of Commons. It was found to have benefited a good deal by the criticisms passed upon the White Paper. The President of the Board of Education was to have wider powers—not merely, as at present, the 'superintendence of matters relating to education in England and Wales' but the obligation to 'promote the education of the people in England and Wales' and to 'secure the effective execution of the national policy'. He was also to be charged with the control and direction of Local Education Authorities and to be advised by two Central Councils—one for England and one for Wales—on matters which he might refer to them, as well as on educational theory and practice in general. Voluntary education was to be provided from the age of two, and compulsory education from five, the leaving age to be raised to fifteen as from the 1st of April 1945,[3] and to sixteen as soon as this should become practicable. Part-time education, at 'Young People's'—later renamed 'County'—Colleges, was to be compul-

[1] T.E.S., 24 July 1943.

[2] H. C. Dent, *A Landmark in English Education*, London, 1943, p. 7.

[3] The date chosen—All Fools' Day—was significant. Only a few weeks after the Education Bill had become law, it was announced that the impossibility of obtaining the necessary teachers and accommodation had compelled postponement till at least 1 April 1946. It seems a pity that hopes should have been raised, as so often in the past, to be destroyed almost immediately.

sory, save for those undergoing full-time education, up to the age of eighteen, though only for a quite inadequate period—the equivalent of one day a week, recalling the weekly eight hours of the Day Continuation Schools projected in 1918. Facilities for technical and adult education were to be increased and developed. Special attention was promised for children handicapped by physical or mental disabilities; free medical inspection and treatment were to be provided by local authorities for all children and young people attending maintained schools and County Colleges; meals and milk were also to be provided by the authorities in such institutions; and arrangements were outlined by which necessitous children would be supplied with footwear and clothing. A bold, yet understanding, effort was made to solve the problems of the Dual System, again showing some modifications, dictated by experience, of the lines laid down in the White Paper.

The encouragement given to the Government by the reception of the White Paper was nowhere more clearly shown than in the estimates contained in the Bill of what these reforms would cost. The allocation proposed for technical and adult education alone was more than three times as large. The total additional cost for 1945–6 was raised from £1,000,000 to £5,500,000, and the ultimate additional cost from £67,400,000 to £79,800,000. At last, it would seem, the Government was prepared to spend big money on peace as well as on war.

The Bill passed through the House of Commons, in all its stages, with surprising celerity. Less than sixteen Parliamentary days were needed for the Second Reading and the Committee Stage combined. There were criticisms and modifications of detail, but, save for a not altogether relevant display of intransigence on the question of equal pay to men and women for equal work, no sign of determined opposition. Indeed, the main faults found with these epoch-making reforms, which would make so heavy a call on the taxpayer, were that they did not go far enough and were being too long delayed. By April, the Bill was through the Commons; by July, with the slightest of amendments, it passed the Lords, and forthwith became law. On paper, at least, the battle for democratic ideals in education was over.

Nothing in the Education Act directly affects the universities, but, as Dr. Venn, a former Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University, had remarked on retiring from office, 'the whole national system of primary and secondary education could not be placed in the melting-pot without raising simultaneously acute academic problems'.[1] In preparation for meeting these problems the University Grants Com-

[1] *The Times*, 2 October 1943.

mittee, a body appointed by the Government 'to inquire into the financial needs of university education in the United Kingdom and to advise the Government as to the application of any grants that may be made by Parliament towards meeting them', was reconstituted in December. Before the War it had numbered ten members, but these had been reduced, by deaths and resignations, to five, and ten more were now added, the new element being drawn less from the universities' retired lists, as in the past, than from professors still working in the universities and in their full vigour.[1]

A pamphlet, *The Development of British Universities*, published in March 1944 by Sir Ernest Simon, Chairman of the Council of Manchester University, 'as a contribution to the active discussion on university affairs which is now beginning', recommended 'a considerable expansion of university teaching and research, and more positive planning in the field of university work'.[2] Such planning had, in fact, already begun, as was later shown by statements issuing respectively in May and June, from the Universities of Manchester and Leeds, by the development reports of the Association of University Teachers and by the conference held in June between the Executive Committee of that Association and representatives of the Governing Bodies of the Universities.

Continual reference will be made in the following pages to the Report on University Developments which was adopted by the Council of the A.U.T. on the 16th of December 1943 and published in *The Universities Review* five months later. The Association drew up supplementary reports, some of which have been issued only in draft at the time these lines are being written,[3] dealing with research in Arts, Science and Social Studies; with Applied Science in the universities; with the training of teachers; and with the regional and the international activities of the university. In general it must suffice to say of these reports that, though parts of them are open to criticism, they cover a wider field than any such documents had done previously. Memoranda of a somewhat similar kind were issued, during this same period, by a Committee on Post-War University Education appointed towards the end of 1941 by the British Association, and, in July 1944, published as a single Report. In this there were three main sections: (i) General Policy and Methods (age of entry, entrance tests, scholarships, residence, tutoring, standards of degrees, etc.); (ii) Replanning (education for the Public Service, the training of teachers, graduate study, adult education, university finance); (iii) Rehabilitation (libraries, laboratories and archives). This summary takes no

[1] *The Times*, 8 December 1943; 19 January 1944.
[2] Simon, p. 3.
[3] See note, p. 10, above.

account of an important section entitled 'World-wide university collaboration', which owes its interest to the presence on the Committee of representatives of the universities of no less than ten of the United Nations. In places some may think this Report rather superficial and its recommendations insufficiently argued: it surveys the ground, too, very much less thoroughly than the Report of the A.U.T. But other parts, as would be expected from the composition of the Committee, are extremely imaginative and suggestive and its publication is fully entitled to figure among the events of the year.

All these were significant and promising developments, and some felt that the keenly awakened interest to which they bore witness would justify the appointment of a Government Committee on the Universities, or even of a Royal Commission, with special reference to Redbrick. 'There are many', wrote Principal Murray, of Exeter:

'who regard the new universities, young as they are, as now a major problem. It is a composite problem. What can be done, for instance, to qualify the dominance of technology in some of the great-city universities? How are the moral and social influences that are comparatively easy to sustain under residential conditions to be assured under other conditions? What are the optimum size and milieu for universities, and how can they be assured for universities yet to be, if the educational advances of the coming era should call them into being? These questions are very far from exhausting the problem.

'I do not believe that very radical thinking and far-reaching expectancies are not rife about the new universities, or that there is any adequate response to them but a Royal Commission.'[1]

This suggestion, however, aroused no great enthusiasm, and, at the time of writing, has produced no result. 'What is a Royal Commission going to do for the civic universities,' asked Sir Charles Grant Robertson, 'except waste three or more years taking evidence and finally recommending what the civic universities already know they require.... All that is required is the money.'[2]

Meanwhile, progress was being made with inquiries that were proceeding into the schools and the provision of teachers for them. Lord Fleming's Committee on the Public Schools, appointed by Mr. Butler in July 1942, had issued, at his request, in April 1943, a special report on the abolition of tuition fees in grant-aided Secondary schools. This revealed a sharp division of opinion within the Committee, eleven members of which signed a Majority Report in favour of abolition and seven opposed it. One result of the cleavage was the precipitation, during the year under review, of a controversy on the Public School

[1] *The Times*, 26 October 1943. [2] Op. cit., 29 October 1943.

question which would have developed more appropriately after the main Report had been published. This, appearing in July 1944, was found to be unanimous. The method it proposed for dealing with the anomalous position of the Public (and the Preparatory) Schools in relation to the general educational system was equally far removed from the conservative attitude of *laissez-faire* and the radical cry for abolition. It produced two schemes, to be considered in conjunction, for bringing these schools into line with the system, the most striking characteristic of which was that they were purely voluntary: no school need apply for association unless it desired to do so.

Whether because attention was diverted from the Report by the stirring news from the War fronts, or because it appeared at that time of the year when school-teachers prepare to take their ease, it was received with a silence broken only by an occasional letter in the Press from 'Father of Five' and an occasional prize distributor, groping after the wherewithal for the customary 'few remarks' at the Old School Speech Day. The Public Schools, however, are no doubt thinking the more.

In April 1944 came the Report of Sir Arnold McNair's Committee, which had been appointed just over two years previously 'to consider the supply, recruitment and training of teachers and youth leaders'. Part of this Report, like the interim Fleming Report, showed a division of opinion, five members advocating the establishment of University Schools of Education, federating approved training institutions, and five preferring an alternative scheme for area training, based upon a reconstitution of the existing Joint Boards. This matter of detail, however, was a minor one in comparison with the Committee's numerous unanimous recommendations, which had gathered great urgency owing to the reforms forecast by the Education Bill and the projected raising of the school-leaving age at so early a date. Before the War there were about 200,000 full-time teachers, with an annual wastage of about 12,000. A large number of these have already gone, and for one reason or another will not return, while many others will drop out at the first opportunity. To an estimated minimum loss of 50,000 must be added a fresh 50,000 who will be needed immediately the War is over to meet new obligations, while ultimately the projected reforms will require not less than 40,000 more. For nearly five years, however, practically no men and very few women have been able to graduate outside the Faculties of Science, Engineering and Medicine and the teachers' training colleges have been as sadly depleted as the universities. The country will therefore need, not only the return of its existing teachers to the schools at the earliest possible moment, but 100,000 new ones immediately, 40,000

more within a few years and a regular intake of from 15,000 to 17,000 annually. Where are all those teachers to come from?

The McNair Committee proposes to throw open the teaching profession to young people from Post-primary schools, as well as from Secondary schools and universities, and to men and women from other callings who are found to have the qualities essential in the part-time or the full-time teacher. Women who left the profession on marriage are to be enabled to return to it if they are willing and able to do so. Steps are to be taken to bring the importance of the profession to the notice of senior pupils and to prevent the early withdrawal from school of potential recruits owing to economic pressure. Efficiency is to be increased by the lengthening of the period of non-graduate training to three years. The iniquitous 'pledge', by which boys and girls at school bound themselves, in exchange for financial aid, to train and teach after leaving the university, is to be abolished. These are no more than a few points from one of the most outstanding educational documents of the century.

But the most remarkable thing about this Report was the fact that the Government started to implement it almost upon its publication —an 'unprecedented course', as Mr. Butler himself remarked, but none too bold for the needs of these vital days. At the beginning of May, the Ministry of Education circularized Local Authorities, urging that suitable pupils should be transferred from Senior to Secondary schools, without giving any 'pledge', as soon as possible. Shortly afterwards it issued the outline of a scheme for the emergency training of teachers from the Services: the courses are to last for a year, with one month of it as vacation; they will involve no tuition fees; maintenance allowances will be available; and the trainees will be grouped in colleges of about two hundred students each. Such steps as these may not wholly allay the fears of those who have experience of the shortage from the inside, but at least they show that the authorities are aware of its existence.

To all these educational developments of the year must be added another of equal potentiality with any of them which has received none of their publicity. This is the creation of a body known as the Foundation for Educational Research.

In no field is research thought less of in this country than in education. Even training, an obvious preliminary to successful teaching, is often looked down upon; research is positively despised. Individuals and associations of teachers have carried it on from time to time, but there has been little co-ordination and results have been meagre. The Foundation proposes to undertake specific research of its own, to grant financial help for research to others and to collect and distribute

information about experimental methods for the benefit of educationists as a whole. Since much progress has been held up in the past for want of exact knowledge, we may hope, in years to come, to see great advances, both in the organization of education and in classroom technique, as a result of the Foundation's activities.

These are some of the outstanding developments of the past twelve months, which, were it not for the fear of shouting before the battle is won, might be called an *annus mirabilis*. But how, it may be asked, does Redbrick enter into it and why is there any need that it should be surveyed from Redbrick's windows? The answer is that Redbrick's place is at the very centre of it all.

Consider where Redbrick stands: in, or near, the heart of a large city, which itself is set in a populous district, where education is the problem of millions. Consider on whom it draws: on boys and girls who have gone through Primary schools, Grammar schools, Modern schools, Technical schools; on young people who have been attracted from business to university because the university is in their midst. Soon, one would suppose, if the Fleming Report takes root, it will draw also from the Public Schools and will send them an increasing number of teachers. Already its graduates are found in schools of every type and its School of Education is a centre of Secondary training: it may well, before long, be brought into direct contact with Primary schools and the colleges which train their teachers too. Its extra-mural lecturers go all over the area which it serves and thus get into touch with people of all ages, classes and occupations, whose only bond is a common desire for learning.

The ancient university deals in the main with one social class and throws no roots either into the life of a city or into the lives of ordinary people. The Public School and the Preparatory School are in these respects exaggerations of the ancient university. The main stream of English education, following the main course of English life, flows from the Primary school, through the Secondary school, to the modern university. As education becomes more and more nearly democratic, the stream following this course will swell, and Redbrick, once passed over by the 'good' schools and frankly despised by the 'best' schools, will emerge as the leading educational force in the country. With more adequate means, with wider opportunities and with deeper responsibilities, she will attract abler professors, lecturers and research fellows and through them will leave a firmer impress on her students. On the one hand, then, she is most keenly interested in the educational developments of to-day and to-morrow; on the other, she is in duty bound to practise the strictest introspection and

attack her most deeply rooted faults. If I gird at her, it is because I love her, and because I am more jealous than ever for her achievement and her reputation in these vital days.

The arrangement of this book demands perhaps a word of explanation. Redbrick's post-war problems are so numerous that it has not been easy to select the most urgent, nor, for that matter, to control them at all, so quickly do they come tumbling out of one's mind. In the first chapter, however, I have tried to isolate the problems which are essentially of the moment, and in the second I have treated others, already under consideration, which must come to the front at a very early date. The third chapter deals with a group of problems which, as it seems to me, Redbrick has not gone far towards solving—or even towards attacking. In the fourth I return to the abuse which (perhaps because so many of us are involved in it) we show less inclination to tackle than any other. The fifth, at the suggestion of many correspondents, goes farther into the very fruitful theme of the university and the life of its region: part of this chapter has already appeared in *The Political Quarterly*. The remainder of the book is so topical as to need no comment. The three appendices, consisting of addresses to special audiences on problems referred to either here or in *Red Brick University*, may be of some interest from the standpoint of presentation.

Chapter One

REDBRICK IN TRANSITION

I shall never forget Redbrick in war-time. You should have seen it on that grey November morning, after our Great Raid. Out of the hundreds of bombs that fell a couple of miles away on the centre of the city, we got no more than two—but what a mess they made! One went clean through the roof of the Library, though that was a make-shift building, soon to give place to another: it was for the books that we grieved. The other turned a wing of the main building into a heap of rubble—that wing, if you remember, that houses the overflow from the Administrative Department and the University Press. And almost worse than the demolition was the damage. Doors off their hinges, windows gone—and of course the next evening *would* bring the first snowstorm of the winter!

In a day or two the glass was swept up, the doors were repaired, the Library was licking its wounds and new quarters had been found for the two homeless departments. But no daylight penetrated the boarded windows and we moved about a building half-lit by low-power bulbs ('Economy in war-time!') like a community of shadows. How much more eerie it all looked now that the daylight was gone! A chance visitor must have wondered where he had come as he groped his way between the columns of sandbags and through open doors caught glimpses of rows of beds—the dormitories of the fire-watchers. And out of the dim distance would emerge, not normal undergraduates, but shadowy figures in the uniform of Army, Navy or Air Force; only when they came near enough to let one see the books they were carrying did the place begin to look like a university after all.

Yet for all the devastation, and the dimness, and the depletion, Redbrick never once gave you the impression of being dead. Except on that Black Monday after the fall of France, when we all crept about, speaking in low voices, as if someone in our midst had died, the buildings had always an air of suppressed activity. The undergraduate societies still went on; Union elections were held with an uncanny normality; the University magazine contained the same old weary jests; the same notices appeared, exhorting the greatly reduced body of freshmen to do their duty by a not so greatly reduced number of meetings. There was a rather noticeable atmosphere around us of 'Business as usual'; and one felt that, if on some fine day in 1943 the War had suddenly collapsed and demobilization had been accom-

plished with an impossible celerity, life at Redbrick would instantly have swung into its wonted rhythm and the War would have been—well, almost!—forgotten. Even in the days of our lowest vitality, when we had not quite recovered from the shock and disorganization of the bombing, one thought of Redbrick as a wounded soldier, limping and swathed in bandages, but looking around him eagerly to discover how he could best 'carry on'.

That much for the outside view: and what of the University's internal functioning? Well, during the first year—the 'phoney' year—some of us who have a vivid recollection of how the universities were depopulated in 1914 could never get over our amazement that the second Great War should see us with 70 per cent of our normal attendance. And, even to the bitter end, there were many ways in which things were surprisingly near-normal. Comparatively few professors went on war service; many lecturers remained with us whom we might have expected to lose; the undergraduates' military education (S.T.C. and the like) was planned so skilfully that it disorganized lectures considerably less than the pre-war preparations for Panto Day. Most graduate work came to an end, but both research funds and direction were still at the disposal of those who were able to use them, and the learned reviews which Redbrick publishes went on appearing, though in a queerly shrunken form. Some of the Faculties, such as Medicine and Engineering, which the Government considered of national importance, actually 'registered students' (to use Redbrick's unlovely language) in greater numbers than ever before. The chief casualty was the Faculty of Arts.

Not for about two years after the War began was it put out of action. Arts men, like Science men, could at first go before the Joint Recruiting Board, and, if approved for the purpose, could stay at the University until they were nineteen with a guaranteed minimum of three terms' attendance. But, when the calling-up age was lowered to eighteen and a half, the Joint Board machinery was scrapped, except for scientists, and the schools were notified that deferment would no longer be possible for fit men of military age who were studying, or had intended to study, in the Faculty of Arts.

'Does it really matter?' asked the man in the street. 'How much does it all amount to?'

One of the finest short pieces of academic writing, in my view, which has come out of the War is the script of a broadcast by Professor V. H. Galbraith which appeared at a time when we in the Arts Faculties were at our most depressed as a result of the latest and unkindest cut in our student body, which denuded our classrooms of all fit men above the age of eighteen. The broadcast, which it is diffi-

cult not to quote in full, is a simple yet eloquent description of what the Arts Faculty stands for—dealing 'not with this or that aspect of knowledge, but with man in the round: with man as he really is with a life to lead and a soul to save'.

'The arts faculty, I believe, is the most practical of all the faculties, just because it studies the big questions and studies them in a non-specialized, non-technical way. It is the one that affects the life of the citizen. Every man has to make decisions of vital importance for his own life. He has, for example, to decide what church he will attend, or stay away from. He has to decide what woman he will marry, what school he will send his children to, which political party he will belong to. The fact that you are a physicist, a chemist, or an expert electrician will not, as such, give you the slightest help in answering any one of these questions. Why not? Because they are not scientific: they are human. Now, the sort of thinking a man does when he chooses a church, or a wife, or a political party, is precisely the sort of thinking which an arts faculty seeks to develop. Here the right decision is as much a matter of feeling as a matter of thought. . . . The arts student pursuing at his university, perhaps rather abstractly, the truth about great matters is simply acquiring a true sense of values. It is this which makes all the difference between good and bad decisions.'[1]

That was how we felt about the waste in the early months of 1943, and how we have since felt, in those months, which can never be recalled, that have followed them. The education of young men in feeling and in judgement, the training of them in the lessons of the past, had almost ceased. Our universities were becoming 'specialized technical schools'. And we Arts teachers, who sincerely believe that French is as important as physics and refuse to admit that history is bunk, felt very keenly the depreciatory attitude taken up towards Arts subjects both by the man in the street, who is the product of our imperfect education of the past, and can only be pitied, and by the Government, who ought to know better. 'Do you seriously mean to tell me', remarked a Drabtown business man who buttonholed me on the tram one day in the summer of 1940, 'that seventy per cent of your boys and girls are still at school? Learning Latin and Geography and Literature and—and all that sort of thing, when we're engaged in the greatest life-and-death struggle that the world has ever known? What in the world do Latin and Geography matter now? Close all the universities, I say, and get down to the War. That sort of thing's all right for peace time.'

[1] 'The Lost Years.' In *The Listener*, 13 May 1943, p. 567.

Is that attitude, ridiculous and deplorable as it sounds to the academic mind, so very different from the official attitude taken up by the Ministry of Labour and National Service? Every attempt was made by enlightened people to alter it. *The Times* protested strongly against what it hardly exaggerated in terming 'the wholesale suppression of the arts courses' as being 'gravely prejudicial to the national interest both now and after the war'.[1] 'The grave effects of this do not appear at the moment,' wrote Sir Richard Livingstone, 'but they will be increasingly felt in the future. . . . It is . . . fatal not to provide the trained intellects necessary for the world of peace; and graduates take longer to produce than aeroplanes or guns.'[2] 'In bleeding the arts faculties white,' concluded Professor Galbraith, 'I fear we may be lowering the general standard of intellectual life in every university in the country.'[3]

Let us look at some of the ways in which this policy worked out in practice. Here was a History Honours man, in his second session, hoping to take a brilliant degree in two years' time and then to spend the rest of his life teaching the subject to our neglect of which we chiefly owe this world-tragedy. He was in a low medical class, though not in the lowest of all, so, after being refused deferment and forced into uniform, he was excused the usual course of physical training and put into the office to add up figures and act as what his somewhat elementally minded sergeant termed a 'clurk'. Here were two linguists snatched from the University only six months before taking their degrees. One was a bespectacled youth of amazing fluency in German: he was accepted for 'Intelligence', and, after nearly killing himself in the endeavour to become a motor-cyclist, for which, as one glance at him would have shown, Providence had never intended him, was posted to a certain port where for two and a half years he performed routine duties, occasionally speaking a few words of French. The other, a fine athlete, of half-Russian parentage, who speaks four languages, was told that 'Intelligence' was 'full', and so went through the mill of an infantry regiment, in company with youths from London slums, eventually rising to the rank of corporal, and speaking no word of any language but his own. A well-meaning chaplain told him that it was a wonderful thing for his character and that he would emerge from the Army like gold tried in the fire. Quite possibly he will—but one might suppose that he would have been of more use to his country in Russia.

These are typical average cases of misfits and misjudgements: very much more flagrant ones would be easy to find. I am not complaining,

[1] *The Times*, 10 February 1942; 22 December 1942.
[2] T.E.S., 8 July 1944. [3] *The Listener*, loc. cit.

however, of the pushing of historians and linguists into the infantry so much as of the removal of them from the universities. If they had numbered hundreds of thousands, it would have been a different matter, but probably all the hard cases combined would not have exceeded a total of two thousand a year, and the influence of these men and women on the post-war world—an influence now at best postponed for some years and in many cases lost for ever—would have been incalculably more potent than anything they ever did to promote the defeat of Hitler.

Consider what has happened. For four years very few women, and, except for a few crocks, hardly any men, have graduated in the Humanities. The men raise the most serious problem, for from them several key professions, such as the Church, the Bar and the highest ranks of the Civil Service, are almost exclusively recruited. These men have been cut off, first at nineteen, then at eighteen and a half and at eighteen, from a continuous course of study. They will never make good what they have lost: let us be quite clear about that. Some of them, who had kept sufficient terms before being called up, will be awarded a 'war degree', so that, if they wish to, they can call themselves 'B.A.(War)'. Others will have to put in another year of desultory study before gaining the same distinction. But neither class will, in any sense, have had a university education. The best, of course, will overcome the impediment by educating themselves. The remainder will be disabled for life as literally as if they had lost an arm or a leg—only they will not receive a pension. The tragic thing is that they have contracted this disability because their studies were the constructive ones of peace and not the destructive ones of war. Had they been engaged in sciences which would enable them to build bombers or manufacture poison gases they would have been left to finish their courses undisturbed. Because their studies were only in languages, history, economics, foreign civilizations—the only studies which will teach the nations how to live together in peace—they were ruthlessly truncated. And yet our politicians are continually reminding us how unprepared we were for the post-war world in 1918 and exhorting us not to think we have won the War of 1939 unless we also win the Peace that follows it. How is this going to be done when so many of the potential leaders among our peace-winners have been robbed of their training?

The worst effects of this short-sighted and unintelligent policy will be seen, in the near future, in the schools. The Ministry of Labour, fortunately, was able to look far enough ahead to adopt a policy of keeping women teachers in the schools and dissuading any who might wish to do so from joining the Auxiliary Services. Girls at

school, too, were allowed to enter upon teachers' training courses and women undergraduates to graduate, even in Arts subjects, provided they were going on to take a course of professional training. But these provisions were insufficient even to maintain an adequate supply of teachers within the schools already in being. During the very years when men preparing to teach—and this includes men outside the A.1 health category—were being sent into the Army, vast plans for educational expansion were receiving a welcome tempered only by the criticism that they failed to go far enough. The school-leaving age was to be raised to fifteen: that meant more teachers. New types of Secondary school were to be created and new schools in large numbers were to be built: that meant more teachers. Institutions for compulsory part-time education were to be set up: that meant more teachers. Classes all over the country were to be reduced in size: that meant more teachers. Every young person capable of profiting by a university education was to have one: that meant more teachers. In the shortest possible time after the end of the War the leaving age was to be raised to sixteen: and that would mean more teachers still. And on top of all this, here was Sir Malcolm Robertson, Chairman of the British Council, calling for 'teachers by the thousand'—'a national service', as a critic put it, 'an army of teachers ready to go anywhere in the world in order to disseminate the British character and outlook'.[1]

Where were the teachers to come from? Where *are* they to come from? It takes a man or woman three, four, five years after leaving school to qualify for a post. Many of the smaller departments at Redbrick, for the last three years, have produced not a single Honours graduate intending to teach. It will be from three to four years more, after demobilization has begun, before they are producing them again in appreciable quantity.

Was it necessary to hamstring ten thousand careers and to sabotage the post-war effort in order to beat Hitler? If it was, then there could have been no alternative, but many of us wonder——! Perhaps the Government's demobilization plans will enlighten us.[2] Will the rule be: Teachers and youth leaders first? Or will some unintelligent system be devised which will keep thousands of vital people, key-men and key-women in the post-war world (and, as things stand at present, *all* teachers are that) eating their hearts out in routine duties? That is one of the most important social questions which have to be answered.

[1] T.E.S., 14 August 1943 (letter) and 28 August 1943 ('Teachers and National Service').

[2] The proposals for the immediate future, published in September 1944, as this book is passing through the press, only increase our misgivings.

II

Back to Redbrick now, back to memories of the war-years; and let us record what effect this wholesale removal of undergraduates had upon the Arts Faculties.

In my own experience, the worst effect was depression. That is not apparently the experience of everyone and the other side of the picture ought to be shown. 'Realizing', wrote Mr. H. C. Dent, for example, 'that they had at best little more than a year of university life before them, freshmen everywhere cast aside their traditional irresponsibility and devoted themselves to their studies with an earnestness which surprised everyone save themselves.'[1] I can only say that I saw nothing of this. The freshman generally considers, rightly or wrongly, that he is entitled to spread his net wide during his first year, to join a vast number of societies, try out various games, take part in all kinds of Union activities, and so on, before settling down to two or three years of concentrated specialization when the Intermediate—often little more formidable than the Higher School Certificate, which he has already passed—is over. The effect of the knowledge that he would be called up at the end of his first year, or early in his second, was merely to make him feel the uselessness of doing any work at all. Whether for this or for other reasons, first-year examination results in Arts subjects were worse than they had ever previously been in Redbrick's history.

This means more than it may seem to. It means the destruction of traditions and standards which have taken a long time to build up and which will have to be built up afresh after the War. People outside the universities do not always realize the enormous differences in tone and efficiency that exist between one School and another. The remark one sometimes hears, that X—— is a 'better university' than Y——, is quite meaningless. The only comparisons possible are between individual Schools at X—— and Y——. A first-rate professor, a devoted and hard-working staff, will take twenty years to create what a bad appointment to the Chair, when the professor retires, can destroy in no more than a couple of sessions. A series of poor years as regards entrants will produce the same result, only more slowly. And that is what the War has done to nearly all the Arts Schools of the universities. There have been few graduate students—perhaps none—to stand for the Schools' tradition and to look after the younger people as only graduates of the same School can. There have been no men in the third and fourth years to set a high standard for the first

[1] *Education in Transition*, London, 1944, p. 138.

and second; and the women, their work sadly impeded by the strain of air-raids and the claims of National Service, have been too closely intent on scraping through their examinations to have thought for much else. Few Schools, again, have not lost some inspiring lecturer to the Forces, and some, through the operation of the retiring age or for other reasons, have seen the departure of their Head. All these causes have produced a weakening of traditions, and a lowering of standards, which will not be quickly set right.

A third effect of the War has been upon the age of entry. As soon as the call-up age was fixed at nineteen, boys and girls naturally began to come up at seventeen instead of at eighteen, and, when it was lowered to eighteen, a substantial number attempted to register at sixteen, so as to have two years' study, and, in some universities, to qualify for a 'B.A.(War)', without returning when the War was over. Redbrick had never had any statutory downward limit of age for entry, but, when admittance was sought by children of sixteen—and, in a few instances, not even quite of that—a resolution had to be hurried through the Senate fixing the minimum age for registration at seventeen and a half.

But the most disastrous effect of the call-up upon the university Arts Faculties was the Long Vacation Term—where this was brought into being. In Science, where much of the undergraduates' time is spent in laboratory work which cannot be done at home, there may be strong arguments for a Fourth Term: in Arts, there are none. Even with three ten-week terms it is hard for the intelligent but lecture-ridden undergraduate to get through all his necessary reading—let alone his thinking—but with four terms it is absolutely impossible. In order that four-term students may be pushed safely through their examinations they have to be given prefabricated material and pre-digested reading: the lecturer, that is to say, must present his pupils with summaries, made by himself, of original and critical works and of portions of text-books which they have not the time to read, and these they must assimilate and serve up to the examiners as though they had read the originals themselves. Unless one is to leave whole sections of the syllabus uncovered, there is no other way. Therefore, when the Ministry of Labour coyly suggested to the Universities that it would be in the national interest for their young people to graduate more rapidly, the wise ones replied: 'No: even in war-time we must not lose sight of the meaning of education.' Others, however, reflected that, when the War ended and ex-Service men and women began pouring in, they would be glad to have as few war-time students left ungraduated as possible. And so they fell to the suggestion of the Fourth Term—some of them almost eagerly. This innovation cannot

fail to have an adverse influence on traditions and standards in the years of reconstruction.

It is perfectly true, on the other hand, that full educational use has not been made of the Long Vacation in peace-time, and a remark on this may justify a brief digression. There can be no question of the Vacation's being shortened: if anything is to be shortened, it should be the ten-week term. Both staff and students need the Long Vacation badly. The passage-at-arms between the Oxford professor and the Oxford college tutor:

P. 'You College Tutors don't know what it is to stare into the fire and think.'

C.T. 'Ah, that's what we call the Long Vacation!'[1]

is something more than a veiled attack on our English climate. Nor is it only at Oxford that at the end of the session 'everyone, whether don or undergraduate, professes to be dead beat and is'.[2] The problem that both Redbrick and (if only it knew it) Oxbridge have to solve is how to make the Vacation of greater value to the undergraduate. But he harder solution to find is Redbrick's.

'Most of our students', observes the Association of University Teachers, in a recent report,

'come from homes where they have no private room or library, where they are continually called upon to help with housework, where they are continually distracted by calls to take part in the amusements of family and friends. Some of them take employment for a considerable part of the vacation, because of financial stringency. Very few belong to homes where study is understood and really encouraged. It cannot be said that the Long Vacation fulfils the function that would justify its existence.'[3]

The report then advocates the institution (except, it would appear, for students of languages, social science and other subjects where work outside the university is essential) of a Long Vacation Term of 'say six weeks'. This would be utilized, not 'for the extension of formal lectures and teaching' but 'as a period for the stimulation of private reading and discussion, organized mainly to this end. We can confidently expect', it adds, 'that much more and better work will be accomplished in such conditions than in the students' homes. The demands on the staff would be relatively small and the private work of the staff would be extremely little interfered with.'[4]

For myself, I should deprecate the institution of such a Term,

[1] R. R. Marett, *A Jerseyman at Oxford*, Oxford, 1941, p. 124.
[2] Ibid.
[3] A.U.T., April 1943, par. 3 (d) iii.
[4] Ibid.

otherwise than by departmental initiative. Undergraduates who live in Drabtown, or have friends there with whom they can stay, enjoy the full use of the University Library, with access to the book-stacks and ample space to work in. Ample, indeed! Walking in August through the Library of a University which has some eight hundred students resident in its locality, it is rarely that I find more than thirty or forty there at any one time. Hostel accommodation should be open during the Long Vacation to any students who give good notice of their intention to reside and financial help for this purpose should be available for any who can show both merit and need. In most progressive departments programmes of vacation work are already provided: if here and there a professor can conveniently hold weekly seminars or discussion groups for his pupils this seems a wholly admirable thing. But to make this compulsory might often lay too heavy a burden on any staff engaged in research—nor, though it may sometimes be desirable, does it ever (given library and hostel facilities) seem to me necessary.

However, the demobilization period will soon be upon us and what a Vice-Chancellor has aptly called the 'Battle of the Bulge' will have begun. And for a short time such questions as this of the Long Vacation Term will be crowded out by more pressing ones. Once again the parallel of a quarter of a century ago suggests itself. For two years after the last War departments were swollen, lecture-courses had to be duplicated, syllabuses were simplified, examination standards were lowered, lecturers were appointed who in normal times would not have passed a selection committee and whom, when the period of urgency had passed, it proved difficult to dislodge. The same problems will reappear, probably in aggravated form, and this time, though on the one hand we ought to be prepared for them, there is a general apprehension that they may not be so quickly resolved. That the Battle of the Bulge, in short, may become permanent.

III

On the question of university numbers when the flow of ex-Service students has ceased very little argument is possible. We shall probably all agree that, in a world in which Secondary education is compulsory till fifteen or sixteen, and Part-time education till eighteen, full-time Higher education should be denied to none who are fitted for it. This principle, though not specifically stated, seems to be in the mind of the Minister of Education when he observes: 'The aim of a national policy must be to ensure that high ability is not handicapped by the

accidents of place of residence or lack of means in securing a university education.'[1] All who can pass an entrance test which must not be lower than at present should be admitted to the university; and those whose parents cannot afford to pay for them should be admitted without fee, and, if necessary, with a maintenance allowance large enough not only to keep them in reasonable comfort but to compensate their parents for the loss of their earnings. Some think that university fees should be abolished altogether, but for my own part I do not. I support the abolition of fees in Secondary schools because, Secondary education being now compulsory, it is as illogical to charge for it as for the registration of births. But since Higher education is voluntary, it seems to me that those who can afford to pay for it should do so, proportionately to their means, and should regard this, not as an imposition, but as a privilege.

University education for all who are fitted for it, then, but not, in the strictest sense, for 'all who can profit thereby'.[2] For most boys and girls of 'Grammar School' type can profit, to some extent at least, by university life. We need a more stringent test than that. And the test must be twofold in character. First, a certain standard must have been reached in general knowledge and breadth of interest, in order to do away with that academic narrowness to which further reference will be made later and which is so largely a question for the schools. Secondly, the candidate must qualify in the special subject or subjects which he proposes to read, and, in doing so, should be required to give evidence of sufficient scholarliness of mind to make him a suitable recipient of academic teaching. To take one example of what I mean by this, I would rather admit a candidate in English literature who gave signs of a critical and independent mind and of some capacity for literary appreciation than one with an encyclopaedic knowledge of dates and facts who could write or repeat pages of poetry, but whose intelligence appeared not to surpass that of the proverbial parrot.

Such should be the entrance test, supported, if thought desirable, by a school report and an interview, and planned by all the universities in conjunction in such a way that any one university, or associated group of universities, would accept the examination conducted by any other. But, once this type of test was established, and expense was no longer a bar to entry, would the numbers in the universities be so very much greater than at present? The National Union of Students, which habitually goes to enthusiastic extremes, would like to see the university population, during the next ten to twenty years,

[1] *Educational Reconstruction*, London, 1943, par. 98.
[2] A.U.T., May 1944, par. 4, p. 53.

increase from its pre-war 50,000 to 200,000 or even 250,000. It is quite common to hear or read the view that university numbers ought to be doubled.[1] The A.U.T. calculates 'on roughly a 50 per cent increase of our student population',[2] and speaks with commendable caution about even this. For myself, I would go lower still: from 30 to 40 per cent would be an outside estimate; and I should not be surprised if, after a period of dubiously successful experiment, the figures were stabilized at no more than an additional 10,000. No such estimate, of course, can be more than a guess, but it might be worth while setting down the facts on which my own guess is based.

1. Of my own pupils, and of the undergraduates whom I examine at other universities, quite 10 per cent, and in some years 20 per cent or more, are unfitted for university study. Most of these are the non-scholarship pupils who have scraped through an entrance examination which at present comes too early and is not very suitable for its purpose; a few of them, however, hold scholarships and were considered 'clever' at school, but find they have neither taste nor ability for higher studies. The majority of these, on a more adequate type of test, would fail to get through. Assuming the numbers to be reduced in this way from 50,000 to 40,000, can there really be 60,000 more who at present are kept out of the universities solely because of the cost? Thirty years ago, yes: I know of many boys of that time who wasted their undoubted gifts through lack of opportunity. But to-day I seldom find among Higher School Certificate candidates boys and girls who would do well in a university but fail to go to one; and several correspondents who are inspectors of Evening School classes say that to find the academic type of mind among these young people in business is very rare. All this suggests that, if more suitable and efficient entrance tests are applied, our numbers will not rise so far above their pre-war level.

2. It seems very unlikely that, except in teaching, the outlet for university graduates will be appreciably wider than heretofore. If this proves to be the case, any undue swelling of numbers will before long subside. A boy may be anxious to go to the university if this will fit him for his trade or profession, but if, on leaving it, he is going to line up in competition with rivals three years younger, he will hardly recommend his little brother to follow his example.

3. I believe—and certainly I hope—that we shall never as a people send our sons and daughters to universities solely because it is 'done'. England is often compared unfavourably with the United States because that country sends nearly ten times as many young people to

[1] E.g., Simon, p. 14; R. E. Priestley, in *The Listener*, 11 November 1943.
[2] A.U.T., May 1944, par. 11, pp. 53–4.

universities as we do. But, leaving aside the fact that a large proportion of the institutions to which those young people go would not be described by us as universities at all, there can be no question in the mind of anyone who knows them that a majority, and perhaps a large majority, of American undergraduates ought never to be where they are. The university population of a country furnishes absolutely no guide to its relative intelligence. Compare even the weakest of our universities with the universities of a country where tuition and maintenance are free, entrance is merely by letter of good character from school, degrees are awarded mainly for attendance at lectures and examinations are largely a formality. What basis of comparison is there? I hope, before I die, to see a better educated Britain, but I expect it to come, not by an increase of 300, or even 100, per cent in the university population, but by improvements in, and extensions of, Primary and Secondary education, together with the provision of numerous types of Higher college, alternative with the university, above the Secondary leaving stage. Some of these might be affiliated to the universities, but most would not. Polytechnics, technological institutions, schools of domestic science, advanced language schools, institutes of social science and international relations—these would help to make us a better educated, and a *more appropriately* educated, people than a policy of large increases in the number or the size of our universities.

The foregoing considerations have reference only to boys and girls entering the universities through the normal channels. A good deal has been said recently about the possibilities of admitting persons of mature years, few of whom, at present, chiefly for financial reasons, take advantage of the methods which examining bodies have adopted to smooth their path to matriculation. This is a matter peculiarly appropriate for discussion just now, since the McNair Committee, in its search after new sources for recruits to the teaching profession, came to the conclusion 'that there are intelligent men and women still comparatively young who, after a spell in some other occupation, . . . would adopt teaching as a profession if a clear way into the profession were available and made known'.[1] The Committee recommended 'that the Board of Education should offer a maintenance allowance (with adequate additions where appropriate for wife and children) to men and women of maturer years who desire to be trained for the teaching profession and are judged fit for such training'.[2]

By no means all such candidates would pass through a university, and there are several other professions, notably the Church, which would gain by having more recruits of this kind. The A.U.T. con-

[1] McN.R., par. 77, p. 23. [2] Op. cit., par. 80, p. 24.

siders that the presence of adult students, particularly those who come with the help of Trade Union and similar grants, is of great value to the universities as well as to society in general'.[1] No-one with any experience of such students would question this. The younger undergraduates are impressed, and sometimes influenced, by their earnestness and industry, as well as by the very fact that they have thought a university education of sufficient worth to justify their making sacrifices and taking risks in order to obtain it. They will also, I think, benefit by their greater experience of life: the opportunity of mingling, on equal terms, with persons considerably older than themselves is not one given to many adolescents.

The chief difficulty about admitting adult students arises in the organization of the teaching. When only one or two are found in a department, and these have come at their own expense, impelled by an overwhelming conviction that they can stay the course, they will probably have sufficient ability to adapt themselves to the absorption of material in a form designed for less mature minds—though that does not mean that they will derive the maximum of benefit from it. But, when the doors are thrown open more widely, two things will happen: first, the standard of the entrants will decline, and secondly, they will come in greater numbers. In that case, there would seem to be no expedient other than separate classes for them, probably of the seminar type, and this arrangement has in turn two great disadvantages—that they would then mix far less with their younger fellow-students and that the expense of admitting them, already heavy, because of maintenance and family allowances, would be still further raised. As the A.U.T. also remarks, 'the pre-university educational facilities available to such would-be students need to be overhauled so that they are well prepared for a university entrance test.[2] This could probably be effectively organized through the University Extension Board and the Workers' Educational Association, but it would involve still further expense and labour, and some critics might doubt if these would be compensated for by the results. Personally, I am inclined to think that they would and I am eager to see experiments made as soon as is practicable.

It is right to point out that, bold as such experiments will seem today, we may, in a decade or two, look back with positive amusement at a time when we thought them so. Every university teacher is familiar with the phenomenon of late development: the callow, listless, or otherwise subnormal undergraduate suddenly becomes alert and mature in the course of a session, or even during a Long Vacation. With the establishment of compulsory part-time education to eighteen

[1] A.U.T., April 1943, par. 3 (v). [2] Ibid.

there may be very much more of this, and a consequent large-scale transference of part-timers to universities, which in turn will demand special pre-entrance legislation and entrance tests. Again, so much better educated will our young people between eighteen and twenty-five be than in the past that many of them may discover vocations for a university career during this period. And, finally, continued part-time instruction must stimulate all forms of adult education: for that reason alone, the present trickle of adults towards the universities may become a substantial stream.

What is the optimum number for a university? That is a question now a good deal under discussion, but it is not, perhaps, a very important one. The A.U.T. suggestion of from 2,000 to 5,000, provided that residence is possible for a large proportion of these,[1] seems reasonable. But it is not always realized that the answer depends as much on Faculties as on Hostels. The academic life of the university must centre in the Faculty and the Department, just as its more intimate 'home' life will centre in the Hostel or College. Most Faculties—certainly all Arts Faculties—will need between twelve and twenty Departments in order to comprehend all branches of knowledge for which there will be students. A Department, 'to deserve the name, must have a staff large enough to undertake teaching and research and to embody some corporate experience'.[2] The fulfilment of this condition would involve a Faculty of Arts of from 500 to 700 students. And no university, if it is to serve both national and local needs, and also to provide its undergraduates with breadth of experience, should have fewer than three Faculties: a more usual number is four or five. Thus we arrive at a minimum of approximately 2,000: the maximum, once the principle of general residence is agreed upon, will ultimately be determined by the amount of hostel accommodation that can be provided.

The Warden of All Souls, who from his Oxford home looks out complacently upon the 'wide variety' of English university life and finds it very good, would like to see an 'additional provision of universities, particularly in our great provincial centres'.[3] Not, I hope, while those there are still have inadequate buildings, disabling deficits and a skim-milk *clientèle* well creamed by Oxbridge. I can see no need for the creation of new universities, except that Charters should be given, within a reasonable period, to the University Colleges of Southampton, Exeter and Hull—perhaps also to Leicester—while a Charter for Nottingham has long been overdue. If England, instead

[1] A.U.T., May 1944, pars. 72–3, pp. 61–2. [2] Op. cit., par. 70, p. 61.
[3] W. G. S. Adams, 'The Modern Idea of a University,' in *Education Handbook*, Norwich, 1943, p. 21.

of eleven universities totalling 35,000 students, had sixteen with an average of 3,000 each, all reasonable demands would be met for a long time to come.

IV

What changes in staffing do the present numbers in our Arts Faculties necessitate? My own answer is: Very few. In *Red Brick University* I cited the case of a Faculty with 324 weekly lectures (some of which are 'offered' but not 'taken') and a staff of seventy-eight:[1] this means an average of about three and a half hours' lecturing a week. How the Vice-Chancellor of Birmingham University can say 'We must double our staffs to deal more adequately with our present numbers'[2] passes my comprehension, unless he is referring to the proposal that formal lectures should give place to expositions and discussions among small groups, and for that the present staffs would have to be multiplied by much more than two. With this question I have already dealt in some detail;[3] and, so far as I know, no critic has challenged my estimate that a completely tutorial system of instruction would, in a small university, involve additional expenditure of something like £120,000 a year. The change-over, if it came, would of course be effected gradually, so that it would be some time before the full cost was incurred. Nothing but this, I think, could justify our increasing the pre-war staff-student ratio, which, for our pre-war kind of programme, was quite adequate.

Another of the topics dealt with in *Red Brick University* which has been discussed a good deal of late is the Sabbatical Year. 'Periodic release from teaching duties', claims the A.U.T., 'is a burning necessity if minds are to be refreshed by sustained and undistracted intellectual effort.'[4] But a Long Vacation is free from teaching duties and it lasts for about thirteen weeks. If salaries are raised, so that lecturers no longer have to devote so much of their time to hack work, it should give ample time for sustained intellectual effort. Beyond this, Sabbatical leave should be allowed, as a privilege and not as a right, to professors and lecturers who can show that they need it, and, what is more, whose original work is of a quality and a quantity that suggest they would make good use of it. In too many cases a Sabbatical Year automatically granted would be devoted to a combination of gainful employment and pure relaxation. Let the principle be established that Sabbatical leave can be obtained for purposes of genuine research only, and that the researcher's full salary

[1] *Red Brick University*, p. 118. [2] *The Listener*, 11 November 1943, p. 553.
[3] *Red Brick University*, pp. 96–100. [4] A.U.T., April 1943, par. 3 (*e*).

will be paid him (less any part advanced to cover his necessary expenses) on his production of evidence that it has been used for this purpose, and a blow will have been struck for the cause of scholarship. But the automatic system will produce only further demoralization and a lowering of our already low standards.

None of the reports and discussions which have appeared say very much about the need for care in the making of permanent post-war appointments. During the last War—which provided the modern universities with their first experience of large-scale disorganization—a good many mediocre lecturers were appointed for lack of better, and some of them, unfortunately, were retained when the War was over, partly because this seemed the simplest way of coping with the flood of ex-Service students and partly because they had been for so long on the staff that there was a reluctance to get rid of them. Further problems arose where the flood was so copious as to necessitate a large addition to a Department's peace-time establishment. Nobody wanted a post-war appointment which was only temporary, for, when it came to an end, all the permanent posts would be filled. On the other hand, the universities knew that the numbers in the Departments when the flood had subsided might not justify the retention of the lecturers appointed to stem it. So some Departments took a chance and appointed to permanent posts people who should only have been temporary; others made temporary appointments and took the best men they could get; while others made do with the staff they had and grossly overworked them.

The same problem will arise again now, whether in a heightened or in a modified form cannot yet be predicted. On the one hand the post-war influx will certainly be much greater than in 1918–20; but, on the other, it is almost certain to come more gradually and be spread over a much longer period. There will be one important difference—namely, that almost anyone who accepts a temporary university post can, on its termination, find work in a Grammar School. So there would seem to be a case for a general agreement among the Universities to make all post-war appointments temporary except those to positions in existence before the War began. All permanent appointments should, of course, be made by a Committee, but in elections to lectureships the Head of the Department concerned should have the right of veto, for he alone knows the type of person who can do the job he needs done, and yet he cannot always give a reason—or, at any rate, a reason intelligible to the non-specialist—for disapproving of the Committee's choice. The best Committee for appointments other than to Chairs and Readerships is one of three: the Dean of the Faculty, the Head of the Department concerned and a senior member

of the Faculty Board who has some detailed knowledge of the subject which the successful candidate is to teach.[1]

The question nowadays most often being discussed, and one on which some Universities are already taking action, is that of salaries. In *Red Brick University* I suggested that the salaries in the lower grades were (by 1939 standards of living) fairly reasonable, but that Grade I should rise to £700, and Associate Professorships to £800; while full Professorships, which for young men might begin at £700, and for others at from £700 to £1,000, according to the candidates' age and experience, should go up by £50 yearly to £2,000. These figures were all based on pre-war costs of living, and, if appropriate additions are made, to meet increased costs, together with family allowances and grants in aid of research or travel for purposes connected with university work, they still seem to me adequate.

The salary usually paid in Grade III, against which many critics protest (allowing 20 per cent for increased living costs it would be £300, rising in five years to £350), is surely as high as is desirable, provided that an exceptionally good candidate can begin near the top of the scale and exceptionally good work bring more rapid promotion. I am sure that it is a great mistake in any profession to give young people large salaries. We want to attract into university life, not those who dream of easy money and ample leisure, but those who are willing, and indeed eager, to make sacrifices for the sake of an ideal. In particular, it would be wise to keep the Grade III salary somewhat below the corresponding stipend of the Secondary school teacher, so that migrations from university to school by those found not to have the qualities for academic work might not be without compensation. Since the university teacher is so highly paid in time he can hardly resent a slight compensatory disparity in money.

That Grade III should be a probationary grade is most important. Nobody can possibly tell beforehand if a candidate, however brilliant his academic record, is going to be successful in a university lectureship. So many qualities are involved: scholarship, initiative and staying power for research; technical excellence as a lecturer, and also (a very different thing) as a teacher; friendliness combined with firmness, together with patience, tact and judgement in dealing with undergraduates; industry, perseverance and punctiliousness, despite freedom from any such external control as obtains in a school—all these, and, as well as all these, the qualities needed by every professional man and woman. I am not convinced that what are in effect life appointments should be made even in Grade II, but I am certain

[1] See also *Red Brick University*, pp. 81–2.

that it should be possible to terminate a lecturer's first appointment at the end of five years without attaching any kind of stigma to him or giving him cause for grievance. His research should not suffer from any uncertainty that he may feel as to his future, for during these early years anything that he writes will be brief and limited in scope, his chief work being to learn his job as a teacher and to prepare himself, by reading, for more substantial research at a later date. Most Grade III lecturers, of course, will know long before five years are over that they are to be promoted into Grade II, so that the plea so often made that their research is impeded by uncertainty is seldom of much substance.

If Grade III ends at £350, and Grade I runs from £600 to £840 (pre-war £500 to £700), that leaves an adequate range of £250 for Grade II. Taking twenty-seven to thirty as the normal age for entry into that grade, annual increments of £25 would mean that the lecturer was approaching Grade I at the age of forty. It is during the intervening ten years that the more brilliant man will get his Chair at another university; but, as I have said before, it is most important that the man who does not should never, even in moments of depression, feel that he has nothing more to look forward to. He has another ten-year range of nearly £250 ahead of him, a salary of £840 (with the grants and allowances already postulated) before he is fifty, and the possibility of rising to £960 as a Reader or an Associate Professor. For a man who has either not applied for Chairs (disliking, perhaps, organization) or who has consistently failed to get one for nearly twenty years, that is surely a reasonably good position, though it does not—and it should not—compare with a long-established Professor's. The Professor must be among the leading men in his field, and that type of man, in academic life as elsewhere, deserves a high salary.

The proposals adopted by the Council of the A.U.T. in December 1943 differ considerably from these and the differences are fundamental enough to demand consideration.

The Council's first proposal is to abolish the probationary grade altogether. 'Some universities', they remark, use it 'in order to maintain a set of inadequately paid lower posts, and, except in these, nearly all Grade III teachers are found to deserve promotion to full lectureships.' This is a surprising statement, and quite contrary to my own experience, but presumably it could be supported by convincing evidence. They propose further to create a probationary period, within the lowest grade (which they would call Grade II), of only two years. This, I think, is hardly long enough. In any case, if the probationary principle is admitted, it would surely be in the interests of all

to describe the status as 'Probationary Grade', or Grade III. For, if a young man is appointed for two years to a Grade which normally belongs to the permanent staff, and is then dismissed, he has a more legitimate grievance, and possibly develops a more justifiable inferiority complex, than if he had been appointed to a lower Grade which all the world knows to be probationary.

The salary proposed by the Council for Grade II (in which the divisions IIa and IIb would be abolished) is £400—£425—£475 and then a scale rising by annual increments of £25 to £800. This is probably too high at the start: it will do no good to young men of from twenty-five to twenty-seven to be given £475 a year when their contemporaries in schools, often men of equal ability, are doing far more exacting work for little over £300. The age (thirty-eight to forty) at which the lecturer reaches the top of Grade II is about the same as in my own scheme, but the salary is about £200 higher. The salary scale proposed for Grade I is £800, rising by £25 annually, to £1,100—£260 ahead of my scale—while non-professorial Heads of Departments rise to £1,300. It is probable that the disparity between the two schemes is smaller than would appear, since I have merely added 20 per cent to a scale drawn up according to 1939 values, whereas the Report states that 'the scale of salaries submitted is based on the value of money in 1943'. Exact and stable figures could not be produced until the country has more nearly reached economic normality but I am clear that the general level of lecturers' salaries proposed by the A.U.T. is too high.

Their allocation to professors, on the other hand—'£1,500 as basic salary'—is too low. Not necessarily at the beginning; for, as I have said, there is a case for paying a brilliant young professor, lacking in experience, no more than the top figure for an Associate Professor, who will be over fifty, and have had at least the experience of a quarter of a century. The magic title 'Professor' should not necessarily at first carry with it a salary higher than anyone else's. But the professor should be on a scale too, and rise by at least £50 annually, so that, as his administrative duties become more onerous (and they always do) and his research becomes of greater value and importance, he has less reason to be troubled about money. On the 1943 scale of values adopted by the A.U.T. the professor's salary should rise by £50 annually from £1,500 to £2,500. This might, however, suitably be reduced, provided the lower grades were scaled down too.

The principle of a salary scale for the professor is one of vital importance and it is disappointing that this has not been fully admitted by the A.U.T. Council. They have, apparently, some idea of the unsatisfactoriness of the present position. 'In certain subjects',

they say, 'the demands of industry, etc., make it necessary to offer particularly high salaries for professors. It is important, however, not to keep professorial salaries low in some subjects in order to be able to compete for professors in others.'[1] But that is precisely the effect of the 'basic' salary, without fixed increments. In many universities the professor, appointed at forty or thereabouts, waits some six, eight, ten years before receiving one morning a note from the Treasurer to say that he is to have an increase of salary. And the next increase may come in another six, eight or ten years—or not at all. It is a most unsatisfactory situation, often affecting those who have given the university the longest service. At fifty-five, the professor in question, elected fifteen years before at £1,000, is earning £1,100 or £1,150 and he cannot possibly base any plans for the future on the certainty that he will ever earn any more. Meanwhile he and his wife are growing older and need the amenities of life more than in the past; his children are proving very expensive at college; he is saving little or nothing. On the other side of the balance sheet is the book he has been writing for the last ten years—a completely unremunerative piece of research, for which he will have to pay if he is to get it published, and which is making greater and greater demands upon his time and energy: he cannot possibly put it aside to engage in journalism or mark cartloads of examination papers. . . .

Or can he? Or does he? Has he in fact any real choice?

That is the position in which the 'basic' policy places him, and, being only a Professor of Modern History, he can do nothing about it. Were he a Professor of Pathology, or Industrial Chemistry, he could do a great deal, because in the respective fields of private practice and industry a far larger income and not less interesting work awaits him. For which reason the university is more lavish with its invisible increments in Science and Medicine than in Arts. It is surely time that the Arts professor was treated better.

Fortunately one voice has been raised on his behalf more effectively than that of his own association. The British Association's Committee on Post-war Education recognizes the need for universities to have, and to keep, professors of the highest quality:

'The reputation of our universities depends more on the quality of their professoriate than on any other single factor. For the sake of university teaching and research we should make it more easy to retain our very best men, and to attract outstanding men back from the outside world when they are still at the height of their powers.'[2]

While recognizing that in Medicine, and some other subjects, higher

[1] A.U.T., May 1944, par. 85, p. 64. [2] B.A.C., p. 42.

salaries will have to be paid, this Committee avers that it would be 'bad policy' to 'consider only outside competition' and thus 'make a considerable saving on the classics'. 'The existing organization of our society being what it is, all wholetime professors in all English universities should be increased to at least £1,500 a year at 1938 prices.'[1]

This means, on the basis of a 20 per cent increase in costs, £1,800—a considerably higher assessment of the professor's worth than that of the A.U.T.

[1] B.A.C., p. 42.

Chapter Two

REDBRICK LOOKS AHEAD

Satisfactorily high among the problems with which Redbrick is preparing to cope when conditions again become normal is the problem of residence.

There is no matter concerning university education on which opinion has moved forward more rapidly than on this. In *Red Brick University* I remarked how, in 1930, the University Grants Committee had 'disclaimed any intention of suggesting that the modern universities "are expecting to transform themselves into institutions mainly residential in character"',[1] and went on to put forward what I thought the rather bold view 'that every university must have sufficient hostels to accommodate a very large proportion of its undergraduates and every student should be compelled to reside, either within one of these hostels, or in lodgings affiliated, as it were, with the hostels, and under strict university control'.[2] No-one has been more surprised than I to find that this ideal is now being generally accepted as that towards which all universities should move and to which they should attain at the first possible moment.

In an interim report presented to the British Association in September 1942, that Association's Post-war University Education Committee laid it down that 'at least one year's residence in college or in a university hostel should be required of every internal candidate for a first degree' and added that, according to figures supplied to it, 'the cost of making this change (without so adding to the expense of a university education as to exclude any student however poor) would be far from prohibitive'.[3] Ten months later, another report by the same Committee, remarking that there was a 'general call' for better residential facilities at the modern universities, spoke rather more soberly of the cost:

> To implement this recommendation would involve. . . not only capital expenditure on sites, buildings and equipment, but also considerable annual expenditure. . . . Hostels with the right standard of amenities, including rooms for resident tutors, adequate and well-furnished common rooms and study rooms, libraries and single bed-sitting rooms, cannot be run cheaply. At the prices ruling in 1938–9

[1] *Red Brick University*, p. 39.
[2] Op. cit., p. 40.
[3] B.A.C., p. 4.

the average annual cost per place, including both capital and maintenance, will not fall far short of £100 a year.[1]

This sum is considerably larger than was charged for board and lodging in Drabtown before the War, so that, even if the undergraduates required to reside in hostels were such as would normally have gone into lodgings, an extra charge would fall due for maintenance. Actually most of them live at home, which makes the charge higher still. If in addition all undergraduates—or all who were given free places with maintenance—were required to reside for a year, most people accustomed to our present scale of expenditure on education would certainly term it 'prohibitive', even though no university would spend more annually on this than the cost of a few minutes of war.

The A.U.T. also advocates the one-year residential principle—only, however, 'as an immediate objective'. 'We would aim ultimately', it continues, 'at a residential system of university education'—there we have the measure of the revolution of opinion since 1930—'but since this is a long-term objective, we suggest that meanwhile universities should make arrangements to allow non-residents to "dine in" at a hall of residence, if they so desire'.[2]

So much for theory. What is going to be done in practice?

The lead, not for the first time, has been taken by the University of Manchester. In May 1944, the Press reported its Vice-Chancellor, Sir John Stopford, as saying that the University was anxious, as early as possible, to accommodate all students in hostels for one year—probably the first—an innovation which would require six new halls, each taking from 150 to 250 students. The cost of this, on pre-war values, would be some £700,000; and, pending the time when it would become possible to build, they hoped to get temporary accommodation.

On the heels of Manchester came Leeds, which, in a 'Report on Post-war Developments,' submitted to the University Grants Committee, set as 'an ultimate aim . . . for all students residence in a hall for at least three out of the four years which will normally be required for a degree course.'[3]

It may be, however, that we shall have to take bolder measures than any of these if we are to solve the problem of residence. I was interested recently to read in *The Times Educational Supplement* (and I hope we are all conscious of our debt to that journal—so vital is it in these vital days, so broad in its sympathies and so alert for action) of

[1] B.A.C., pp. 40–1.
[2] A.U.T., May 1944, par. 87, p. 64.
[3] T.E.S., 1 July 1944.

an experiment in community student life that has been going on for the past nine years in the University of Toronto. In 1936, twelve students rented a house at a low figure from Victoria College, and 'with a minimum of furniture and equipment they went into residence and started housekeeping on a co-operative basis'. Six years later, there were one hundred students in five houses, one for women and four for men.[1]

The government of each house was in the hands of its members, who also provided the necessary capital in the form of ten-dollar loans. The management was undertaken by an elected committee of five. Profits were distributed once a year according to the amount paid for room and board. Dons (one of them with a wife and child), as well as students, lived in these houses on a basis of strict equality, though they found that in fact they were frequently called upon to act as advisers. 'The actual planning and running of each residence thus remained almost entirely in the hands of its student members.'

There are several reasons why such a venture should be more successful in Canada than here. For one thing, staff–student contacts are closer in a country less affected by long authoritarian tradition. Mr. Herklots' idea of staff–student hostels, which I examined in *Red Brick University*,[2] has, I see, been revived by the A.U.T.:

'Simple hostels should be established in the country, where staff and students of particular departments can work together for a few days or weeks. In a work-fellowship of this kind a new attitude to work is engendered.'[3]

But such fellowship, I fear, is still very much in the region of wishful thinking. Another impediment to our adoption of the Toronto plan would be that there is no tradition here of 'earning while learning'—or, in the transatlantic idiom, 'working one's way through college'. The author of *The Times* article himself suggested that the responsibilities might be 'too exacting and time-consuming for students at the undergraduate stage'. But they would consume time in a healthier way than do many undergraduate activities and they should be at least as beneficial and fruitful as those of office-holders in the Students' Union. The danger is not that the idea would prove unworkable if it were put into practice, but rather that it would not be put into practice lest it should prove unworkable.

But for this, and any similar, experiment the post-war period is just

[1] 'Community Residence for Students.' In T.E.S., 25 March 1944.
[2] *Red Brick University*, pp. 151–3. [3] A.U.T., May 1944, par. 88, p. 65.

the right time. First of all, it is unconventional—and in these years during which we have all done unusual jobs and been thoroughly mixed up with each other convention has gone by the board. Next, it is better suited to students of some maturity than to the boy or girl coming straight from school, and it will be a long time before the universities have so large a number of mature students again as in the next year or two. Then, during these past years, we have all become used to community life. Boys and girls, not to say men and women, who had never so much as shared a bedroom with anyone, have been herded together, by night and by day, in the Forces, in the Women's Services, as evacuees, in air-raid shelters, as fire-watchers. Even boys and girls coming to the universities from day-schools have learned something of community life, and had their rough edges smoothed down, through having been transferred to camp schools. Lastly, a long and exhausting war emphasizes the importance of the essentials of life and the triviality of its trimmings. At any other time those who believe in the residential university might be inclined to wait until the State or some private benefactor presented them with sets of brand-new hostels each standing in its own extensive grounds and equipped with the latest thing in study-bedrooms. The post-war mentality is much more likely to favour the rough-and-ready solution—even a rougher, and a readier, one than that of Manchester.

I hope, then, that the Toronto experiment will be emulated over here, with all the variants that our different and diverse conditions may suggest to us. At the same time, it is only right to point out that nothing of the kind can ever solve our large-scale problems. For nothing less is aimed at than to convert non-residential universities, in which some 150 students out of (say) 2,000 at present reside, into residential universities in which barely 150 will *not* reside. This can only be done by the erection of many halls of residence, housing sufficient numbers to provide a community life which shall be really broad and varied. And, from the first, these halls should have a diversity and character which will aid them in building up their own traditions. People say they can never become colleges, like those of Oxford and Cambridge, because the latter colleges grew up, for the most part, as independent foundations, and were never in any sense mere hostels. That is how it seems to us to-day. But I should like to call them colleges, so that they may strive to become what as yet they are not, but what I for my part believe they are capable of becoming in the future. They can create and develop traditions, they can receive gifts and endowments, they can inspire patriotism and affection. And once there are not just one or two, but ten or twelve, healthy rivalry will aid their development. No sign of the educational times is more

significant and more encouraging than the simultaneous realization in the minds of so many that a residential Redbrick is on the way.

II

A second question with which Redbrick is becoming increasingly preoccupied is how far specialization is leading to narrowness of outlook.

This is no new question: during the last twenty years it has been raised again and again. I have discussed it in my earlier book,[1] quoting some typical criticisms of university education as over-narrow, showing that the increasing tendency to specialization is a social, rather than an academic, phenomenon, and finally examining the much-attacked Honours course, which, as I see it, stands less in need of supersession than of reform. 'The real fault is that we have not developed our conception of what an Honours subject should be and given it all the breadth of which it is capable. Let that remedy, at least, be tried.'[2]

Two interesting contributions to this discussion have recently been made by Cambridge men—one a teacher in his own University and one a migrant in the north. In a brilliant lecture of which more will be said later, Professor Bonamy Dobrée relates the alleged excess of specialization in the newer universities to the demands made upon them, at their foundation, by society.

'Society, at the time most of us came into being, lacked technicians and school teachers, as once it lacked clerics; and just as the older universities were founded to meet the earlier need, so the newer were brought into being to satisfy the later.'[3]

This is not to say, continues the author, either that the newer universities should not have produced what society asked of them or that they 'did not from the start, from the moment that their charters (in some instances) transformed them from science colleges into universities, cherish wider ideals or seek to embody more dynamic aspirations'. But, he adds, 'the plain fact of the matter is that they still in the main turn out technicians and teachers narrowly trained in their tasks, largely because that is all that the societies which they serve ask of them'. His remedy is, therefore, that 'the societies must be induced to demand more'.

Now I think we have to make a clear distinction between narrow-

[1] *Red Brick University*, pp. 128–41. [2] Op. cit., p. 141.
[3] *The Universities and Regional Life*, 1943, p. 7.

ness in the curriculum and narrowness in university life. Let us consider each in turn.

Narrowness of curriculum is too often assumed to be inseparable from specialization. It is true that specialization was forced upon the universities by the demands of society—though not only by those of provincial society: there is even more specialization at Oxbridge than at Redbrick. But society has never demanded that the curriculum should be narrow. To take, for convenience, the examples given in *Red Brick University*, the newer universities got their charters at just about the time when the schools were demanding that teachers of English and French should have a deeper knowledge of their subjects and a more thorough training in the teaching of them, and therefore undergraduates hoping to teach English literature began to devote at least two years of their university course mainly to English literature instead of giving one-third of their time to mathematics and one-third to history. So much was imposed from without. Where the university, the department and the undergraduate were still perfectly free was in determining exactly how the special subject should be studied. Here you have an undergraduate who, without neglecting set books and periods, uses his special studies to delve into philosophy, theology, educational theory, political science, and so on; who reads widely in contemporary literature; who gets into touch with, and keeps abreast of, modern literary movements and modern thought. That is the best type of specialization, the 'broad way'. Here, however, you have an equally industrious undergraduate who for an equal number of hours daily mugs up set books and periods, and anything else which he deems 'likely to be set', learning by heart yards of verse in the hope that he may get a chance to reproduce them 'in the exam.' and committing to memory strings of dates—the births and deaths of leading authors and the years of publication of their principal writings. That is the 'narrow way', the way of the student in blinkers, which has brought upon specialization quite undeserved obloquy.

If narrowness, as opposed to specialization, is in no sense imposed upon the university by society, still less is narrowness in university life. One of the advantages of the internal university degree not perhaps sufficiently realized is that, save for rare exceptions, a degree candidate gets the class he deserves. A man with a first-class mind and first-class application gets a First; a man with a second-class mind and second-class application gets a Second; and so on. Where the second-class mind is combined with first-class application, or vice versa, the result is more often a Second than a First—the large number of students of that description is in fact responsible for filling the class known as 'Two-one'. It is a very rare thing, that is to say, for a

student to get a First by pure 'swotting' to the exclusion of interests outside the examination syllabus. Even from the restricted 'class-list' standpoint, quality of mind comes out as well where interests are wide as where they are narrow. If our students fail to reach out as widely as they should it is partly because they do not realize this, partly because school training has led them to think of the degree as the be-all and end-all of existence, and partly because, with the best will in the world, they just *have* to catch the four-fifteen train home. None of these reasons seems to have anything to do with the demands of society.

My second quotation, from Dr. F. R. Leavis, expresses only an individual opinion, but gives considerable food for thought:

'A distinguished war-time migrant remarked to me recently that he found Cambridge, with all its advantages, surprisingly content to be an agglomeration of departments and special studies. In spite of the unsurpassed opportunities for intercourse across the departmental and specialist frontiers, and in spite of its being so much urged in favour of the college system that it favours such intercourse, he found little evidence that the use made of these opportunities amounted to much.'[1]

The first comment upon that observation of those of us who are not Cambridge men would probably be that, if it is justified, Cambridge is evidently going the way of Redbrick, with less excuse for it. But on consideration I am disposed to think that the distinguished war-time migrant had been unfortunate in seeing Cambridge under what were temporary and abnormal conditions or had failed to penetrate very deeply into its spirit and life. Outwardly, of course, any efficiently organized university in this specialist age will appear an agglomeration of departments and the fact that Cambridge has of late become more departmentalized only means that it has been increasing in efficiency. But as to intercourse across the departmental frontiers, that *must* take place where intelligent people, whether dons or undergraduates, are thrown together as they are at Cambridge. Except to the extent that everyone was preoccupied in 1943 with the War, with the cramming necessitated by shortened courses, with the demands of National Service, and so on, neither undergraduates nor dons can possibly fail to educate themselves, as the latter class habitually do in the Combination Room during the hour after Hall and the former class round the fire during the small hours of the morning.

The problems, then, which Redbrick has to face are how to broaden curricula which must of necessity continue to be specialized

[1] *Education and the University*, London, 1943, p. 31.

and how to provide undergraduates with more facilities for educating each other—i.e., for residence.

To judge from the A.U.T. Report, a composite solution of the specialization problem is to be attempted.[1] First, the number of Honours students will be reduced. Secondly, both Pass and Honours courses will be remodelled. Thirdly, the normal course for the first degree will extend over four years.

These proposed solutions have all been discussed in *Red Brick University*; and, except for the attempts being made to equate the prestige of 'General Honours' (formerly the Pass Degree with the mark of distinction) with that of 'Special Honours' (formerly known as the Honours Degree) they seem wholly commendable. However much one may applaud the intention (to quote Leeds University) of 'improving the status and character of the General courses and "divorcing the implication of excellence and mediocrity from Honours and Ordinary"',[2] it is impossible to blink the fact that the Special Course, whatever name be given to it, does demand higher qualities of mind and mental activity than the General Course, and that First Class Special Honours will always win higher esteem than First Class General Honours, especially if the content and the treatment of the Special Course are to be broadened. At present some of the advocates of General Honours are protesting too much, and, unless they recover a sense of proportion, they will find that they are doing their cause more harm than good.

In other respects the A.U.T. recommendations are unexceptionable. The Honours degree course has quite wrongly become 'the normal course for all students; while the more general course required by the Pass Degree tends to be looked upon as waste land'. Many who enter upon an Honours Course, merely for reasons of prestige (or, one might add, because of the demand for specialist teachers), are 'ill-fitted for specialization'. The present Honours Courses (to be termed 'Special' Courses) should therefore be remodelled so as to 'link up the specialist with other spheres of study', while the present Pass Courses (to be termed 'General' Courses) will 'continue general education on a higher level and from a different angle' from that of school. Either type of degree should be awarded with or without Honours.

Thus far the A.U.T. If its recommendations are adopted, the Dean, in interviewing the freshman, will consider (i) if his school record, examination results and performance at the interview seem to fit him for a Special or a General degree; (ii) if the profession which he pro-

[1] A.U.T., May 1944, pp. 56–8. The quotations in the text are from these pages, except where the contrary is stated.
[2] T.E.S., 1 July 1944.

poses to enter demands a specialist or a general type of qualification. He will record the information and impressions thus gained upon a card and dismiss the freshman to his courses of study, which, according to the A.U.T., are for one year, or even for two years, to be of a general character for all, providing 'instruction in a group of correlated subjects'. At the end of this period, the undergraduate will return to the Dean, who will add to his card particulars of his performance in the courses and examinations which he has taken since his entry, and, after a period of meditation, will assign him to the Special or the General Course, sending him, if the former be his goal, to consult Professor Blank, who is in charge of it. No-one will deny that this procedure is a great improvement on the present state of things, which may be illustrated by the following scene in any Deanery on one of the first days of any October.

[*Dean or Dean's assistant sitting at table, C. Enter, L, girl at head of queue. She has been waiting in the queue for an hour and a half and is showing signs of strain.*]

DEAN. Pass or Honours?

GIRL. Honours.

DEAN. Subject?

GIRL. English Language.

DEAN. Other first-year subjects?

GIRL (*hesitatingly*). Latin and—I think—either French or . . .

DEAN (*decisively*). Latin and French. Thank you. For French you take Courses 101 and 102. For Latin—let me see—Courses 102 and 104. For English Language, go and see Professor Crusty, second floor, first door on left. Sign this form. Thank you. . . . Send in the next, please. . . .

Yes, the new method is infinitely better. So much more human! But, when one reflects that the Dean of an Arts Faculty at the beginning of a session frequently has 200 freshmen, to say nothing of shoals of problem-cases from higher years, masses of routine, piles of correspondence, and a Faculty Board meeting, with its accumulation of vacation business, on the following Monday, one is tempted to write it down as a counsel of perfection. Certainly a posse of Deans, or Directors of Studies, would be needed, and even then registration would take several times its present number of days before the Deanery (or Deaneries) would be empty.

'If seven maids with seven mops
  Swept it for half a year,
Do you suppose,' the Walrus said,
  'That they could get it clear?'
'I doubt it,' said the Carpenter,
  And shed a bitter tear.

Any such reform as this, as the A.U.T. has clearly seen, presupposes a degree course of four years, and even this would allow only for one year of general instruction—which in fact is, I think, quite sufficient. A full three years' study is essential for any Honours Course worthy of the name. But I hope that the maximum of pains will be spent on the reform of the content of the Honours Course, for I am sure that we have not even begun to realize how very much better it is capable of becoming than it is at present. Specimen detailed syllabuses should be sent to the A.U.T. by Heads of Departments who are experimenting in this direction and published for the benefit of others. 'Each subject', as the Report says, 'has its own lines of development, which should be the subject of consultation between experts from the universities.' What a pity, and what an astonishing thing, that in a country where no university is more than a few hours' journey from any other, the experts in each subject do not meet regularly for several days' consultation—say at the end of September, when the new session is about to begin!

III

A third group of problems concerns representation—of the non-professorial staff on the Senate, and of the academic staff, whether professorial or not, on the Council.

The academic government of a university by a Senate consisting of professors alone is nowadays generally felt to be a mistake. Because there happens, for example, to be an endowed Chair in Modern History and only a lectureship or a readership in Ancient History, it seems hardly fair that one of these Departments should have its interests represented on the Senate and not the other, especially in universities where the Faculty Board, on which every Department is represented, has not a great deal of power. Again, there are often men of experience who are not even departmental Heads, yet who are far better administrators, and have a much profounder knowledge of university business, than the average professor, and have also, as a rule, considerably more time. The A.U.T. Report lays it down that 'the Senate should include all heads of academic departments, the librarian, and an adequate number of representatives of the rest of the academic staff',[1] leaving individual universities to experiment as to non-professorial representation and in due course to pool their experiences. This is a matter which, now that it has been well venti-

[1] A.U.T., May 1944, par. 58, p. 60. Cf. *Red Brick University*, p. 63.

lated, may safely be left to take care of itself. Within a short time we shall certainly reach a satisfactory solution.

Academic representation on the Council is a thornier subject and at the same time a more important one. For, as I have already explained,[2] the Council at Redbrick is supreme. At the worst, an obstructive or intransigent Council could reject every resolution which the Senate submitted to it; and, at the very best, no decision which the Council makes can be seriously affected by the minute academic representation which is all that it allows. In practice, it is true, the Senate is permitted, with rare exceptions, to have the controlling voice in all academic matters which involve no expenditure, while the Council controls everything else. It is often said that this arrangement works quite smoothly. So does a dictatorship—on the surface. But, in the era that is just beginning, dictators are going to disappear, and so, let us hope, is the dictatorship of Big Business, however benevolent, over education.

I believe that within the next ten or twenty years there will be as complete a revolution in opinion on this subject as there has been over residence. To-day, no doubt, most academic persons would demur to the view that 'in the ideal university a Senate or Council composed of graduates and teachers would be completely autonomous',[2] but by 1955, unless I am much mistaken, they will be proclaiming it far and wide, if in fact that ideal has not in many places been achieved. The A.U.T. is politic—and a little timid. It believes that 'the present representative character of University Courts and Councils is appropriate to the present situation and stage of development of the regional universities',[3] but considers that the academic members of Councils should be more numerous and 'have the unquestioned right of participating in all decisions affecting the university . . . , including questions of finance'.[4] 'The Council', too, 'should not have the right of veto over purely academic matters, in which decisions can be taken only on the basis of professional knowledge and experience': among these matters is explicitly mentioned one of the most usual subjects of controversy between Councils and Senates —viz., elections to Chairs.

All that is paving the way to something better and is probably as much as can be said by an academic association in public or on paper. But one may perhaps be allowed to inquire how a lay body came to have this all but complete control over an academic society and by what right it retains it.

Reasoned out from first principles, the position is absurd. The uni-

[1] *Red Brick University*, pp. 61–3.
[2] Op. cit., p. 60.
[3] A.U.T., May 1944, par. 55, p. 59.
[4] Op. cit., par. 56, p. 60.

versity is a society of seekers after, and disseminators of, knowledge. It should therefore be governed either by the whole of its mature members—that is to say, its graduates, who do, in fact, exist as a joint body, known as Convocation—or by such of them as are still actively working with and in the society. In practice, a smaller body elected by one or other of those classes of graduate would be more practicable. Below this Council, truly representative of the society which it governs, would come the body whose composition has just been discussed, the Senate. Every member of the Council would, under this scheme, be a graduate of the society; or, if the State and the local authorities which contribute to its maintenance should demand representation upon it, the voice of the society would still be predominant.

How does this compare with the Council of (say) thirty-two members which dominates a typical modern university to-day? The Chancellor and the Pro-Chancellor are members of the society only because they were made so at an Honorary Degree ceremony. Of the other thirty, seven are members of the Senate, elected by that body or by the Faculties, and two are members of Convocation, which elected them. That leaves twenty-one, out of thirty-two, in whose choice the society has had no part, and eleven of whom, besides not being members of it, are members of no university at all. Most of them have been elected, either by that miscellaneous body known as the Court of Governors, whose eventual abolition I have made bold to prophesy,[1] or by the various local authorities who make contributions of differing value to the University's maintenance. And, looking at the names of these worthies, anyone knowledgeable in local politics will suspect that this one has been nominated by a Socialist Town Council to 'uphold the principles of democracy' and that that one has been nominated by a Tory Town Council to 'keep the place from going Red'.

Those are the people who from time to time may veto the long-thought-out decision of an academic body, advised by the relevant experts, upon the most suitable candidate for a newly endowed Chair, or who may refuse a professor, struggling to keep his department up to date, some small amount of money needed for its development. Surely it is time that we recognized such conditions as anachronistic.

It was natural, of course, that Redbrick's founders and first benefactors should have wished to have a large share in its government: during the years of its immaturity and slow development, no-one would have grudged them that, though, despite the fine work they did, they would sometimes have gained had they been more closely associ-

[1] *Red Brick University*, p. 60.

ated with academic interests. But they have all gone, and many of their descendants have other and very different interests, while the University is now fully mature and quite capable of self-government. Let it govern itself, then, with such intervention only as logic and reason dictate.

The other day I heard two members of the Redbrick Council declaiming against a so-called 'Socialist' newspaper editor who had said that our civic universities should be controlled by the State. Redbrick, they said, must at all costs remain autonomous. The actual consideration of that question demands a fresh section but in this context I venture to draw attention to their adjective. Autonomous! And both these men were nominees of the Drabtown Borough Council, one of them the father of two Redbrick graduates but neither of them a university graduate himself.

As soon as the scale on which the State is going to aid the universities becomes known, the government of the modern university will become a question of great moment—and not only because of State intervention. I think we may be prepared for some fundamental changes.

IV

Autonomy, like so much else in Redbrick politics, is closely bound up with finance.

Since the end of the last War, all the universities have been receiving public money, on what nowadays we should consider a very small scale, through a body, academic in composition, already referred to, the University Grants Committee. It is quite clear that, if even a fraction of the reforms which are being demanded on all sides are to be carried out, State aid will have to be given to an extent hitherto undreamed of. For where else is the money to come from? Not from local authorities, which to-day are contributing barely one-quarter even of the meagre amount given by the Treasury. Not from private benefactors, crippled by Income Tax, Excess Profits Tax and Death Duties. Not from fees; for, even if those who wish university education to be free fail to get their way, there is certain to be an increase of freely placed, as against paying, students. Only State aid is left; and only the State has aid available on the scale that is needed.

How much money shall we require? Estimates vary. The British Association Report, remarking that the present annual Treasury Grant is equal only to the cost of four hours' war, opines (in italics, for greater emphasis) that it 'should be at once *doubled*'.[1] The Vice-

[1] B.A.C., p. 40.

Chancellor of Birmingham University bids higher: 'If the subsidy were *trebled* it would not be as big a proportion of the national income as our chief colleagues in the United Nations pay for the education of their best minds'.[1] Sir Ernest Simon, while willing to accept a doubled grant for the first year, wants the present grant to be *quadrupled* at the end of five years.[2] I will bid a great deal higher than that —and within a decade I believe that even the figures which follow will be considered modest ones. For residential developments alone each of the newer universities should be promised a non-recurrent sum, varying slightly according to its needs and potentialities, of about one million pounds. For open scholarships, research and tutorial posts, new buildings, travel grants and various other facilities which they must have before they can begin to compete with Oxford and Cambridge, the same universities should have a recurrent annual grant of about half a million. On top of that should come the regular annual grant made to all the universities, a substantial part of it to be devoted to repairing the devastation wrought by the War in the Arts Faculties. This grant might at first total ten million pounds yearly: what it would eventually rise to I have not the faintest conception. Those figures represent perhaps the cost of a battleship down and an annual sum which alternatively, if we preferred it, would buy us a day of war. Only the equivalent of the battleship would be unsinkable and between a day of destructive war and a year of constructive war the choice should not be in doubt.

Do let us start to think on this sort of scale and not in terms of doubling or quadrupling a miserable yearly pittance of two millions. The only thing I apologize for in my estimate is its inadequacy. But it is merely the thin end of the wedge. It does at least enable reforms in Higher education to be looked at together with those in Primary and Secondary education without the need to take up a magnifying glass when one passes from the latter to the former.

All this leads up to the question of State control of the universities, and to-day, as a quarter of a century ago, some of us are regarding such a possibility with trepidation. The first two points I shall make will meet with general agreement. One is the principle that the granting of public money carries with it the right to exert an appropriate degree of public control. The State cannot simply distribute two million pounds a year to the universities and then forget about it. On the other hand, there is no doubt that university autonomy in this country has produced good results—and anyone inclined to doubt that should spend a year in one of the American State universities, or in certain Continental countries where university teachers change with

[1] *The Listener*, 11 November 1943. [2] Simon, p. 5.

changing governments, and research, teaching, scholarship and everything else are dependent upon the vicissitudes of party politics. I would rather the universities continued exactly as they are than suffer that.

From the standpoint of the universities the present arrangement works admirably. The University Grants Committee, even in its pre-war form, was a well-meaning, and, as a rule, an understanding body, which made periodical visits to the places that its recommendations were to benefit, heard all available evidence and inspected conditions for itself. Although (or should the word be 'because'?) its members were not politicians but academic experts, the recommendations, in the words of its Chairman, have been 'invariably accepted', and because to them 'the principle of university autonomy has been as sacred . . . as to the representatives of the universities themselves' there is probably no country in which the universities have 'been more free from any kind of State interference'.[1]

'They have enjoyed freedom of teaching and public utterance and freedom to determine the lines of their own development. Their staff have been subject to no kind of test, political, religious or racial. This unusual combination of State support with full autonomy has been brought about by a method peculiarly British, in that it is indirect and is nowhere clearly formulated.'[2]

But can this desirable state of things continue if State aid is vastly increased? In theory, yes, for an increase in the amount of a grant does not affect the principle according to which it is given. There may, however, develop a demand for control, and, should this come from any considerable section of the tax-paying community, it cannot be entirely disregarded.

One consideration that may prompt such a demand will arise if Redbrick is given proportionately more substantial aid than Oxford or Cambridge. For, although both types of university have debts to the community, that of Redbrick, which draws upon a sharply defined constituency, is the more obvious and the more easily assessable. 'There is a growing feeling that the life and work of the universities should be more closely related to the life and work of the nation as a whole, and that there should be stronger links between the universities and other institutions of society, particularly the public services of education and social welfare and organized industry.'[3] One might suppose that more effective *local* control would better advance these

[1] Sir Walter Moberly, 'The University Grants Committee.' In *Communication*, No. 1, January 1944, p. 7.
[2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

aims than a tighter State control; but there are many somewhat vocal critics who see in State control a remedy for every ill and it is by these that the demand would be led. Nor would they be satisfied with a quite excellent suggestion already made, that the University Grants Committee should become a committee of the Privy Council and be supported by subsidiary committees to advise on the various departments of university activity.[1] 'Direct control' would be the cry. And it would only swell in volume when met with pleas like Dr. Priestley's that 'if the State is wise, having provided the tools, it will leave the universities to get on with the job without dictation'.[2]

Direct control would presumably mean, for one thing, regular inspection of organization, administration and lectures by a new division of that service to which the Norwood Committee would like to give some such high-sounding name as 'His Majesty's Educational Advisory Service'. I cannot speak for the administrators, but I should myself have not the slightest objection to discussing departmental organization with an Educational Adviser or to giving him the run of my lecture-rooms. In fact, such an innovation, if it were practicable, would probably do all our teaching a world of good. It would keep professors and senior lecturers up to scratch, for their lectures are never criticized—to their faces—from one end of their career to the other. It would strengthen one's hand in recommending the dismissal of unsatisfactory probationary lecturers, which one always rather hesitates to do at present just because the recommendation has to be made on one's own responsibility and 'there's always the chance that he may improve'. It would perhaps do something towards the establishment of a training course for young lecturers—a reform which I have already advocated, and which, despite critics who argue wishfully, is perfectly practicable. It would have a salutary effect upon students, who would think, as boys and girls at school always think, that it was they, not their teachers, who were being inspected. And if life appointments were abolished, as I think, for all save the most proved and experienced teachers, they should be, it is not only probationary lecturers who would be on their mettle.

But *is* university inspection practicable? In any effective sense, I very much doubt it. To take teaching alone, the work of every year above the first is so highly specialized that an inspector would be needed for almost every Department and more than one for a good many. This would mean, in addition to district inspectors advising on administration, a very large number of peripatetic part-time specialists each of whom would inspect the whole of the universities in which his

[1] For further discussion on this subject, see Simon, pp. 11–12.

[2] *The Listener*, loc. cit.

particular subject was taught. At once a number of objections arise. Where are the specialists who have the practical knowledge of teaching, save in the universities themselves? If they were not in the universities, how would they use the rest of their time?—for the small amount of work that many of them would have to do would bring them very little remuneration. If they were in the universities, how could one avoid the personal clashes consequent upon the setting up of colleagues as inspectors? And then what about the cost of this new inspectorate? Would it not altogether exceed whatever benefits it brought? Would not the money be very much better spent on the tutorial system?

The farther we proceed along these lines, the more objections we encounter. And when we come to consider the inspection of research, the proposal breaks down altogether. For on most research projects there are only a handful of people who are competent to speak at all, and only one or two, here and there, who can speak with real authority. The idea of a university branch of the inspectorate may therefore be dismissed altogether.

A more practicable, if less desirable, form of control is State representation on the Council. Provided the representatives chosen are in close touch with university affairs I can see no inherent disadvantage in this whatsoever, and a great deal of benefit. The difficulties arise when we come down to details. Returning to our Council of thirty-two, we find that five members are nominated annually by the local authorities which make contributions to the University funds, but that the total annual amount of their contribution is less than one-fifth of even the present Treasury grant. Assuming a comparative representation, then, proportionate to contributions, the five local authorities would only have one member between them, whereas the State would have five representatives to itself. This would no doubt cause regional heart-searchings and possibly open strife, yet, on the other hand, once the principle of State representation on the Council was conceded there would be no peace until it was commensurate with the proportion of State aid. For myself, provided the Council is predominantly composed of the University's graduates and teachers, I should be content to let the other interests fight out their representation: twenty-four graduates and teachers, six State nominees and two local authority nominees would be a reasonable compromise, both the University and the State being represented on the Finance Committee. The danger, of course, lies in a gradual encroachment by the State: it would be as disastrous to have a Council controlled by bureaucrats and politicians as by directors of commercial houses and indifferent or half-educated aldermen. Once more, the *status quo*,

even if as anomalous and illogical as many other British institutions, seems on the whole preferable to any innovation that can be envisaged at the present time.

Until we discover what are to be the shape and the extent of future State aid it is perhaps difficult to carry either speculation or suggestion any farther. Unless public opinion changes in a way that there is no reason to expect, there is little risk of what would be a major disaster—the transformation of the universities into State institutions and of their teachers into Civil Servants. The only possible reply to that move would be the foundation of new and independent societies which would have to fight Redbrick's early battles all over again.

But lesser disasters are not inconceivable. What is there, for example, to prevent future appointments to the University Grants Committee 'being confined to persons politically acceptable to the Government of the day? What is to restrain a future Committee from putting irresistible financial pressure on the Universities to adopt particular policies? In the allocations of grants to particular Universities, what is to restrain members of the Committee from favouring unduly those Universities with which they have most intimate personal connection? On the other hand, what is to prevent particular Universities, secure in the enjoyment of their block grants, from going their own way regardless of any national policy and of any sort of co-ordination? The answer to these questions is that there is no legal safeguard, but none is needed. The real safeguard lies in a very strong convention and tradition and in the determination of all concerned to make the system work.'[1]

These are pointed questions, asked and answered by the President of the Committee himself. I share the implied optimism of his answer. The very slight extent to which benefactors have been able in the past to interfere with university policy emboldens me to believe, with the British Association Committee, that 'the universities will be strong enough to resist any harmful requirements which the Government might be tempted to couple with substantial increases in State grants'.[2] The growing authority of the University Grants Committee ('moral rather than official, since it resembles that of the scholar and scientist rather than of Government')[3] convinces me that no further control is likely to be needed. But the British Association Committee adds a caution which I should also endorse: 'While the universities safeguard their autonomy, they must get over their fear of government influence in university affairs.' We must be prepared for changes —and not only for the changes that we desire. If we proclaim aloud, as many of us are doing, that the new era brings with it new needs and

[1] Moberly, loc. cit., p. 8. [2] B.A.C., p. 43. [3] Moberly, loc. cit., p. 8.

new responsibilities for the nation, we must not forget that it also involves new obligations for ourselves. And chief among these is the obligation to examine any question afresh in the light of changed conditions—even principles which we had considered axiomatic and privileges to which we were so accustomed that we had come to claim them for ourselves as rights.

Chapter Three

PROBLEMS OF THE FUTURE

Besides the problems with which Redbrick is already at grips and others which she is preparing to attack in the immediate future, there are many that will have to be left until these are disposed of or that will be created by conditions not yet in existence. Some of them are concerned with regional activities, which seem of sufficient importance to justify treatment in a separate chapter. Others may be dealt with here.

I

The problem of inter-university co-ordination seems as yet hardly to have occurred to the Universities, so ready are we always as a nation to leave things to chance while we can rub along as we are. I often reflect what a magnificent thing would be made of university education by that eminently co-operative nation, the United States, had it both our deeply rooted traditions, which dollars unfortunately will not buy, and also a territory as small as Great Britain, where the Universities, by comparison with its own, are almost at each other's doors. No-one wants the organization of the British Universities to be uniform, or their curricula identical, but there is room for a higher degree of uniformity than we have at present, and in addition for close and valuable co-operation in matters where it is advisable, or inevitable, that there should be divergence.

To some of the anomalies arising from our uncooperative spirit I have already drawn attention. An attempt should be made to standardize degrees, especially the misleading degree of M.A. Critics have said that this could not be accomplished without coercion from above, so deeply engrained is academic individualism. But I am inclined to think that, with a little good will and a strong infusion of the co-operative spirit, the obstacles to it should not be insuperable. There ought to be no great objection, for example, to making the M.A. either the first degree in Arts or a degree taken automatically (or at least without examination or thesis) at any time after two years from graduation, and to instituting a B.Litt., or an M.Litt. as the first Arts research degree everywhere. To make the doctorates of different universities more nearly equal in merit (nobody wants them to be exactly the same, but some of the present inequalities are ludicrous)

would be a harder and a more delicate matter, but it might at least be attempted. Graduates reading for a research degree should be able to migrate freely for part or the whole of their course, going where they can get the best facilities and the most expert direction. Professors and lecturers should 'exchange pulpits' for short periods, so that other universities than a man's own may have the benefit of his specialized knowledge. Scholars coming here from abroad should as a matter of course register their impending visits with a central academic agency, which would then notify all the universities in the country: at present a distinguished man of letters or science may come and go before one hears of it. Co-operation between university libraries, already in existence, should be extended. Universities with special problems of any kind, or with special developments in view, should communicate them to the rest. These are only examples set down at random: the number of opportunities is legion; the use we make of them only too small.

Then we should all combine to enter into closer relations with the universities of other countries. Here good pioneer work has been done by the British Association Committee, which would like to see a World Council of Universities, and also, 'as one of the organs of any post-war Society of States (or other international authority) an International Education Organization representative of teachers (including university teachers), governing bodies, local education authorities, and governments. This body should make inquiries, offer suggestions, issue reports, encourage experiments and give, where needed, grants in aid of education in its international aspects.'[1] This idea, says the Committee, has already taken root. Not only has the State Department at Washington shown interest in it, but 'a Conference of the Ministers of Education of the Allied Governments and of the French National Committee is now meeting regularly in London under the chairmanship of the President of the Board of Education'[2]—a 'living nucleus' out of which the post-war organization ought to grow. In April 1944, in fact, this conference 'accepted the tentative draft constitution for a United Nations Organization for Educational and Cultural Reconstruction', to be open 'to all the United and Associated Nations and to such other nations as shall be accepted by the assembly of the organization after the war. The Conference decided to forward the draft constitution to the Allied and Associated Governments.'[3]

Such a body will study, in greater detail than has been done heretofore, such fundamental questions as the best auxiliary language for international communication, mutual recognition of university quali-

[1] B.A.C., p. 44. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

fications, international student exchange, the entry of British students into foreign universities and reciprocity between professors and lecturers of different countries.

Though on the practical side many of the details of this scheme remain to be worked out, it is undoubtedly based upon broad and worthy conceptions and embodies a vision which we must not lose. Yet before we British can co-operate efficiently with other countries we must learn to do so among ourselves. During the latter part of the War a body was created with the somewhat cumbrous title of the Association of University Professors and Lecturers of the Allied Countries in Great Britain. Existing at present only in a provisional form, it will become, as soon as conditions are normal, a genuinely international one, with its headquarters in London. At a recent meeting of this association a Belgian professor referred to the 'insularity' of the British Universities, which before the War made it very difficult to create contacts with them. 'Whenever we wished to establish relations with the British Universities,' he declared, 'we were obliged to approach each one separately.'[1] It would be a curious anomaly to have an association co-ordinating, in so far as this is possible, the Universities in the leading countries of the world and yet no means of co-ordination among our own. It is stranger still that the excellent work done by the Universities' Bureau of the British Empire should not have pointed the way to a Universities' Bureau of Great Britain.

Apart from the University Grants Committee, which, though chiefly concerned with finance, issues a valuable quinquennial report going into many academic problems by no means wholly financial, the only co-ordinating body in existence is the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals. This body, whose composition is strictly that indicated by its title, meets informally from time to time and its members communicate to their Senates such particulars of its proceedings as they may think proper. Only to this extent has the world, outside the limited circle of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, any knowledge of its proceedings. 'It is understood,' says Sir Ernest Simon, who may or may not be speaking from inside knowledge, 'that the Vice-Chancellors' Committee does not normally attempt to consider long-range university problems.'[2] It issues no reports, possesses no secretarial staff and no income and cannot of course commit the Universities which it represents in any way whatever. None the less, it is, by reason of its very composition, a body of great weight, and during the War it 'has come to be recognized by the

[1] *Communication*, No. 3, 15 May 1944. [2] Simon, p. 8.

Government Departments as the normal channel for dealing with the universities as a whole on administrative questions'.[1]

If the money to be spent, and the progress to be made, in the future now dawning is to be for the greatest good of the greatest number, a much more intimate and detailed co-operation between the Universities is essential. The A.U.T. Report proposes the creation of an 'Academic Council', 'large and representative enough to be competent to discuss the work of the universities from all sides, and empowered to send recommendations to the University Grants Committee. It should include a certain number of members of the academic staffs elected from each University.'[2] The British Association supports a similar recommendation, made by the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee,[3] that a Universities' Advisory Council, entirely free from government control, should be set up by the Universities 'to consider the whole range of university policy and to effect co-ordination and eliminate any unnecessary or wasteful overlapping'. It would include 'the Vice-Chancellors of the universities and the Principals of the university colleges, teachers of various grades in the universities and persons of distinction in other walks of life, e.g. industry, agriculture, medicine, education and government services".[4] Such a Council, it would seem, could not fail to be extremely large; it is hard to elect two or three 'persons of distinction' without thinking of a dozen more with even better claims. I would rather see the present Vice-Chancellors' Committee enlarged by the addition of one member from each University elected by its Senate: the Pro-Vice-Chancellor or a senior Professor or a senior Dean would be the obvious kind of choice. This Committee, or Council, would meet at regular intervals, with power to make recommendations either to the Universities or to the Grants Committee or to any Government Department.[5]

To the committees of this body, which would be small but numerous—Finance, Research, Students' problems, Foreign relations, University extension, and so on—professors or lecturers should be freely co-opted, the aim being to get together, on any one subject, the half-

[1] Simon, p. 8. [2] A.U.T., May 1944, par. 76, p. 62.

[3] An unofficial group of members of both Houses of Parliament and representatives of certain scientific and technical institutions which has recently published a report on 'Scientific Research and the Universities in Post-War Britain'.

[4] B.A.C., p. 43.

[5] Both the British Association Committee (op. cit., p. 43) and Sir Ernest Simon (p. 12) suggest that the Grants Committee might later function as a Committee of the Privy Council, the Lord President speaking for it in Parliament.

dozen people most competent to deal with it in the country. There is to-day in a certain university one man of outstanding experience on the subject of adult education; there is another who has had extraordinary success in organizing staff–student contacts; a third has spent many years in the universities of Canada and South Africa; a fourth has an unusually good business head and in his own Senate and Council is on every Finance Committee. Yet, unless they happen to be active for a time in the Association of University Teachers, not one of these ever has the opportunity to use his natural gifts or special knowledge or long experience *in the service of university education as a whole.* That is where we are at fault. Anyone would suppose that universities were, not colleagues, but rivals. We must get it into our heads that what matters primarily is not the interest of any one of us but the interest of the whole. And until we are working among ourselves on that basis we cannot expect to get far in co-operation with other countries.

II

We have said a good deal about the freedom of the university from the tyranny of bureaucracy or party politics; we now come to a no less important subject—the freedom of the academic individual from a possible tyranny on the part of the university.

The worst forms of enslavement, if we preserve for our society a reasonable degree of autonomy, are never likely to come to us. We are in no danger of being made to conform to religious tests; of being forbidden to make known our political opinions; of being arrested for having opposed the Government of the day; of being dismissed from our posts for having proclaimed liberal views. Such things have happened continually in certain countries less favoured than our own; but if occasionally anything of the kind has happened here the case has been an extreme one on which opinions have been divided. And in these respects our freedom is likely to increase rather than not. The freedom now to be alluded to is on a lower level, but none the less it is one that we should do all in our power to preserve.

Both at Oxbridge and at Redbrick, the academic person, who for convenience may be described in this section as the professor, has enjoyed professional liberty of a very high order. At Oxbridge, because his statutory duties have always been extremely light: one can give thirty, or even sixty, lectures in two and a half eight-week terms and yet have considerable leisure for branching out in other directions. At Redbrick, because although teaching and administra-

tion have generally been heavier, the University would never have established itself within its special community had not the professor been allowed, enabled and encouraged to go about its constituency and make as many contacts as he could. So, wherever he may be, he is free to interpret his duties as he likes. He may be primarily a research worker—an old-style professor, who sees little of the world outside his study: if so, no-one will attempt to induce him to change his habits. He may be by temperament an administrator: in that case, without contravening the terms of his appointment, he can devote comparatively little of his time to teaching and research. He may believe that the best service he can render to the subject he professes is to survey and supervise its teaching in schools and thus strengthen the links between school and university: if he does, he can examine for the School and Higher Certificates, be an Occasional Inspector under the Ministry of Education, develop contacts with local Education Committees, sit on the Governing Bodies of local schools and visit as many schools in his own locality, or outside it, as may invite him. He may feel that his subject is studied too insularly and spend his spare term-time corresponding with foreign universities and his vacations visiting them. These are only a few of the prospects which open before a professor in a British university on his appointment. He is free, and provided he neglects neither his research nor his teaching he ought to be free, to mark out for himself the particular sphere of service in which he feels he can labour to the best advantage. Some of Redbrick's most distinguished early professors, the men who have been instrumental in carrying it to a level which fifty years ago no-one would even have imagined, have struck out for themselves in most original and unconventional ways, as they could not have done had the University not shown itself to be wisely liberal. In passing, their activities have not been without influence upon Oxbridge.

Of recent years, however, there has been a tendency, showing itself in various directions, for the newer universities to define and delimit the activities of their staffs in a way which may in time become harmful and even dangerous. I am not referring to research and teaching: these must take precedence of everything else, and if a professor does nothing to add to knowledge or neglects to conduct or provide for the lectures and classes prescribed by his Faculty Board and by the Senate, it is the clear duty of the Senate to bring him to book. What I have in mind is the large margin of leisure which every professor has when he has complied with the minimum requirements of research and teaching and which he can fill either by doing more research and teaching or in such other ways as those just described. In the staff of any Faculty there is a tremendous amount of potential energy, often

highly imaginative and constructive in character, which can and should be used for the benefit of the Faculty, of the University and of education and learning as a whole. Sometimes the maximum of good will be done if the energy of a particular professor is used in the service of the Faculty; often, however, his parish is the world and his vocation is such a wide one that the Faculty, and even the University, will profit by it only to a secondary degree, the primary beneficiary being Secondary or Adult education, or the country as a whole, or some part of the learned world, or even posterity.

It has been the glory of our universities that they have allowed those of their teachers who feel called to use their leisure in one of these ways to do so freely; and not the least attractive feature of academic life, which to many people more than compensates for its material shortcomings, is precisely this freedom. But there are signs that a change is coming which, wherever it puts in an appearance, academic persons must resist with all their strength. In one University, let us say, there is a Council whose lay members feel that 'these professors have altogether too much holiday', so they endeavour to lengthen terms or to impose hours of attendance in the University buildings. They are defeated, of course, but they will return to the charge till they score an initial victory, as, unless we are vigilant, they sooner or later may. Or here is a Vice-Chancellor, coming to his post, in middle life, from some other sphere, with little experience of university administration, who sees professors as civil servants and tries to work upon his Senate and Council to treat them as such.

The other day, a promising young lecturer was attracted by the advertisement of a Chair then vacant in a modern University, wrote for particulars of it, and was shocked to receive a leaflet which referred him to a regulation in the University Calendar limiting the freedom of full-time professors as follows:

'A Professor shall devote himself to the work of the University and shall not undertake any continuous teaching or continuous professional engagement during the Session outside the University without the special consent of the Council; and if he accepts an external examinership or other office involving temporary absence from University work, he shall send the earliest possible intimation thereof in writing to the Vice-Chancellor.'

Such a regulation, in his view (and in mine), is gravely reactionary. To begin with, a professor should devote himself primarily to the cause of scholarship, and only secondarily to the particular University which he serves, since that University is itself the servant of scholarship. And only he, or someone closely associated with, and

expert in, his particular field of study, can judge if he is doing so. No other person can act as the keeper of his conscience—not even an academic person, and certainly not a heterogeneous body composed largely of business men and representatives of City Councils.

That opening clause of the regulation is bad enough, but the next clause, which translates principle into practice, is worse. Let us take an imaginary example or two to see how it would work.

Fifty miles from Redbrick there is one of the new County Colleges, which, under an unconventional and energetic principal, has won extraordinary success and is anxious to get Professor Active to give a sessional course of lectures within his special field of International Relations, promising him a crowded house and a substantial number of weekly essays to reward his labours. Professor Active has no mind for twenty-four journeys of fifty miles each way and he foresees that acceptance will take a great deal of his time and energy and probably entail his dropping some other piece of work which is more directly concerned with the University, though it can be done equally well by one of his staff. On the other hand, he knows of no-one else as easily accessible who can give this course, he recognizes in the County College a vital centre of intellectual life, and, weighing the matter with much care, he decides to accept.

In a liberal society that would settle the matter, but at Redbrick University it has now to be brought before the Council. (Not, it will be observed, before the Senate.) At the next meeting of this body Professor Active's academic colleagues support him and on everybody's lips is forming the word 'Agreed' when up rises an ungrammatical Alderman, who has been a disease on the Council for the past two years, but, being a political light in the city, can always be relied upon to rally a few supporters. The Alderman draws attention to the number of applications this particular professor has of late been making. Does he belong to the University or does he not? Here he is, gadding about all over the country—and abroad, in fact: how long is it since he got that leave of absence to lecture in South Africa?—instead of going about his duties and teaching in his own classroom. What did we appoint him for? Are we paying Redbrick professors to spend all their time out of the city? The Alderman moves that the permission be not granted, and further suggests that the Vice-Chancellor drop a hint to Professor Active that these continued applications are causing the Council displeasure.

A discussion follows. The Council has only five academic members against twenty-four laymen, including six nominees of municipalities. The voting is fifteen to six, the remainder abstaining; Professor Active is refused his permission; and the Vice-Chancellor duly has

a few words with him, though not perhaps precisely on lines which would have been approved by the obstructive Alderman.

An illustration of another kind brings the narrow and the liberal viewpoints into even more obvious conflict. Let us suppose that something has happened which fortunately is never likely to happen—that the energetic and deservedly prosperous English Association has fallen on evil days and its branches are dying out everywhere. The Council of the Association, meeting to discuss the position, decides that there is only one effective remedy: it must persuade some man of ability, personality and enthusiasm to give as much of his time as he can for a couple of years to travelling about the country, resuscitating old branches, founding new ones, addressing meetings in the universities, keeping in touch with local correspondents—and all this without remuneration other than a small allowance for secretarial help and out-of-pocket expenses. Except for idealistic motives the proposition is not an alluring one and the choice of a suitable person is a serious problem. Only a man of standing has any chance of success—and men of standing are seldom willing to take service with moribund associations as unpaid publicity agents. Eventually the Council decides to aim high and risk a rebuff. The best man the meeting can think of is Professor Livewire, who holds the Chair of English Literature at Redbrick, and to him a delegation accordingly goes. At first he turns down the suggestion on the spot. Redbrick is not far from London, and yet on main lines to the north, so that he is well placed for travelling facilities. But the Fridays and Saturdays which, with an occasional Monday morning, are the only days he could give the Association, are just the days he needs for his forthcoming edition of Dekker, which has been on the stocks for many years and is approaching completion. Then the delegation puts the matter to him again as one of extreme gravity and urgency, affecting the study of English, not merely at Redbrick and other universities, but in schools and other institutions throughout the country and even in the Dominions and the Colonies. He is the only man they can think of who combines prestige with enthusiasm and scholarship with the power of popular appeal. Will he not come?

Professor Livewire asks for further time to consider the proposal, and eventually decides—with some regret, it must be admitted—that he will be fulfilling his vocation better by devoting those two and a half days a week to the English Association than to his own research. So he accepts the invitation for an initial period of twelve months.

And then he has to ask permission from the University Council. I do not know if the irrepressible Alderman grows vocal again and I do not greatly care. What I am protesting against is the parochialism

which defines service to a university as work done within its precincts or within the normal sphere of its extra-mural activities and the illiberal and illogical system which elects a man to a position of trust and then refuses to trust him. Professor Livewire was presumably appointed to do three things—research, teaching and organization in his special subject. Very well: by all means let the University see that he does them. If, at the end of any session, or term of years, it is found that he has failed to do them, let him state his case, and, should he be adjudged guilty of dereliction, let him be warned, reprimanded or even dismissed. But at least give him freedom of judgement over whatever the period is for which he is appointed, and, if he is to be appointed for life, let him be trusted for life.

Perhaps it will be said that such permissions as have been specified are in fact always given and that such clauses as that in the calendar referred to are intended only to restrain professors from becoming company directors, or from holding two posts at once in different universities. That may be the custom at the present day, but there is a very serious risk that it may not continue. In any case, the principle is as abhorrent as the further regulation about external examinerships is futile. If 'temporary absence from University work' has to be notified to the Vice-Chancellor, what about the professor whose week-ends in his country cottage last from Thursday to Tuesday, the professor who attends the university throughout the session in the afternoons only, and the professor whose only research is done in his garden?

There is another direction in which a cloud like a man's hand is appearing, to be a future menace to academic freedom, and that is in the attempts being made in some quarters to interfere with Heads of Departments.

The Senate has, of course, a perfect right to give as much or as little liberty to these Heads as it thinks advisable, just as a County Education Committee is justified, from a legal standpoint, in exercising strict control over the headmasters and headmistresses of its Secondary schools. But in both cases the wisest policy is to give as much latitude to your Head as you can. It is true that in the university, where the Heads are in closer touch with each other than in the schools of a district, a greater uniformity is necessary, but if all proper care is exercised in making appointments the proportion of capable Heads should be higher, the fields being smaller, the contacts of professors and lecturers being closer than that of headmasters and their staffs, and detailed, confidential information from expert advisers much easier to obtain.

The development which threatens to endanger the freedom of

departmental Heads, and to hamper their activity, is the rapidly growing tendency to multiply the number of committees. To some extent this is due to the universities' growth in size, for a Senate of twenty can debate in a way that a Senate of sixty cannot. But it is attributable much more frequently to the increasing tendency to trust a committee of five more than a single professor and to the growing belief that the single professor is likely to be prejudiced, whereas a committee cannot be.

There are many questions, needless to say, which can best be settled by committees—questions, for example, in which several interests are involved, varied information has to be sought and diverse points of view have to be reconciled. But it is hardly too much to say that if a question *can* be decided by an individual, it *should* be. For an individual has normally a much greater sense of responsibility than a committee: everybody knows how, when each member is undecided on some matter, one prominent personality, anxious to get off to another engagement, says: 'Well, I propose so-and-so' and all the rest (subconsciously remarking 'Well, if he thinks so, it's probably all right') fall into line without demur. Now, if that is so in business of a general character, how much more so is it in business that affects one particular Department! Take such a matter as a junior appointment on the staff, a modification of the scheme of lectures or a change in the regulations of the Faculty which chiefly affects a single Department. If the departmental Head can be reasonably confident that, provided he has first talked it over with the Dean, any recommendation that he may make will be passed by the Faculty Board and the Senate without discussion, he feels the maximum of responsibility, and, if he is efficient and conscientious, he will go to any pains to ensure that his decision will be the best one. But if the same decision is left to a committee of five—and many such needless committees, alas, are far larger than that—the result is very different. Sometimes the Head, having very definite views about the matter, makes a strong recommendation to the Committee, which, as none of its members has any special knowledge of the subject, it is not rash enough to reject. In that case, precisely the same result is reached as if there had been no committee at all, at the additional cost of the waste of some hours of several people's time. Sometimes a similar recommendation is made, and, either because its members think they know better than the expert or because there are general considerations which seem to them to override the expert's special considerations, is rejected. In that case there is a chance that the decision may be a better one, though it is also probable that the Dean would have persuaded the expert of this when they discussed it together. But, assuming that the

Head is unconvinced of it, his defeat engenders in him a feeling of frustration, which leaves its mark, even if it eventually disappears, and which grows to an alarming extent if the committee's decision proves to have been mistaken. And so we come to the worst of the possible results of this over-confidence in committees. After a Head has been defeated in a number of departmental issues, whether through the obstructiveness of committees or through the unfortunate chance that several such may have happened, for different reasons, to disagree with him, his sense of frustration becomes permanent, and either he leaves the University for another in which conditions are better or he remains and gives up the attempt to develop his Department any further. Possibly he may still do good work, devoting his leisure to research, or Extension work, or contact with the schools. But the University has lost something which no committee can ever give it—the imagination, energy and enthusiasm of a specialist. In a minority of instances, of course, the departmental Head may himself be incompetent, pernickety or prejudiced, and the Committee has then saved the Department from too steep a decline and held it in a state of moderate efficiency until he can be got rid of. But experience and inquiry would suggest that this is very seldom the case. Departmental Heads are generally chosen with great care; and when, as infrequently happens, they prove incompetent, their incompetence is still more infrequently accompanied by such energy and conscientiousness as has been described: it usually grows out of the demoralization produced by having a secure position until the attainment of whatever age is fixed for compulsory retirement.

I would plead, then, with great earnestness, that all academic persons, and in particular all departmental Heads, be appointed only after the most careful inquiry, and, once chosen, be treated like persons in positions of trust, and given as much freedom as possible. The risk of their making an occasionally faulty decision, which, in such matters as the appointment of a probationary lecturer or the modification of a syllabus, is not irreparable, is far less harmful than the much greater risk of blunting the keen edge of an imaginative mind and an energetic disposition, which, in a Department under a comparatively young man, may not be rectifiable for a quarter of a century. Besides which, there is no more soul-killing or time-wasting experience than the setting up of unnecessarily numerous or unnecessarily large committees. And neither with time nor with living souls can Redbrick, facing its huge programme of development, afford to dispense. It has already too little of the first and too few of the second. It needs more of both.

III

Several correspondents have taken me reproachfully to task for having said nothing about Redbrick's treatment of women, all of them assuming the reason to have been indifference. I freely concede that the omission was unpardonable. But the subject was never absent from my mind: it is one of the few, indeed, on which I am absolutely intolerant. It was left out merely because there was not space to treat it at any length and it deserved more than passing consideration. This it shall have now.

The problem is confined to the staff. Undergraduates, whether men or women, are treated with perfect equity. Women attend the same lectures as men, have their own Common Rooms at the Union, elect their own officers (there are normally two Presidents yearly, one of either sex), queue with men for meals, debate with them and dance with them to their hearts' content. It is only when a woman becomes a lecturer that she begins to wonder if she is really wanted.

One amenity, it is true, she does enjoy, and it is a substantial one: Redbrick gives equal pay to men and women for equal work. Let us hope that it may soon be nobody's amenity, but everybody's right. If two men do the same piece of work, for the same party, and do it with equal efficiency, no-one would dream of refusing them equal payment. There is therefore no *moral* justification for denying it to a woman and a man. If the woman works for seven hours a day and the man for eight, or if the woman demonstrably achieves less than a man in the same period of time, the case is different. But for the headmaster of a school of 450 boys to be paid £750 a year and the headmistress of the girls' school of 450 to be paid £500 is ridiculous. Equally so would it be if Redbrick advertised a History lectureship at £400 for a man or £350 for a woman. Fortunately Redbrick does not.

None of the arguments used by the defenders of this inequality will hold water. There is no shadow of evidence for the theory that women work less, or achieve less, in education than men. The average schoolmistress works quite as hard, and gets quite as good results, as the average schoolmaster. The girls at a County School are as well turned out, in every respect, as the boys at the neighbouring Grammar School. The headmaster may be more of a public figure in the town than the headmistress, but the headmistress, as a rule, devotes more time to the details of school organization, and I would risk any money on her being at least equally efficient.

Another and a very unworthy argument used against equal pay for equal work is that women should be paid less because they can live on

less. If they can live on less, it is only because they have learned to make and repair their own clothes, cook their own meals and do much of their own housework when their day's teaching is over and their men colleagues are sitting at ease with the newspaper before the fire. But both man and woman have twenty-four hours to the day; and if the woman chooses to spend her leisure in saving money, the man is perfectly free to spend his in earning money. To penalize a woman for her own thriftiness is hardly justice.

A more specious argument is that men have to keep families on their pay—or at least should be enabled to do so if they have any—whereas women do not. Disregarding, for the sake of brevity, a whole group of exceptions to this generalization which have sprung up during the past difficult years, we have first to observe that, if there were any force in the argument, there should be a graded rate of pay for men, according to the size of their families, another graded rate for women with dependants, a lower rate for bachelors without dependants and a lower rate still for spinsters. If work is to be fairly remunerated on a basis of the worker's circumstances, an even more complicated scheme than this would be necessary; but it would seem very much fairer to give equal pay for the same work and to compensate workers with dependants by means of income-tax relief and of family allowances substantial enough to solve the problem of child maintenance.

The only reason for the perpetuation of this inequality which has any general relevance is the economic one. In commerce and industry there are fewer openings for women, who are therefore in greater supply than men, and this fact operates in a natural way to lower their wages. If all employers have to pay women at the same rate as men, it is said, they will (for several fairly obvious reasons, such as the higher sickness rate in women) prefer men, and women will be worse off than at present. If the rates are equalized in some types of employment and not in others, men will tend to prefer the latter to the former. In either case, we are told, there will be a social dislocation consequent upon the disregarding of an economic law.

These considerations might well apply to universities, in which men and women are competing all the time for the same jobs. No-one, so far as I know, has observed that men tend to leave university work, where women and men are paid equally, for school work, where they are not: perhaps that is because university work is in other respects more desirable. But my point is that these economic arguments are not, except quite indirectly, applicable to the schools, for in the large majority of cases men alone teach in boys' schools and women alone in girls' schools. One might expect that, under present conditions, the

boys' schools would be full of women—but other than economic considerations prevail in education. For that reason there need be no fear that if the rates are equalized, as it is to be hoped they shortly will be, men would leave teaching for other occupations where women are paid proportionately less. Teaching is still, to a great extent, a vocation, and those to whom it is not remain in it because of various non-financial advantages which it has over other occupations. And, quite apart from all this, ought not the remuneration of a profession so often entered for high moral and idealistic motives to be governed by standards of equity and justice rather than by economic laws which treat it as an occupation on a level with industry and commerce? For my own part, I think it should, and I am glad that in this respect Redbrick has led the way.

But, although the woman leaving school work for a university has certainly the advantage of no longer being paid at a lower rate than her male colleague, she encounters other disabilities which she had not previously known.

Most modern universities, having very few women on their staffs, make quite inadequate provison for their accommodation and comfort. In one, there is no Women's Common Room, and women are excluded from the Men's Common Room on the ostensible ground that there is no room for them. In another, a woman departmental Head has to share a private room with her staff, whereas every male Head has a room to himself. Another gives no women private rooms, but only a single Common Room, so that they can never interview students privately. Still another has one single cloak-room for the women of several Faculties. There can be few modern universities, if there are any, in which the women lecturers have not some grievance of this type.

Until recently, again, some of the modern universities made the position of married women extremely difficult: unless they resigned on marriage they risked being asked to do so in a not distant future. Since university work is less physically exhausting than school work, there was always a case for the more generous treatment of married women here. Now that the principle of retaining them in schools seems likely to be established—principally because of the prospective dearth of teachers—for some time to come, little more need be said about this here, but it is perhaps a suitable point at which to draw attention to the wise and enlightened treatment of the question of resignation on marriage to be found in paragraphs 89 to 95 of the McNair Report, to which it may yet be necessary some day to call the attention of the Redbrick Council. The Report stigmatizes the require-

ment, where it exists, that women teachers shall resign on marriage, as tending to stamp the profession as one for celibates.

'This deters young women, most of whom naturally look forward to marriage, from spending the time and money required to prepare themselves for teaching. They seek other occupations, though many of them may be gifted as potential teachers. In short, the marriage bar depresses recruitment.'[1]

Quite apart from the question of supply, it continues, there are good reasons for having married women in schools. Children of all ages 'benefit from the care and training of teachers with experience of home responsibilities, including the experience of marriage and, perhaps, the care of children of their own. The influence of a wise married woman on adolescent boys and girls and on her colleagues, both men and women, is an advantage which the schools ought not to have to forgo.'[2] The Committee ends by recommending that teachers in grant-aided schools be not required to resign solely on the ground of marriage and that arrangements be made by which married women who wish to do so may return to school work after long absences.

A graver disability than either of the two foregoing still awaits women who enter upon university work—namely, their meagre prospects of promotion. The position is that practically all Chairs in Great Britain, except a few in modern languages (e.g. at London, Birmingham and Manchester)[3] are held by men, and, so far as my information and experience go, it is unusual for any woman to be considered for a Chair by a selection committee, with the natural result that very few will apply for one. Nor is it much more usual for a woman to be appointed to a Grade I lectureship or to the Headship of a Department. Yet, where a woman is second-in-command, and her chief resigns, no hesitation is shown in appointing her, for however long a period, as *chargée d'affaires*, nor is there often any evidence that she fulfils this trust any less ably than a man. Once a new Head is appointed, she fades out of the picture and as a rule returns to her subordinate position, often without any improvement in salary or status. It never occurs to anybody that she might have been the new Head herself. A man, under such conditions, would very probably, and properly, go elsewhere, but a woman cannot, so slender is her chance of getting one of the few minor posts available to her.

One hesitates then, before recommending a woman, however brilliant (and in the Arts faculties of modern universities the best students are generally women), to embrace a university career.

[1] McN.R., par. 90, p. 26. [2] Op. cit., par. 91, p. 26.

[3] A woman has been appointed to a Chair at Cambridge as this book is passing through the press.

'What are my prospects?' inquires a First Class woman graduand after beating all the men of her year.

'Well,' one replies, 'you *may* get a post; though, other things being equal, a man will probably be preferred to you. If you do get one, you will have about £5 per week, with microscopical increments, and, at the end of five or six years (assuming that you keep your post) you will have reached about £6 per week. By the time you are forty, you should be earning £400 a year, but it is most unlikely that you will go farther. There is little chance of your moving from one university to another or of your ever becoming a departmental Head. So, if you have any material ambitions, apply for some other sort of job: women are better elsewhere unless they have private means, love the work for the work's sake alone or intend to seek an early escape in marriage.'

Now why should women be penalized in this way? Not because they are unpleasant or undesirable colleagues: everyone with experience of a mixed Common Room knows how much the women contribute to it—and besides, any university could afford the luxury of two Common Rooms if it so wished. Not because they fail in research: most learned reviews in the Humanities will have a greater number of women contributors than of men in proportion to the numbers of each working in universities. No: the reason seems to be a prejudice against women, partly as being unsuited to teach men and partly as lacking talent for organization.

As far as organization goes, one might hesitate to make a woman managing director of a large business house: women have not the tradition of big business behind them. In the United States the same view is sometimes taken as regards academic organization and men are not infrequently appointed as presidents of large women's colleges. But in our own country, where for a century women of unusual gifts have ruled, not only colleges, but large girls' schools, and made them famous, it is hardly logical to close to them the headships of university Departments in very few of which there is as much organization as in one small Secondary school. As to teaching, few would recommend that boys of between eleven and sixteen should be taught by women, for when the immature mental processes of the child begin to develop they are best understood by a man and as the boy is influenced by predominantly masculine ideals he needs men to look up to. Even so, there are many co-educational schools in which boys are taught by women, as well as by men, throughout. But, after about the age of sixteen, and increasingly in late adolescent and adult life, the readiness with which a youth or a man learns from a man or from a woman has nothing to do with their sex. Both in this War and in the last, the success of women with Sixth Forms in boys'

schools was very marked. And, in the higher world of scholarship, the sexes are less differentiated than in any other.

It is disappointing, not only that women have been so poorly treated in universities, but that they have made no efforts to get themselves treated better. Even more than prejudice, it is thoughtlessness that has barred their way to promotion; for few university men would attach much importance to the arguments just put forward. A determined and unanimous series of attacks by the combined body of university women teachers would probably win a comparatively easy victory.

After the last War, women became enfranchised simply because the signal services they had rendered their country established their claim to equality with men in this respect more firmly than any number of speeches could do. There can be no university in which, during the present War, women have not rendered services equally notable by stepping into responsible positions vacated by their male colleagues. Let them demand as their reward—and they will surely obtain it—that universities advertising posts in teaching or research shall henceforth state: 'Women are eligible for this post equally with men.' A new and more enlightened tradition than that of the past would not be long in building.

Chapter Four

THE LEISURED PROFESSOR AT BAY

If, out of a sense of its great importance, and the conviction that this has not been generally realized, I return now to the subject of Arts Faculty research and the professor, it is not with the intention of merely repeating what was said under that head in *Red Brick University*. I wish rather to correct some misconceptions, to comment upon the discussion which has followed the breaking of the conspiracy of academic silence and to go into further detail regarding my suggested remedies for an abuse the existence of which seems to be generally admitted.

I

First of all must be reiterated the axiom that research—that is to say, the pursuit of knowledge, together with the obligations that this involves—is absolutely essential to the idea of a university, and that, if there is any conflict between research and teaching, research should come first. Since *Red Brick University* was written the British Association Committee has come out with a dictum that has a genuine ring all too seldom heard:

'Research . . . is an essential part of the work of every university. . . . Apart from research, university education of the right kind is impossible.'[1]

It will not do to say, as the Warden of All Souls says, that the 'central function' of a university is to provide a liberal education, and its 'main practical work' to 'train people for the various professions', putting the obligation 'to advance research and to increase the sum of knowledge' second.[2] It is perfectly true that 'research, which is the highest form of specialization, should have the foundations not only of a thorough scientific training in the field in which the researcher is working, but also a basis of liberal culture which widens the mind and helps to relate the piece of special research to kindred problems and wider issues'.[3] But a liberal or a professional education, though many pursue the one or the other for its own sake alone, should always be,

[1] B.A.C., p. 29.

[2] 'The Modern Idea of a University.' In *Education Handbook*, Norwich, 1943, pp. 14–15.

[3] Op. cit., p. 15.

in the mind of the university, activities at once subsidiary and complementary to the pursuit of knowledge.

The general reaction to this position seems to have been that of *The Times*: 'This is perhaps an extreme view, but all opinion emphasizes the importance of research.'[1] Unfortunately, as far as Faculties of Arts are concerned, opinion seems to 'admit', rather than to 'emphasize' it, and little is done towards the translation of principle into practice. But at least it is conceded that research is, and must always be, one of the aims of a university, and many of my readers, both in letters to me and in articles and reviews, have been emboldened to come out on the side of scholarship with a decisiveness which must surely produce an effect on Faculty Boards throughout the country. What is more, many of them show a perfectly clear realization of, and a deep shame at, the parlous state of Arts research to-day. 'We feel that all university teachers and students are deeply indebted to you for your outspoken words,' wrote two lecturers with experience both of Oxbridge and of Redbrick, 'recalling them to their true vocation. If they do not return to it, productive scholarship will be entirely in the hands of scholars who do not hold university appointments.' And reviewers, who necessarily write with caution, have taken the same line:

'Such is our plight now that one of the best things he [Truscot] has said is that a university exists in order to seek truth and ensue it. It might be thought beyond belief that this required to be said about universities with a thousand years of liberal tradition behind them. ... But we cannot be sure that this is so.'[2]

Yet, satisfactory as this may be so far as it goes, it certainly does not go far enough. And, weighing these and other opinions expressed in reviews and articles, I am certain that too many of the writers are, perhaps unconsciously, obsessed by a narrow and unworthy idea of research, which somehow or other must be got rid of before we can make very much progress. Could we only abolish the word, it might help a good deal, but what are the alternatives? 'Investigation' sounds pompous; 'original work' might refer to novel-writing; 'higher study' (a word sometimes employed by universities in association with 'research') suggests absorption rather than dissemination. I have noticed that some of our most distinguished researchers in Arts subjects never use the word at all: they merely refer to their 'work' or their 'writing'. But unhappily the 'work' or 'writing' of so many

[1] 'Universities after the War.' In *The Times*, 3 April, 1944.

[2] D. G. James, 'New Notions about Universities.' In *The Universities Review*, November 1943, p. 10.

other people would mean something so very different! No, the word, it is to be feared, has come to stay: all we can do is to try to marry it to some worthier ideal and so make an honest woman of it.

A few months since, I read in the late Dr. T. R. Glover's *Cambridge Retrospect* a passage which admirably illustrates the harm which this unfortunate misconception can do:

'Long ago A. E. H. Love, who left St. John's to be professor at Oxford, made the criticism that Cambridge after all was devoting herself chiefly to the production of professors. The newer ideal for a professor was devotion to "research", which is very well in scientific studies, but less obviously useful in literature. Broadly speaking, in literature the less a professor "researches" in the modern sense of the term the more likely he is to understand what he is doing. Manuscripts and antecedents are of little help to the real understanding of literature.[1]

Now this passage can safely be cited because Dr. Glover was an eminent researcher in a broad, yet entirely admissible acceptation of that word, whose work all scholars regard with admiration. He clearly takes the 'modern sense' as equivalent to factual research and the making of 'discoveries' and it is perfectly correct to say that too much stress has been laid upon this by comparison with re-interpretation, scholarly appreciation and creative criticism. Selection committees have often preferred a young man who has made some lucky 'discovery' to a maturer man and a more experienced teacher whose output has been honest and steady but has rather tended to the textual or the expository. Learned reviews have been known to reject very competent critical articles in favour of contributions by less mature and gifted writers which were supposed to contain something 'new' and thus to 'add to knowledge' (i.e., of facts). At the same time, it seems most unfortunate that so respected a scholar as Dr. Glover should have thrown off this somewhat irresponsible paragraph, since any effect it may have can only be to diminish respect for research in the good sense as well as in the bad. Still more must one regret the implied approval of the word 'useful' as a desideratum for research work. If only one learned book in a hundred, and one learned article in a thousand, can be said to have added to the welfare or happiness of man (which I take it is what 'usefulness' means), there are few pieces of honest investigation which do not carve out one more step on the ladder leading somewhere. Even our old friend, the graduate's thesis on 'Jones in France',[2] will tell us something about Jones and

[1] *Cambridge Retrospect*, Cambridge, 1943, pp. 110–11.

[2] *Red Brick University*, p. 110.

something about France, and, if conscientiously done, it may save some less callow worker much routine labour and become a brick in the edifice which all will recognize as 'useful'—perhaps 'epoch-making' and 'alone of its kind'. And, quite apart from this, who can estimate the 'usefulness' of the most immature piece of factual investigation to the investigator himself? Research of any kind is a training in method. And one must learn to design a four-roomed house before attempting a cathedral.

With Dr. Glover's paragraph may be contrasted a few lines from the biography of another eminent Cambridge scholar, Sir J. J. Thomson—lines which will strike an echo in all who both value and practise research and train others in it:

'The special value which he attached to research as a means of education was that it necessarily took the learner away from that reliance on teachers to which all set teaching was subject. A man who was attempting even the most modest piece of research had to find out what others had done on the same lines, and he had to find it out for himself in the largely uncharted country of original literature, instead of having it presented to him in a cut and dried form by a lecturer. . . (He) maintained that he always saw the minds of those attempting research strengthen and mature under the process. It gave independence of view, self-reliance, initiative, and training in judgement: and the very disheartening phases through which a research worker generally goes before light begins to emerge was in itself a valuable training for the battle of life.'[1]

It will be observed, of course, that this last passage, which, though written of Science, is equally applicable to Arts, refers, not to mature scholars, but to the young, while the preceding passage has to do with the research of 'professors'. This raises another point which seems not to be generally realized—that, in most Arts fields, factual research is a training-ground, or, for the maturer scholar, a subsidiary activity, rather than an end in itself.[2] It is not unusual, especially in fields which have been little cultivated, for some problem or problems of factual research to occupy a worker for many years: sometimes the discovery of one unknown or forgotten fact may lead to researches which last a lifetime. But more commonly, to adapt a metaphor attributed to A. L. Smith, the scholar 'digs into his work' the results of his early researches, and digs into his character, too, the virtues, the qualities and the habits which they have engendered in him, so that his later work bears flower and fruit to which he gives

[1] Lord Rayleigh, *Sir J. J. Thomson*, Cambridge, 1942.
[2] *Red Brick University*, p. 108.

his name and which perhaps make him famous.[1] One can no more see the results of the early work in the later than one can see the manure in the prize sweet peas, but the one could never have existed without the other. I am old enough now to have past pupils who have done work of distinction, but only they and I are aware how much their fine creative, interpretative work, so highly praised in the learned reviews, owes to the raw articles rejected by those same reviews or tucked away in dark and forgotten corners of them, and the typewritten 'dissertations' which never saw the light of print, and never will.

Let me repeat, then, as emphatically as may be, that research is not, and can never be, limited to fact-grubbing. In *Red Brick University* I have defined the word comprehensively to include scholarly investigation, appreciation, creative and textual criticism, re-interpretation and a critical treatment of contemporary thought. It also takes in 'not only the pursuit of all these activities oneself, but the encouraging, stimulating and training of others to pursue them, and participation in the activities of bodies devoted to their furtherance'.[2] The A.U.T., in a Report on Research in the Faculty of Arts, makes an admirably liberal and comprehensive survey of the field from which there is space here only to extract brief quotations. It should be read and considered carefully and introspectively by every university teacher: little more would then be heard of the fallacy that research is 'useless'.

'1. There is, first, the discovery of new "facts". This term . . . could be applied to the discovery of new pieces of evidence, for instance an unpublished document or buried archaeological remains. It would also be used when, as a result of this or of the re-examination of evidence already known, the occurrence of a historical event is established, which had not hitherto been known. . . .

'It is undoubtedly important that this sort of work should go on. Much of it is of value, and increased facilities for its publication are, in many directions, needed. But there are serious dangers in overestimating this aspect of the work. It may easily lead to a false evaluation of facts, which attaches importance to them, not because they really contribute anything to the understanding of the subject, but just because they have been hitherto unknown or neglected. . . .

'2. A much higher degree of originality is shown by the scholar who is able to re-interpret the facts already known, to throw new light on their connections with each other, their relative importance, etc. . .

[1] Cf. Stuart Hodgson, *Ramsay Muir*, London, 1943, p. 39.
[2] *Red Brick University*, p. 111.

The exact point at which this amounts to a real novelty which ought to be published to the world is a delicate question. It is impossible to over-estimate the value of such work at its best. But it cannot be supplied to order....

'3. An important part of the work of a university teacher should be to keep himself informed of the work that is being done in his subject by other scholars. This requires constant reading and also opportunities for meetings and discussions. Not the least of the benefits of this is the stimulus it provides for the continual re-examination of the existing evidence in order to estimate the value of the new suggestions. A lot of work of this kind can lead to publication in the form of discussions in periodicals and also in the form of reviews of books. A full-scale review can be a real piece of original work, and should be valued accordingly....

'4. It is also desirable for the university teacher to devote some of his time to extending the range of his knowledge of his own subject beyond the particular period or branch of it in which he specializes. This in itself is hardly likely to find expression in published work, but it will have an effect on the quality of his published work in his own specialism, and still more, perhaps, will be expressed in his teaching.

'5. He will also find it worth while to acquire some knowledge of other subjects, which may have some bearing on his own, as ancillary to it or closely related to it. The results of this, again, will show themselves indirectly in his research and teaching in his own subject.

'6. Finally, there is a suggestion that the university teacher in *some* subjects might regard it as part of his work to keep an eye on current controversies in the outside world to see where they impinge on his own special work.'[1]

My only critical comment on this survey is that the six forms of activity which it specifies are of very diverse value. The first two belong to what might be termed 'primary' research, representing the scholar's main line of activity and also the normal direction of his progress. A few workers, for special reasons, are justified, as has been said, in confining themselves to factual research. A few others are able to devote their entire lives to criticism, though nearly every critic, at some time or other, discovers factual problems for which a solution has to be sought before he can go further. But the majority, as they amass experience, graduate from the factual to the critical, or, while directing, or collaborating in, the factual research of their pupils, become predominantly critics themselves. The other four types of activity are both subsidiary and subservient to these and are normally

[1] A.U.T. (Research).

carried on contemporaneously with them. They can also, to a large extent, be carried on in short periods of time during term—in the University Library, on free evenings, in the Common Room, during railway journeys, in discussions with colleagues or pupils. Few teachers spend so much time on them, or produce such notable results in them, that they are justified in regarding activity in any or all as absolving them from activity in one or other of the first two. And among themselves the four differ greatly in nature and in importance. Keeping abreast of one's subject is only contributing to knowledge when the results of one's labours are made available to others—as in reviews of books, on the value of which, I fully agree, much more stress should be laid. The same applies to 'keeping an eye on current controversies'. Learning more of one's own subject, on the other hand, and learning about other subjects, are part of the duty of the teacher (including the school teacher) as well as of the researcher, and these least of all can take the place of factual research, though, as the Report rightly remarks, they can subserve it.

A second point which it is desirable to make here, and which is almost as axiomatic as the first, is that research and teaching should go hand in hand. Each is complementary to the other. 'University teaching can neither be divorced from research, nor university research from teaching.'[1] The necessity of considering them separately led me to insist on this at the very outset:

'These blend so frequently, and at times so completely, that it is often more accurate to describe them as one single aim which can be regarded from two aspects.[2]

One could hardly be more emphatic than that. The A.U.T. Report says almost exactly the same thing in slightly different language:

'Research . . . must occupy a large part of the time and attention of the university teacher, if he is to fulfil his obligations as such at all. It is of vital importance, both for its own sake and as a necessary condition of effective teaching at a university level.'[3]

Professor A. N. Whitehead, in a striking passage, presents it from another angle:

'The two functions of education and research meet together in a university. Do you want your teachers to be imaginative? Then encourage them to research. Do you want your researchers to be imaginative? Then bring them into intellectual sympathy with the

[1] B.A.C., p. 29. [2] *Red Brick University*, p. 105. [3] A.U.T. (Research).

young at the most eager, imaginative period of life, when intellects are just entering upon their mature discipline. Make your researchers explain themselves to active minds, plastic and with the world before them; make your young students crown their period of intellectual acquisition by some contact with minds gifted with experience of intellectual adventure. Education is discipline for the adventure of life; research is intellectual adventure; and the universities should be homes of adventure shared in common by young and old.'[1]

All this is very true, but one danger must be guarded against which can best be described by a quotation from the opening words of the A.U.T. Report: 'Research in the general sense of the original and independent pursuit of knowledge. . . .' That is a well-intended definition, but let us see where, in practice, it is apt to lead us.

'Precisely,' says Professor Deadwood, that well-known academic figure, who always looks slightly shocked when the obnoxious substantive is mentioned. 'Precisely. Research is the original pursuit of knowledge; I pursue knowledge whenever I prepare a lecture; therefore, I perform research and am doing all that is required of me.' That might be thought an exaggeration, but I have heard those very words used, in private and in public, by teachers who are either failing in their own obligations or are attempting to excuse such failures in others. If the contention were a valid one, every school teacher who conscientiously prepares his lessons is engaging in research, and many schoolchildren, in writing essays or attempting to wrest the meaning from a French or Latin unseen, are engaging in research. So, in a sense—a very imperfect sense—they are. But it is not in that sense that the university teacher should view his obligation. His task is not merely to pursue knowledge 'originally and independently'. (How else, by the way, can one pursue anything but 'originally'? And why 'independently'? Does collaboration in research destroy its nature and value?) His task is to attain to the knowledge he pursues, and to diffuse it when it is attained—or alternatively, if it is not attained, to give an account of the pursuit for the benefit of others. Research, that is to say, will begin with pursuit but will end in publication. The act is completed only with diffusion; and although in the most literal sense a certain amount of diffusion can be accomplished *viva voce*, in lectures and seminars, there is no permanence about this.

One strongly suspects that the man who for twenty years after election to a Chair publishes nothing has nothing to publish. It is surely unthinkable that he should go on delivering lectures, each of

[1] A. N. Whitehead, *The Aim of Education and Other Essays*, London, 1932, pp. 146–7.

which embodies the results of original investigation, for so long a period, and have no desire to communicate these results to a wider audience than he can reach with his voice. To say the least, it hardly inspires one with confidence in their value.

II

I now return to that great unsolved problem of university life dealt with at some length in *Red Brick University*—the problem of the academic person (for brevity, as before, he may be referred to as a professor) who does no research worth mentioning after his election to the permanent staff and shows no intention or desire to do any. If the universities are to fulfil their primary function, this problem must be solved, and, if the will to solve it is there, no time will ever be found again like the immediate future. For any solution, of course, will have reference to new appointments. The lazy old leopards will never change their spots: they must be allowed to die out and become relics of an unregretted past. It is the future that must be better.

In *Red Brick University* I showed that the research in Arts subjects, both at the old and at the new universities, is done by a very few people, either genuine scholars of a mature type or young men who are producing hard in the hope of getting promotion, and that the vast majority do practically nothing. I gave statistics illustrating the small amount of teaching which is demanded of them and pointed out that in no Faculty are more than a handful of men overworked with committees. Why, then, is there so little productiveness? 'The only explanations one can find are that the staff neither believe in research nor are forced to do any. Practically every lecturer of any standing—and every professor who has ever been a lecturer—has a certain amount of past original work to his credit. But once the lecturer becomes a professor, or has risen to as high a grade as he judges himself likely to reach or thinks it worth while to work for, all such activities come virtually to an end. That is not cynicism, but a conclusion which will probably be found inescapable if figures are taken over any number of years in any one university.'[1]

As preliminaries to remedial action I postulated an education of opinion and a reform of the time-squandering committee system. Before coming to the actual remedies I will discuss the reception of the indictments themselves.

First of all, there was a repetition of the old excuses. A critic in

[1] *Red Brick University*, p. 119.

the *Universities Review*, for example, puts the matter bluntly. 'Our cheeks begin to glow. Are we the laziest body of people in the community?' This sounds hopeful. But then, instead of answering 'Yes' and proceeding to ask what is to be done about it, he discovers that 'certain considerations may mitigate our shame'. Just listen:

'Some are obliged to fill vacations with the exhausting work of marking school scripts. Keeping abreast of our subject may take most of our spare time, and many large volumes are put aside for careful scrutiny in the vacation....'[1]

In other words, 'no time'! But, before we examine that excuse, can the critic explain why it is that practically every professor and senior lecturer has a satisfactory, sometimes a quite remarkable, amount of published work to his credit at the time of his election, produced during the very years when he has least time and most needs money, yet often, once he has a position and a comfortable salary secured to him for the rest of his working life, he produces little or nothing more. Everybody knows, and has long known, that this is the case. If it is not, let it be disproved. Let it be explained, for example, why a young man, known over half Europe at thirty-five as the author of two standard works which are still used everywhere, was elected at that age to a Chair and has now reached the age of sixty without having published anything more. Or why another, appointed professor at thirty-eight, on the strength of a small but penetrating book and the unanimous opinions of all the experts that he was the coming man in his field, has utterly failed to justify these prophecies, and devotes himself, when not lecturing or attending meetings, to bee-keeping. Nor are these isolated cases. How many Arts professors of twenty years' standing would dare to print in *The Universities Review* a list of the contributions to knowledge which they have published during that time? If I am wrong, any Arts Faculty can prove it by issuing statistics.

However, let us give our critic's excuses serious consideration. First of all, 'the exhausting work of marking school scripts'. Only a few members of any Arts Faculty mark school scripts at all and most of those who do are not professors. But even if they all did, the scripts period lasts from about mid-July to mid-August: say four weeks. Allow three weeks for holiday and relaxation after this exhausting experience and there is still quite a substantial amount of vacation left. At Oxbridge the vacations total twenty-eight weeks yearly; at Redbrick, twenty-two. That leaves twenty-one and fifteen weeks respectively. How does the exhausted script-marker use these?

[1] *The Universities Review*, November 1943, p. 35.

Apparently he takes refuge behind the 'many large volumes' to which he must devote such 'careful scrutiny'. But is it so impossible for him to scrutinize them during the term? Let us try to discover what he does in term-time. For that purpose I will conjure up Professor Deadwood and have a talk with him.

'Now, Professor, let us take a working-week as equivalent to forty-four hours, which gives you five eight-hour days and nothing after one on Saturdays. How many hours a week do you lecture?'

'Well, six, as a rule—that is for six periods of three-quarters of an hour, but I am always glad to see students in the following quarter of an hour—though few of them ever come.'

'That leaves thirty-eight. What else do you do at the University?'

'Oh, there are meetings: they take about two hours a week on the average. And I have to consult with my staff: should we call that perhaps two hours more?'

'Well—we might! That will leave thirty-four hours to account for. I suppose you spend that time on original research.'

'Well, not exactly. The fact is, I am too tired to do any research during the term. No, there are other things. There is preparation of lectures—at least there was, when I was younger, but nowadays I just give the same lectures year after year. Of course I add to them or revise them from my reading.'

'So that won't occupy many of the thirty-four hours. Perhaps you use them for reading—keeping abreast of your subject and all that sort of thing?'

'Well, ye-es. That is, I do read, of course. But hardly as much as thirty-four hours a week. Perhaps two hours a day would be a fair average. Not counting Saturdays, of course: I always spend Saturdays in the garden.'

'Right you are, then: that leaves us with twenty-four hours a week unoccupied: rather more than half the total. I wonder how you fill that in.'

So does the Professor. But he can suggest nothing further. Except that, of course, 'a lot of things crop up—letters to answer, don't you know, and students to interview, and what not. The fact is, I don't know where the time gets to.'

But *I* do. It's a strange thing that it should be the laziest people and the hardest-worked people who make that remark, the difference between them being that the hard-worked always seem to be able to make more time if necessary.

This is Professor Deadwood's day in term-time. (I don't know, and I can't imagine, what he does in the vacations.) He has a leisurely breakfast at half-past eight, followed by pipe and paper; reaches the

University between ten and half-past; reads his letters and perhaps writes one; saunters into the Common Room for a cup of coffee; calls on a colleague, or the Bursar, or the Clerk to the Senate; returns to his room, glances through the latest issue of a learned review, has a few words with a pupil—and, lo, it's lunch-time. After lunch in the refectory, followed by a chat about the day's news in the Common Room, he gives a lecture at half-past two, and immediately afterwards hurries home lest he should be late for tea..After tea comes the day's exercise (unless it happens to be a day when he has no lecture, in which case he plays golf in the afternoon) and after dinner he spends a couple of hours with a new book on his special subject (or a book from the circulating library on something else), after which, the paper again, a nightcap, and bed at eleven, after a somewhat tiring but thoroughly well-spent day. Certainly the genus professor ought to be celebrated for longevity!

But surely, it will be said, all professors are not like this one? No, not by a long way; but a great many of them are, and the point of my criticism is that it should be possible. Even were there none, the system would be a bad one. And the system permits worse things than that. It permits a professor to hold his Chair for years on end, just because the Chair is endowed, without having a single pupil and without writing so much as an article or a review. It enables a professor to discourage would-be pupils from reading with him by demanding of them an impossibly high standard or by putting his lectures at hours when they cannot attend. It lauds a professor who turns himself into a caricature of a schoolmaster by teaching hard all the term, engaging in outside activities all the vacations and doing nothing whatsoever to advance knowledge.

And the ironic part of it, let us repeat, is that ten, twenty years ago, these same unproductive professors, then candidates for the Chairs they now hold, were producing useful work, sometimes steadily, sometimes rapidly, until they gained the coveted post which for them has been equivalent to retirement from productiveness altogether.

Another excuse, on which little time need be wasted, is that 'a man may spend many years on a topic before he is ready to publish'.[1] True, he may—and it is a curious coincidence that the professors who sternly deprecate 'rushing into print' and 'premature publication' are those who themselves publish least—but I suspect that he very seldom does. The young and inexperienced lecturer may credit any reverend senior with masses of unpublished work which will be given to an expectant world in his old age but by the more mature the rare

[1] Ibid.

birds of that type are easily recognizable: their names are often to be found at the foot of reviews, minor notices and miscellaneous queries in learned journals; they are well known and well spoken of by the leading scholars in their field; they are always accessible to the younger men; they have always time to spare for anything to do with scholarship. No: that explanation will fit about one per cent of the apparently unproductive and the idea that about eighty per cent of our colleagues are burning the midnight oil in company with unpublished masterpieces is altogether too good to be true.

But now we come to a really bright idea—not in the least a new one but put forward so plausibly by our critic that it must be given careful consideration. For it 'challenges Mr. Truscot's principles'!

'Some professors and lecturers may feel that their *métier* lies in teaching rather than in original work. They may spend their free periods of the year in collecting material for courses and expend their energies on their pupils and on the practical life of the university during terms.'[1]

Now, surely, it is the turn of Mr. Truscot's cheeks to glow. What if our poor maligned colleagues are only being true to the inner light and conscientiously following their vocation? How cruel to stigmatize them for neglecting research when they are spending forty-four hours weekly, for thirty weeks, in giving six, eight or ten hours' lectures, and the greater part of their twenty-two weeks of vacation in 'collecting material' for the courses of the ensuing term! One would almost think that, with such a devotion to teaching, they would be happier as masters at Public Schools, where they would be able to teach for thirty periods a week instead of ten and would have so much greater scope for 'practical life' in every shape and form.

For all its plausibility, in short, I find the assumption quite unconvincing. To begin with, I want to know why these people, whose *métier* is teaching and not research, ever entered a sphere in which, as is well known, research is demanded as well as teaching. Some universities even put the demand into their regulations:

'It shall be the duty of each Professor:

'(*a*) to contribute, so far as in him lies, to the advancement and diffusion of knowledge, especially by the prosecution and promotion of original research;

'(*b*) To give instruction in accordance with the curriculum from time to time prescribed by his Faculty and the Senate in the subject committed to his charge. . . .'

[1] Ibid.

Secondly, I want to know how it is that a professor who engaged successfully in research until the date of his appointment to a permanent post only discovered that his *métier* lay in teaching after he had obtained it. To these two questions it will be hard to give a satisfactory answer, and a third one is more disconcerting still. It is generally admitted, in the words of the A.U.T. Report (the italics are mine), that 'research . . . must occupy a large part of the time and attention of the university teacher, *if he is to fulfil his obligations at all.*' It follows, therefore, that a university teacher who does no research is not fulfilling his obligations. Should he not, then, leave the university and go into a school? I can see no justification for his remaining at a university.

If the reply made to the third question be that he has such a live, original and inquiring mind that all his preparation, teaching, lecturing and discussions are a true embodiment of the spirit of research, the obvious rejoinder is: 'Then why does he confine his teaching to the limits of his classroom instead of giving it to the world?' And this question brings us to a true assessment of the worth of the excuse which we are considering. In a vast majority of cases the answer is that such a person is not in any sense whatever doing research and the reason that he communicates nothing to the world is that he has little or nothing worth communicating. In a few very exceptional instances there is another reason. I give it in the words of Professor Whitehead:

'For some of the most fertile minds composition in writing, or in a form reducible to writing, seems to be an impossibility. In every faculty you will find that some of the most brilliant teachers are not among those who publish. Their originality requires for its expression direct intercourse with their pupils in the form of lectures, or of personal discussion. Such men exercise an immense influence; and yet, after the generation of their pupils has passed away, they sleep among the innumerable unthanked benefactors of humanity.'[1]

One of these rare instances was revealed a short time ago. A scholar whom his intimates knew to be of rare ability died, when near retiring age, after having risen to the very top of his profession, but also almost without having published. I withhold his name, because both he and his friends felt keenly the curious inhibition which seemed to prevent him from writing—and the rather pathetic efforts made, since his death, to put together some of his notes for publication have not been particularly successful. But I quote this case to show that I am fully aware of the existence of such an inhibition. It could probably be cured, in most people, if attacked resolutely in youth—but that would

[1] *The Aim of Education*, pp. 148–9.

mean 'premature publication'! It does not, however, affect our main argument. It is as futile to suppose that our 80 per cent of non-producing staff are haunted by a mysterious inhibition as that they are all hugging epoch-making but unfinished manuscripts.[1] I doubt if one per cent of them falls within each class. In that case, we still have to explain the seventy-eight.

III

Having disposed of the excuses, let us now come to the remedies. Of the four which I proposed:

1. Greater care about new appointments and promotions;
2. Short-term appointments;
3. Annual reports;
4. Reciprocity with other universities, and Sabbatical years,

the fourth is the least important, because by itself it would be of no use at all: the remainder, if adopted, would constitute a determined attack on the abuse from three sides. But, maintains the critic in the *Universities Review*, 'this is going too far'. 'The application of any sort of pressure . . . suggested in certain quarters', remarks the A.U.T. meaningly, 'is greatly to be deprecated.'[2] I want now, as regards in turn principle and practice, to inquire why.

In principle, it will presumably be conceded that the proposals are reasonable. What is there to be said against them? It is agreed that the professor has two obligations—teaching and research. If he spent a whole year on research, without going once into his classroom, there would be trouble. Then why should there not be trouble if he spends a year in teaching (from six to ten hours weekly) without doing any research? The question to be asked is rather if remedial action is practicable and advisable. Would the remedy be worse than the disease?

Admittedly a suitable procedure is not easy to find because research is a more delicate and a more individual matter than teaching and absence from the study is less noticeable than absence from the classroom. But for that very reason the problem calls more urgently for solution and if we are in earnest about it we ought not to be content until a solution is found. One may begin by saying that the only true, effective and permanent solution is the creation of a sound tradition. And that can, in time, be done. The schoolmaster could easily scamp

[1] Professor Whitehead (p. 149) fully recognizes this: 'When all such allowances have been made, one good test for the general efficiency of a faculty is that as a whole it shall be producing in published form its quota of contributions to thought.'

[2] *The Universities Review*, November 1943, p. 35.

a great deal of his exercise-marking. The parish priest could omit to say his Mass or Office in church if nobody is present. The nurse often performs duties which she could omit without anyone's being the wiser. Our trouble, as university professors, is that we have allowed teaching to absorb our energies till we have no longer any conscience about research. We have now to develop a conscience; and it is for the decades of its development, not for all time, that we have to legislate.

The objections which have been raised to my remedies have concentrated, as I expected they would, on the second and third. As to the first, the critics assume that the maximum care about appointments is already taken. My view is that it is not. But about that no argument is possible. We have to consider the arguments against appointing professors and lecturers for not more than ten years at a time and making their reappointment as conditional upon their research during each period as upon their teaching. The objections which have been raised to that proposal are as follows:

1. *Intangibility of the evidence.* That difficulty one can fully understand. Not only is it impossible, maintain some, to define and delimit research, but, even were it possible, it is undesirable. One critic, for example, writes to me of the 'need for keeping "research" free of set rules purporting to define it'. Another correspondent, however, supplies a working definition which would take us a part of the way:

'If a man is so strongly moved by a problem as to apply himself to it without reserve until he has resolved (so far as in him lies) its difficulties and perplexities, he is doing research.'

Let us face the facts. How many professors and lecturers in any Faculty of Arts would even claim that they were doing that during (let us say) the last academic session before the War? Is it not rather a quibble to object to the applying of 'set rules' to define what hardly exists?

Another aspect of this problem is that (to quote once more the correspondent last referred to) 'it is easy to apply original thought to gain results which are largely negative in character'. An exercise of this kind, if conscientiously and ably performed, will have been well worth while as a discipline for the researcher, and probably, if the negative results are published, from an objective point of view as well. But how is one to assess the ten years' work of a professor, who, for all his concentrated labour, has practically no results to show? Will he not be dismissed, and some facile investigator, doing statistical work which any hack, under direction, could accomplish, be commended and given his place?

Certainly not. To start with, even the briefest account by the professor of the work he has attempted to do could be checked by an expert in the field and any doubts cleared up by correspondence or interview. Deception would be next to impossible. Then, if assessment of this kind were not effective, how would researchers who get no results fare in their applications for professorships? Are *they* turned down in favour of facile fact-grubbers? No professor would maintain that, save in an exceptional case, such a thing is possible. An external expert, in private correspondence with a committee, is absolutely frank. 'This man', he will say, 'has achieved very little so far, but he is on the right lines and you will be quite safe in taking him.' Or 'of these two people, the first has done work which is satisfactory as to bulk and attractive in presentation, but not strikingly original; the second has contributed only a couple of papers to the *English Historical Review*, but each one opens up a new line of thought and I can see from his letter of application that he is developing these energetically and on the right lines.' Why cannot referees write in the same way of men who already hold their Chairs? There seems no essential difference between pre-election and post-election procedure.

As a matter of fact, the same difficulty may arise at a still earlier stage. In June 1934, an able young graduate was awarded a travelling fellowship with which he went to Rome to search for a document which he proposed to transcribe and edit for his M.A. It took him three months to trace the document, and, when he had studied it carefully, and copied a large part of it, which took six months more, he discovered that the work was leading him in a different direction from that which he had been given to expect, and, further, that the competent editing of it demanded qualifications which he did not possess. Having spent several weeks in learning Italian before starting work in Rome, he had by now consumed nearly half the time which he could give to his M.A. work, without apparently having achieved any result whatever. What was to be done? He came home for consultation with his Professor, who accepted the evidence which he produced of a session's research; in the second session he began work in a related field which he hopes one day to resume. Though he wrote no 'thesis', and showed up nothing which could conceivably be published, there was never any question of his not being awarded the degree. Presumably one can be as fair to a professor as to a candidate for the M.A.

2. *Impracticability of terminating appointments.* 'How can you possibly get rid of a man at fifty-five?' Provided the terms of his appointment are clear, I see no kind of difficulty. He is appointed for five years at, let us say, thirty-five; then for five years more till forty-five;

and finally for two successive periods of ten years till sixty-five, the usual compulsory retiring age. Of course he could have a magnificently lazy time in his last decade, but that we must allow him if, after twenty-five years of productivity, he were capable of laziness at all. The thing to be avoided at all costs is his settling down to a routine of ten hours' work a week in term and nothing in vacation before he is forty. Now if at forty and forty-five the external experts who had reported upon his work at thirty-five were still favourable, he would have a clear and peaceful run each time. But if at fifty-five they, or their successors, reported that his activity had come to an end, and he had no extenuating circumstances to plead, his appointment would automatically terminate according to the agreement. The only reason we find this difficult to envisage is because our rule has always been life appointment for the lazy and the industrious alike—and generally at the same salary.

In practice, actual dismissal would very seldom occur. Once a few examples had been made, and candidates for permanent posts knew that research was expected, and would be demanded, of them, they would either seek other fields of usefulness or do their job. If they grew tired of research, and gave it up, they would feather their nests in advance of the expiration of their decade, or take an earlier opportunity of flying elsewhere. After all, there are a good many other openings than a university for a man or woman with a First Class Honours degree and long experience of teaching and handling undergraduates, even if he or she is in the fifties.

3. *Dignity of the Professor.* Some of the younger people have sounded quite alarmed and I have heard them discussing with great concern if five-year appointments are likely to come in the near future. The older men view the prospect with commendable serenity. Being 'safely seated', as one of them, a well-known scholar, put it to me, they have nothing to fear; no regulation that may be made is likely to be retrospective. So they speak their minds freely. 'You won't catch me', remarked the same scholar, 'submitting my record in research to a bunch of my colleagues, even though they were dignified with the name of "committee".'

No external experts, of course, or anything but a formal motion, would be necessary where so distinguished a professor was concerned, nor need a Research Committee everdo more than send forward such a motion where (as would soon generally happen) the report of the professor himself testified unmistakably to his fulfilment of the statutory requirements. But why is there loss of dignity in submitting one's record of research to a committee for the purpose of a reappointment, and yet no loss of dignity in not only submitting a record, but

soliciting and presenting testimonials, together with specimens of one's published work, for the purpose of a first appointment—to say nothing of the humiliating experience of waiting upon such a committee in person! Has one, between thirty-five and forty, grown so much more important that what one was only too glad to do then is a humiliation now? Is it not rather that the permanent member of a staff has come to look upon immunity from criticism as a right and resents any attempt to take it away? If not, why do senior men present themselves for doctorates of letters, a procedure which involves submission of published or unpublished work to a commiteee? One never hears the suggestion that there is any loss of dignity in that.

4. *Risk of the production of inferior work.* Any pressure, says the A.U.T., 'could only result in increasing the quantity of publication at the expense of its quality'. 'There is reason to think that many young scholars have suffered in their wider understanding of their subject by the necessity that they feel to produce something in publishable form in order to qualify for appointments.'

The last sentence has strictly no relation to what is being proposed. If young scholars have so suffered, that concerns the period before their appointment and is due to the unwise procedure adopted by the committee of selection. No committee should require any large amount of published work from a young scholar. Evidence that serious research work is being done, with a view to ultimate publication, can be given and tested in other ways. In my own special line I could pronounce on anyone's claim to be doing original research without his having published so much as an article.

The same applies to work submitted for reappointment. The specialist referee will not be deceived. Naturally, as a man grows older, more published work is expected of him, but each case would be considered on its merits, and the idea that a volume of work actually published should be demanded within any period does not come from me: I should decisively reject it. My view is that publication must be the goal of research; and, if a man dies and leaves work adjudged by experts to be worthy of publication, it should be published, as the discharge of an honourable obligation, by his University.

This does not mean that inferior work never *would* be produced, but it does mean that it *need* not. There would always be professors trying to make sure of reappointment by publishing early in each period, and the quality of their production might suffer. At the same time, the reception of such work by the critics would probably deter a serious man from doing this too often; while, with the majority, the alternative to inferior work from them would be no work at all. And,

of the two, inferior work, if of publishable quality, is surely preferable.

Everything depends here, in the last resort, on the policy and the standards of the individual Faculty, and this, in its turn, upon its conception of research and the degree of its determination to get it.

IV

I close this chapter by reiterating the hope that the proposals I have put forward will be given serious and unprejudiced consideration.

The A.U.T. seems hardly to realize the seriousness of the position. 'The risk of a few idle professors', says its Report, 'would be a lesser evil than the certainty of a flood of inferior published work done to order.' That sentence is unsatisfactory because it begs the question: it is not certain that a flood of inferior work would be published; nor is it necessary that it should be; nor would it, in any case, be 'done to order'. But principally it is unsatisfactory because it misstates the case. There is no 'risk' of 'a few' idle professors. There is the *fact* that a *large number* of idle professors are ruining the traditions of their calling.

In its Science Report the A.U.T. lays it down that 'every member (of a Department), including the Professor, should be able to give at least half the working week to research'.[1] Supposing it were possible for all members of the Arts staff to have half the working week for research, does the A.U.T. for a moment suppose that they would use it for that purpose?

Not on your life; but there would be a tremendous improvement in the standard of the Arts staffs' front gardens!

[1] A.U.T. (Research): Science, par. 15.

Chapter Five

THE UNIVERSITY AND ITS REGION

This chapter sets out to treat at greater length a subject which was touched upon very briefly in the concluding pages of *Red Brick University*—the relations which can, and should, exist between a university and the region in which it lies. A subject which, as it were, intersects this—the contacts of a general kind which it is possible to make between universities and schools—will only be considered incidentally,[1] and treatment of another—the future of adult education—can only be satisfactorily undertaken when we know more about the post-war world. What is said about this last, therefore, must be taken as no more than tentative.

I

It must be emphasized at the outset that the chief business of a university is not, and can never be, the service of a region—still less the creation of numerous contacts, whether social or educational, with a region. The aims of a university must be, primarily, the pursuit, and secondarily, the dissemination, of knowledge. Those two aims should be at once its soul and its inspiration; they should lie at the heart of its activities and be the source of its life; the others, however attractive they sound—and, to anyone with a passion for education, are—lie upon its perimeter. Universities were not founded to spread thin layers of beneficent influence over the country; and, if they are content to devote their main energies to a merely peripheral development, they will rot at the centre and in due time cease to be in any true sense universities at all. If they allow abuses, such as that described in the last chapter, to grow unchecked, they will find themselves devoid of motive power, and their peripheral, as well as their central, activities will suffer. 'We sometimes feel', one of our leading Vice-Chancellors has said, 'the risk that the universities may be too much in contact with affairs. Many things are necessary for the making of a university. But the most important thing of all is a good staff dedicated to its job. If a university has that, all else will come in due season. The centre of the university's influence *and service* is

[1] *Red Brick University*, pp. 180–4.

always the great teacher, the man whose passion it is to know, to teach and always himself to be learning.'[1]

In its Report on University Developments the A.U.T. made the following enumeration of the functions of a university: (*a*) the free pursuit of knowledge; (*b*) the dissemination of knowledge; (*c*) the formation of young people as individuals; (*d*) the study of social problems.[2] That is unexceptionable; but an early draft report, which met with considerable criticism, began in this way:

'In the modern world the universities necessarily take a central position, and their responsibilities grow. With the greater complexity of society, its growing technical needs, there is an ever increasing demand for experts in the spheres of science, business, administration, social services. If this demand is not met, there will be a relative impoverishment in our national efficiency and equipment, and we shall be unequal to the tasks set by a modern society. What seems a truism in time of war may easily be forgotten, or obscured by deliberate interest, in times of peace. It is for the universities both to make society more conscious of this demand, and to supply it.

'But the universities are central in another sense. Modern society imposes problems of citizenship as serious as those of technical efficiency. Many of the most gifted of our youth pass through the universities; many of those who will later take leading positions in our society there pass from childhood to the age of responsibility. It is essentially the universities who have the task of training them. It is there that the foundations of an enlightened and cultured democracy should be laid. This was the traditional achievement of Oxford and Cambridge before the twentieth century, when culture and social leadership were confined to a small class. With the immense increase in the number of those called on to fill posts of responsibility in modern society, the universities have to meet the need of educating great numbers of students in social responsibility and culture; they must be, more fully than before, schools of citizenship as well as academies of learning.'[3]

Now that is dangerous doctrine—not because it advocates a single thing which ought not to be done if and as more fundamental duties allow but because the whole idea which it presents of the university is

[1] From a broadcast by Sir Hector Hetherington in the B.B.C. African service, 9 December 1943. Quoted by permission.

[2] A.U.T., May 1944, par. 3, pp. 52–3. The definitions are longer than these, but I think I have been faithful to their spirit in abbreviating them.

[3] A.U.T., April 1943. Cf. D. G. James, 'New Notions about Universities', in *The Universities Review*, November 1943, pp. 10–13.

out of focus. I am sure we ought to regard with suspicion the demand that the university should continually be thinking of 'society', teaching citizenship, stimulating the social consciousness, mingling with people of all classes and occupations, supplying experts to local industries, taking part in local activities, and the like. The National Union of Students, at its 1944 congress, discussed university reform 'as a social problem of national and international significance'. It laid down, as a 'fundamental' premiss of all its arguments, that 'the universities should be of maximum service to the community'.[1] The Association for Education in Citizenship holds that the aims of the universities should be to give a general education, promoting an understanding of nature and society, a functional or technical (i.e., vocational) education and a moral or social education. Well, the university can find time and opportunity to do some of these things, and to the extent that it can, it should. But they must always come second to its fundamental task; and, the better it does that, the better, in the long run, it will do everything else.

To the university in a large city, for example, the citizens should, as I have suggested, turn continually for guidance when some great political or international issue fills their minds. But if its professors are not men who have learned through disciplined thought and study to view life whole, they will turn to them in vain. The university should seek to influence the surrounding schools from which most of its students come; but, if it is not itself wholly and sincerely devoted to the pursuit of knowledge, any influence it may have will at best be evanescent and ephemeral—at worst, definitely harmful. The same principle holds good of the influence which the university exerts on the region, and on the world outside it, by means of its graduates. If, during the three or four short years which they have spent in close contact with its teachers, they have become imbued with the spirit that informs true scholarship, which is so much more than learning, they will in their turn imbue others with it too. If they have not, they will pass on knowledge, and nothing else.

The university, then, should be a regional power-house, but it must be sure about the source and nature of its power. Its motto must be 'First things first'; and to that motto it must always be true, however strong may be the temptation or the pressure to disregard it. All that follows must be read in the light of that principle.

[1] T.E.S., 12 February 1944.

II

Even in a country no larger than our own it is well that regional characteristics and interests should be preserved and it is to be hoped that determined resistance will meet the efforts made from time to time to supplant them all by a drab national uniformity. Our universities, well placed as they are, form excellent centres for regional development. Leaving aside Scotland, where the heaviest task is that which confronts the University of Aberdeen, and Wales, the four constituent colleges of whose single University are suitably spaced, we find that, with but little adjustment, the eleven Universities and five University Colleges of England will find the regions which they should serve at their doors.

The two Lancashire and the two Yorkshire universities serve regions which, though small in area, contain large populations. Manchester and Liverpool would partition Cheshire, Liverpool taking the larger portion to compensate for the work which would fall to Manchester in North Lancashire and probably Westmorland. Hull has a natural region in the East Riding of Yorkshire, and Leeds a great responsibility in the rest of that large county, save that Sheffield would operate to the south of Huddersfield and Wakefield, as well as in Derbyshire. Durham, which already has a college at Newcastle, would take care of Northumberland, Cumberland, and County Durham, with most of the North Riding, the remainder falling to Hull. The future interests of the north-north-west would probably be better served if Durham could establish a college at Carlisle.

In the Midlands a very wide area is served by the University of Birmingham, which, having also to cater for so large a city, might reasonably be relieved by Oxford. If the whole of Berkshire were assigned to Reading, Oxford, besides Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, could take North Wiltshire and most of Gloucestershire, Bristol providing for that part of Gloucestershire south of Stroud as well as for Somerset. To Berkshire, Reading would add North Hampshire and East Wiltshire. South Wiltshire, with Dorset and South Hampshire, would fall to Southampton. Exeter, as a full University (perhaps with some of its Faculties at Plymouth or Truro), would be, as to a great extent it is to-day, the academic centre for Devon and Cornwall.

London, numerically the largest of our Universities, would have to cater for the vast population of London County, as well as for Surrey, Sussex, Kent, Middlesex, South Hertfordshire and Essex as far as a line drawn from Bishops Stortford to Colchester. Though communi-

cations are easy, some small measure of devolution, in extra-mural work at least, might not be impossible here. An almost equally extensive task falls to Cambridge. The University Colleges of Nottingham and Leicester, besides attending to the counties in which they are situated, could easily share the entire county of Lincolnshire, but that would still leave Cambridge with Cambridgeshire, the Isle of Ely, Bedfordshire, Huntingdonshire, North Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk. If an increasing university population brought a demand for more University Colleges, an excellent choice would be either Norwich or Ipswich, or both. A College at Ipswich could relieve London of its portion of Essex, as far as Brentwood and Southend.

With such an apportionment drawn up and agreed upon by an Academic Council representing all the Universities and University Colleges of the country, regional activities would be organized upon a scale as yet unapproached. It may be asked if Oxford and Cambridge, after their centuries of hegemony over the entire country, would willingly resign themselves to the role of regional universities like the rest. They would still, of course, draw their undergraduates from all parts, for so long as the quality of their work was high enough and their historical and social prestige powerful enough to enable them to do so. But London and Durham Universities already do this, not to mention certain Schools of outstanding brilliance elsewhere. Oxford and Cambridge would only be asked to recognize their responsibilities towards the regions of which they are the geographical centres, to relinquish the extra-territorial centres they now hold to the Universities in whose constituencies these lie,[1] and to take part in a co-ordinated extra-mural scheme embracing the entire country.

Both these Universities have in fact already done much good work locally. Oxford has long had an extra-mural committee covering work in Oxfordshire, Berkshire, and Buckinghamshire, a great part of which is carried on by three full-time tutors resident in the districts which they serve. The last report available of the Oxford Extra-mural Delegacy relates to the most difficult period of the War, yet it can show a total of 97 courses held at 52 centres, an increase of 34 courses and 8 centres over the year preceding. Cambridge works similarly, with four resident tutors, in Cambridgeshire, the Isle of Ely, Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire, Essex and Norfolk. Both Universities maintain close collaboration with the Workers' Educational Association.

To these results, achieved in face of transport difficulties, shortage of man-power and other impediments incident to total war, has to be added the work accomplished in the various departments of education for the Forces, which is of amazing volume and is omitted here

[1] See *Red Brick University*, p. 188.

only because it does not immediately concern our present theme. There is every reason, therefore, to believe that Oxford and Cambridge will collaborate willingly in regional education, and in some respects will even lead the way. Yet they must not be content to rely, as they have done to a great extent in the past, on the services of young and unknown tutors, of graduates of foreign universities, and of graduates of their own who are working in universities in other parts of the country. One can look down a list of Oxford and Cambridge Extension Courses without seeing the name of a professor or a resident lecturer from either University: only rarely is there the name of a resident don who is an acknowledged authority in his field. Occasionally a meeting, or a series of meetings, is held at the University, and then a professor will deliver an opening address while other professors will give some of the lectures. But that is not good enough. While the professors' main duty is their primary job, those of them who can lecture well should occasionally find time to go out into the region. The leading Oxford historians should be heard at Cheltenham and Swindon, the heads of the Cambridge schools of English, French and German at Bedford and Norwich as often as the corresponding professors in the North and Midlands can be heard in the great industrial towns of their constituencies. And that is not to say that even they are heard in such places as often as they might be. There is a lot of ground to be covered everywhere.

III

Taking now the city and the constituency in turn, as in *Red Brick University*, we need not do more than refer to what was there said about the influence of the university on the city. Sir Ernest Simon, who, as Chairman of the Council of Manchester University, knows more about this than most people, suggests that 'civic universities'—why not 'all universities'?—ought to 'study the special problems of the regions in which they are situated, and make themselves centres of active thought on the history, geography, language, archaeology, geology, climate, agriculture, industry, local government and planning of their "home" area'.[1] The American Universities, he says, are doing this effectively: Wisconsin University has a committee on regional study with twenty standing sub-committees; Purdue 'brings 50,000 persons from the State on to the Campus for different forms of discussion and study every year'; Minneapolis (presumably the University of Minnesota is meant) 'has a fine building on the Campus

[1] Simon, p. 17.

for extra-mural work, constantly filled by all sorts of regional conferences'.[1] The regions served by the American Universities are, of course, much larger than ours, and there is a good deal that can be said on University Extension in the United States by one who has lived and taught in that country which would not be obvious to a visitor. Nevertheless the United States points us a way here which we shall do well to follow—perhaps, in some respects, more intelligently.

I am much less interested, however, in courses on Brewing and Aeronautics than in the position which the universities, old and new, should hold in the cities where they have made their homes. At one time the University of Oxbridge—or, at any rate, the undergraduate portion of that society—was conscious of the existence of a town of the same name only to despise it. That hotel and lodging-house keepers, grocers, stationers, booksellers and suchlike persons should establish themselves there to batten on the University was perfectly natural, but that the University should have any contact with them that was avoidable seemed mere quixotism. That attitude, of course, has now entirely gone: town-and-gown controversies are things of the past; novels in which wicked undergraduates seduce the daughters of publicans are no longer written; and Oxbridge dons serve terms as Mayors of Oxbridge to the satisfaction of all. Redbrick dons (if the transference of the noun can be permitted) have not done more—in fact, considering how many of them are Drabtown men, one would like to see them elected more frequently to the Drabtown City Council.

It is the more important that the modern universities should live in close association with the cities which are their homes because so few of these cities have anything approaching a cultural tradition. The admiration with which we all regard that great provincial centre of musical activity, the Hallé Orchestra, is symptomatic of the rarity of such a tradition elsewhere. It would create a wild shock if one were to suggest that Wigan might become a Mecca of musicians, Derby a centre of interest in painting, Crewe the meeting-place of a famous group of literary critics, Reading a manufactory of Biblical scholars as well as of biscuits, and so on. Yet all these towns are within easy reach of academic influences, and either they, or others not vastly different from them, have all the potentialities enumerated. Not that I want the universities to start by thinking in terms of special interests: their duty to their home towns is rather to serve as centres of knowledge and thought. To the university the city should come for information, unbiased by prejudice, and sufficiently full and varied to enable individuals to make decisions for themselves on matters of

[1] Simon, p. 18.

moment. On the university the city should depend for help in forming right habits of thought on political, social and international issues, and, I hasten to add, on religious issues as well. As *Red Brick University* makes clear, a very important part of these contacts is their personal aspect. At present, with two or three exceptions, the professors at Redbrick are completely unknown in Drabtown; so, too, except to a small group of public men, is the Vice-Chancellor. That is all wrong. A leading professor should be better known than a leading City Councillor. Men should flock to the University to hear him pronounce on a current issue as they would flock to the pictures on a Saturday, or to a political meeting at election-time. If the universities had the right men, and used them as they should, the Vice-Chancellor should be as well-known a figure in Drabtown as the Lord Mayor and the Bishop, while the dozen or so most gifted and public-spirited professors should be among its best-known citizens—men of whom the city is proud and whom it would grieve to lose. Who would care in Drabtown to-day if Redbrick's Professor of International Politics accepted a Chair in the United States? Who, in fact, even knows anything of him beyond his name?

(Once more, let it not be supposed that this is a plea that professors should talk more and think less—that they should desert the study for the platform. On the contrary, unless they live a life seen by none they will wield no influence when they are heard by all. It is the months of the year which they spend in gathering power that give them the power in the days and weeks that remain.)

Such was the general plan which I ventured to lay down for the impact of the university upon the city. Without my knowing it, while *Red Brick University* was in the press, Professor Bonamy Dobrée was working along similar lines: his conclusions will be found in an eloquent lecture entitled *The Universities and Regional Life*, delivered at King's College, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in April 1943. He asks that the university premises should include 'some inviting buildings, well designed, well decorated, common to ourselves and the public'.

'There they will gather to rub shoulders with staff and students, to inquire with intelligent curiosity what they are all engaged in and why; to tell them of their own needs and to relight their vision. There will be good club-rooms, a library reading-room, possibly a dining-hall; and through them will flow infinite discussions on the issues of the day—on whether the church should pronounce upon politics, on the proposed regional power scheme, on the ideas of justice or freedom, on cultural relations with other countries, on new developments in painting, on whatever hopes and passions stir the time.'[1]

[1] Dobrée, pp. 16–17.

Professor Dobrée asks boldly for many things which I had dared only to imagine as belonging to the future—'a People's Repertory Theatre, working under the direction of the university, playing weekly of the best drama of every time and clime'; 'a public concert-room, where experiments in music, as well as the old masterpieces, will from time to time be heard, for the university will be eager to foster new life in the arts. In the same way the university picture gallery will always contain recent works lent by the best living painters, sculptors and architects, more especially of those who hail from the region'; a cinema theatre, 'for here, in the film, is the greatest cultural organ ever discovered, more important to-day than printing'.[1] For a University Cinema Theatre, open to a public to be defined on a later page, I should like to make a plea of special urgency. This, more than anything else, we who stand for intellectual life and culture actually owe to the public. For it was we (or our fathers—which, as the wolf said to the lamb, is the same thing) who allowed this great potential instrument of culture to be captured by commercial interests and put to base uses. It might, from the first, have become, as to a large extent the radio has become, an educational institution of a high order. The British Film Society has of recent years been created to do what little it can to atone for the non-establishment, a generation ago, of a British Cinema Corporation. Vested interests may now make a B.C.C., working in close collaboration with the B.B.C., impossible; but surely it is the universities' duty, at the very least, to supplement the efforts of the British Film Society by having a University Cinema Theatre in their own cities, and, ultimately, in the chief centres of their regions as well. 'Unless the universities as such', says Professor Dobrée, 'interest themselves actively in the film, they are losing one of the greatest cultural opportunities ever presented them.'[1]

And what of the radio? Here, for a moment, we must go farther than the region, in order to suggest that the B.B.C., which is so assiduous in broadcasting to schools, should also plan courses for undergraduates and persons of undergraduate type. Redbrick, as we have said, gets all too few of the distinguished speakers who go so readily to Oxbridge, but, through the medium of the microphone, it might have of the very best. Discussion groups can be arranged as easily in universities as anywhere. It is a thousand pities that these possibilities have not already been explored, since it is during the demobilization period, when the overflowing of our lecture-rooms will lead to a time-wasting duplication of lectures, that such facilities will be most needed.

[1] Op. cit., p. 17.

But there is also an important part for the B.B.C. to play in the universities' regional life. The universities, and especially their Extra-mural Departments, should be closely linked up with its extra-mural organization: at present they have only the flimsiest of connections with it. One obvious form which collaboration might take (especially during the years in which university numbers will be increasing and teachers hard pressed) is that of experiments with the substitution of broadcasts for lectures in the chief extra-mural centres. Other forms of mutual aid will readily suggest themselves and here little experimenting is necessary. On the one side the universities can organize more discussion groups for the broadcasts which the B.B.C. already gives and use all their local machinery to encourage and stimulate serious listening. On the other hand, the B.B.C. should make much greater use of the universities' personnel. It is astonishing, but perfectly true, that there should be members of university teaching staffs —young, middle-aged and old—who are excellent lecturers in the technical sense of the word, yet have never been invited to give so much as a ten-minute broadcast. Nor does the assistance which the universities would give the B.B.C. end here. Through their extra-mural organization, their lecturers, teachers and administrative officers come into continual contact with young men and women of great promise who are forceful speakers (though not necessarily in the B.B.C. accent!) and could be utilized at the microphone with much greater effect than many of the speakers employed at present. So low is the present standard of radio-speaking that a good deal of money might advantageously be spent on its improvement and no agency could more profitably be used for this task than the universities.

IV

But already we have passed the city limits and entered the wider university constituency generally described as its 'region'. Little that falls to be said under this heading can be applied to all these constituencies: practice must vary according to situation, composition and size. But it can at least be said that in all, without exception, links should be forged with every type and class of person and institution—with boys and girls at school, with their teachers, with professional people and associations, with artisans and tradesmen, with men and women living in retirement or for other reasons enjoying ample leisure. Besides taking such particular measures as those now to be described, each university should establish, in some form or other, an organization which would serve as a vast 'Extension Society', build-

ing up nuclei of people interested in its extra-mural activities and perhaps appointing local correspondents who would keep interest alive and create more. These key men and women would be given a very special place in the university's life and would be invited frequently to social and business meetings held in the university buildings.

Let us now look at some representative forms of a university's regional activity.

1. *Schools.* Much of the contact that it is so desirable to establish between university and schools can be best made departmentally. Though it affects only a part of the school, a departmental bond (e.g., an informal visit made by the Professor of Latin to the Classical staff and to the Latin classes) is stronger than a more general one (e.g., an address or a lecture given by any professor to the whole school) and it also has the advantage of influencing the abler pupils, many of whom, in due course, will go to a university—as a rule, let us hope, to the university of their own region. General contacts, on the other hand, touch a far larger number of pupils, and their repercussions are often felt in homes and in the community as a whole. Within the city, an obvious opportunity can be taken by inviting large parties from the schools for lectures, or series of lectures—either parties of senior scholars for talks of a general kind or parties of boys and girls studying one particular subject for talks on that subject. The organizers of the well-known series of lectures for children given at the Royal Institution in London utilize a season of the year—the Christmas holidays—when time is apt to hang heavily on young hands and all the civic universities might do something for children during that period. Similar lectures could be organized in any large centre outside the town or city which is the university's home; in smaller places, the only practicable procedure is for Mahomet to go to the mountain—if only once in every three, four or five years. If these visits can be made to coincide with Open Days, or Parents' Evenings, so much the better.

2. *School teachers.* Contacts of the departmental kind here are occasionally made through professional bodies—e.g., local branches of the Classical Association, the Historical Association or the Modern Language Association—of which both school and university staffs are members. This is a particularly valuable thing, because the two parties meet on equal terms, and with the best will in the world it is difficult for a middle-aged professor to walk into the Staff Room of a Grammar School at the mid-morning break and be completely at his ease. The wise professor will welcome such occasions as these

meetings and use them as a jumping-off point for making the teachers' acquaintance. Another obvious means of contact is the University Training College or Department of Education. A third is through such a general extension scheme as has just been described. There is no better local correspondent than a teacher: he is in touch with pupils past and present, and, through them, with their homes. A real and living interest shown by a large body of teachers in University Extension work may get it almost anywhere.

Another method of establishing relations with teachers is through refresher courses, which I have suggested that the universities ought to organize, chiefly, though not entirely, for their own graduates.[1] A special invitation to any such course might be sent to teachers who are not graduates of Redbrick but live or work in the region. A related method is to invite the teachers' associations, or their local branches, to hold their conferences and other meetings at the University, social meetings, to which the appropriate sections of the University staff would be invited, being among them. None of these opportunities, perhaps, will occur very often, but they should all be seized whenever they do.

3. *Workers.* Under this comprehensive heading would come the activities in which the universities collaborate with the Workers' Educational Association, and various other aspects of Adult education, which it is relevant here to treat only in so far as they affect the universities. The story has often been told[2] of how, in 1875, some twenty years after F. D. Maurice and his friends had founded the Working Men's College in London, Cambridge University, with its Extension lectures, entered the field of Adult education, closely followed, in turn, by London and Oxford. These lectures, being unsubsidized, had to be somewhat expensive, and they were, and to a large extent are still, attended chiefly by the middle classes. The Workers' Educational Association, founded in 1903, did a great deal for Adult education farther down the social scale, and, four years later, the formation, at Oxford, of the first Tutorial Classes Joint Committee initiated that collaboration between the W.E.A. and the universities which has given such great results and will yet give greater. At the apex of the movement, in which all the English universities now collaborate, come the three-year Tutorial Classes, organized by the W.E.A. and conducted by university tutors: these, and classes of allied type, were attended, in the year before the War began, by some 15,000 students. Shorter courses, some of university type, occupied

[1] *Red Brick University*, pp. 182–3.

[2] Recently it has been outlined once again, by the British Association Committee on Post-war University Education: B.A.C., pp. 30–3.

another 42,000.[1] So much instruction has been given during the War to the Forces and the Women's Services that we may safely predict an immense accession of students for these classes when times are once more normal. It is also probable that more classes will be demanded of a type which can best be given by the universities, and that there will be a considerable flow of students from these classes into the full-time courses of the universities. Until more is known of the nature and extent of this demand, of the part which will be played by local authorities in meeting it, and of the amount of public money which will be available for this purpose to each of the parties concerned, it is impossible to discuss it in great detail. A few general principles, however, may be laid down.

One is that the instruction given by the universities should be largely non-vocational. This is especially true of Arts subjects. What university teachers can do for working people above everything else is to initiate them into the habits of disciplined thought which they themselves have formed and which govern all their activities. (Once more this makes it clear how important it is that the universities should be sound and healthy at the centre.) Beneath the content of the lectures and classes in English, History, Psychology, Art, and so on, are the qualities which the teacher has gradually developed, and which the worker often admires and desires to develop for himself: the ability to think clearly, to examine thoroughly, to judge dispassionately, to pronounce impartially, to stand for what is good, to show contempt for what is bad, to keep an open mind about what is uncertain—above all, to develop, feed and sustain a passion for knowledge and to remember that, however much one may learn, it is of small volume beside all of which one is ignorant. The great achievement of the union between scholars and workers has been the following and nurturing of this ideal, and each party has benefited from the union.

Next, there is the question of tutors. These have always been provided by the universities, and it seems likely that, once the demand for them becomes greater than in the past, more efficient arrangements will be made for their training. For, while the full-time tutor must always have a university background and be in essentials of an academic type, he needs special qualifications for as specialized a type of student as any other.

The feeling is growing that, especially in rural areas—and it is in

[1] In his Presidential Address for 1943 to the W.E.A. Educational Conference (*Education: The Task Before Us*, London, 1943, pp. 8–9), Professor R. H. Tawney gives the total numbers in 1942–3 as 72,950. He predicts that by 1948 they will be 'well over 100,000'.

such areas that the greatest progress has still to be made and is the most difficult to make—the tutor should be resident in the area in which he lectures. The Oxford Extra-mural Delegacy writes quite decisively:

'The experience gained by the Delegacy over many years has convinced them that it is mainly by the influence of such tutors that a solid foundation is laid for the development of Adult Education in an area. Not only are they able to teach both Tutorial and other Classes but by being constantly available and giving their whole minds to the work they become known and trusted. They receive appeals from many quarters, and by responding to them strengthen the idea that education is an integral part of well-ordered life. Whilst the results achieved in the sparsely populated villages of the countryside may take longer to become obvious than in the towns, yet even in the relatively short time for which two of the tutors have been engaged there is evidence of the value of their efforts.'[1]

There has been some discussion of late as to whether the universities should hold evening courses leading to degree examinations, so that adolescents and adults employed in commerce and industry should qualify for degrees in their spare time. There is much to be said on both sides of this question, but for myself, having seen something of it at first hand, I am on the whole opposed to it. In all probability it will become unnecessary, since a wider avenue from shop, office and factory to university is likely to be opened in the near future for those who can prove their ability to tread it. Part-time degree classes are, of course, quite another matter. If compulsory part-time education up to eighteen is to be given more time, as before long it surely must, than the meagre day a week at present assigned to it, and if to this are to be superadded facilities for further part-time education, it should become quite practicable to institute degree courses within a part-time framework, using days and hours when the students are not fatigued, as they must be in the evening. A colleague of mine who used to teach young business men in a large Midland city for two hours on one evening weekly tells me that, through representations made by the Education Committee to the large firm which employed most of the men who came to him, one hour in the middle of the day was substituted for one of the evening hours. 'Without exaggeration,' he says, 'we got through three times as much work at midday as in the evening.' The same will be true of part-time day degree courses as contrasted with evening courses.

[1] University of Oxford. Delegacy for Extra-mural studies. Report for the year ending 30 September 1943, pp. 7–8.

The British Association Committee predicts that, when the world has settled down once more to peace, a new set-up in Adult education will bring the local authorities more fully into the picture than they have been in the past. This, the Committee believes, is entirely to the good. Much of the adult education which has been administered and provided by the W.E.A. and the universities is not, even in the broadest sense, of university type, and is very similar to education which those authorities themselves provide. 'There seems to be no reason why it should not become the statutory duty of the local education authorities to provide this kind of education for all who cannot obtain it otherwise.' If Parliament assigns them this duty, they would enter, as third parties, into the partnership already in existence and the Committee suggests that they might function as 'Joint Committees of local education authorities, one for each of eight or ten English regions, and one for Wales',[1] or alternatively that special authorities, financed by the Treasury, might be set up to organize non-vocational education below the university level, each of the three parties, and other voluntary organizations, to be represented on them.

There is still another way in which the universities can collaborate in the provision of education for adult workers. If in due course their residential facilities are increased in the way that has been suggested on all sides they will have many new hostels, halls or colleges, which will be unoccupied for short periods at Christmas and Easter as well as for three full months in the summer. Sometimes these will be needed for their own refresher courses, but, when free, they could often be used for adult education courses—or, if pleasantly situated, for holiday settlements at which occasional lectures, concerts and cinema shows would be given and men and women could spend their leisure in an environment of tranquillity, taste and culture. To have permanently available from thirty to forty of such buildings, each with accommodation for about 200 people, will be of very great assistance to whatever body is responsible for Adult education courses. This consideration need not in any way prejudge the question of whole-time residential colleges for Adult education, for much of the instruction (e.g., pre-university courses) would be given for longer periods than the length of a vacation, and some of it, at least, would have to be residential if it was to be effective. For these institutions country houses might be purchased as they come into the market: those familiar with life at the Bonar Law College at Ashridge will appreciate the great advantages of this solution. The British Associ-

[1] B.A.C., p. 32.

ation Committee on Post-War University Education has calculated the total annual cost per place of such residential education, at 1938 prices, to be £125: 20,000 places per annum would therefore cost £2,500,000, 'or an addition of about 6d. in the pound to the pre-war cost of the national system of education to public funds'. This estimate does not include the maintenance allowance which would have to be paid to the worker's family while he was not earning. But, on the other side, some of the accommodation for short courses could certainly be provided in university hostels during vacations, which would bring down the capital costs. And, secondly, the estimate is made on a basis of accommodation in each college being provided for only 150 men or 100 women. For several reasons, it seems much better that they should be co-educational, and it should surely be possible to have from 200 to 250 in each, with a corresponding economy in organization.

So much has been said of education for the working classes that it may be feared the more leisured have been forgotten. They have, however, been left to the end of this survey only because they present less of a problem. This class comprises a large portion of the community which has in the past enjoyed Secondary, and often Higher, education, has a fairly wide range of interests, can adapt itself to whatever facilities may be provided for it and is able to make some financial contribution to their cost. It includes men and women who have retired from business or professional life or who are physically either permanently or temporarily incapacitated through disability or illness; men and women who are doing either part-time or full-time work of a kind which enables them to attend courses of instruction in the evenings; and women of no occupation (living, for example, in hotels or boarding-houses) or occupied mainly with domestic duties in their homes. This may not seem a very extensive class, but it is remarkable how large and constant an audience it can provide for lectures almost anywhere.

It is this class which, for seventy years, through good days and bad, has provided audiences for the Oxford, Cambridge and London University Extension Lectures. One Cambridge centre has just celebrated the seventieth anniversary of its foundation: during this period it has held courses without a single session's break either in the 1914–18 war or in this, and in the session 1943–4 it mustered an average attendance per lecture of just under 100. Distinguished though this record is, it is only an outstanding example of an interest of which the level is extremely high. Let it be recorded that despite air-raids, the black-out, transport difficulties, war duties, absences on

National Service and all kinds of other hindrances, the last published report of the Cambridge Board of Extra-mural Studies listed twenty-two centres which had average attendances of over fifty people for lectures, and sixteen more of between forty and fifty. If, after seventy years, in the midst of a world war, such lecture-courses as the universities can provide still draw such audiences, it seems clear that, far from their coming to an end, a new period of development will open up for them after the War is over.

There are a number of reasons for their success. One is that these three Universities—and some of the others are following them here—have been careful to employ lecturers who, though not always noted specialists, are invariably strong in technique. Another is that the energetic organization of the University has been ably seconded by a strong local committee—and the enthusiasm of some of these committees, or often of some one person who is the soul of the local Extension Society, has to be seen to be believed. A third is that the lectures, as a rule, are not mere entertainment, but provide real intellectual food. They vary in subject a good deal according to current interests: nowadays, for example, they turn mainly on international politics, foreign history, post-war planning and reconstruction, modern art and literature and contemporary views and interpretations of art and literature of the past. Each lecture is followed by a discussion class—and the weary lecturer need not suppose that he will be allowed to evade the class, however small may be the attendance for it. Weekly papers are written by a few; and for the fewer still who wish to take it there is an examination.

These details are given of set purpose, because in our concern for one type of worker we are apt to forget another, and too little is known of this highly educative activity which has weathered so many crises, and, notwithstanding the counter-attractions of cinema and radio, is still going strong. It should not only be continued by the Universities which at present carry it on but be incorporated by the combined Universities and University Colleges of the country as a part of their regional organization. This would mean the rupture, or the partial rupture, of the relations between the oldest of our universities and a few centres which lie within the regions of others, but the creation of new centres everywhere would more than outweigh this, and the well-tried experience of the past would give new life to the future.

This survey of possible developments in the regional work of the universities has ranged over a wide field and it remains to add that not all the suggestions it makes are intended to be put into force to-

morrow. It is not forgotten that they would entail considerable expense: all the universities would need to expand their extra-mural departments and to increase their administrative and clerical staffs; some of them would have to create departments of adult education; others would erect special buildings for classes and large meetings (including social meetings) or might even establish outposts ('University Houses') in outlying parts of their constituencies. And this expense would fall just at the time when large demands are beginning to be made upon the country for educational expansion and other forms of reconstruction which are even more necessary than some of these. Obviously there must be precedence according to urgency of need and the main lines of the new Education Act must be got into working order before all else. But that is no reason why we should not proceed with regional planning even before the plans can be put into action. The first thing is always the vision.

Chapter Six

THE NORWOOD REPORT AND THE UNIVERSITIES

The report issued in July 1943, after rather less than two years' labour, by Sir Cyril Norwood's Committee had a distinctly good Press but met with a somewhat mixed reception by professional educationists. According to well-informed rumour, some of the members of the Committee have been disheartened by the numerous and often trenchant criticisms directed against certain of their proposals. They have no need to be. Their Report is worthy of these vital days. It challenges attention—and, what is more, action. It cannot conceivably be ignored or forgotten. Those who oppose its suggested solutions for our problems must find better ones.

Such criticism as it has aroused is directed almost entirely to details. The only objection that can be taken to any large part of it concerns the chapters on the curriculum. There seems to be a general feeling that these try to cover too much ground and that some of them show insufficient awareness of the problems involved. But such a criticism, given the composition of the Committee and the relatively short time at its disposal, was almost inevitable. The curriculum is really a subject for an entirely different report, to be drawn up by a larger body with a strong representation of specialists. The Norwood approach is general. 'At the outset it must be stated that we have no intention of treating the curriculum with any attempt at exhaustiveness. We shall not trace the historical causes which have shaped it; nor are we concerned to discuss fully its underlying principles. Details of technique or method fall outside our purpose.'[1]

If this is a defect, it is the defect of two great virtues: the Committee's liberal and comprehensive conception of the scope of education and its overriding concern with fundamental principles. It has not tried to patch up our existing educational system but has reasoned everything out afresh. Its reference, at first sight, may seem to have been a limited one: 'to consider suggested changes in the Secondary School curriculum and the question of School Examinations in relation thereto'.[2] But behind the investigations which that reference at once suggested, the Committee saw another and a more important one: 'What is the purpose of secondary education?'[3] It is by laying bare their conception of that purpose that the compilers of the Nor-

[1] N.R., p. 55. [2] Op. cit., p. iv. [3] Op. cit., p. vii.

wood Report have done education the greatest service—and not merely Secondary education, but the entire process, from the nursery school to the classes and courses for the adult.

So the Report was regarded and discussed from two standpoints. Most people, especially those who have never read a line of the actual document, but have been content with summaries in the Press, glanced at its detailed proposals, and as some of these were startling, and even revolutionary, there were generally a few from which—at first—they dissented. To such people, the characteristic features of the Norwood Report are its endorsement of the trifurcation of Secondary education recommended in the Spens Report and elsewhere, the envisaging of a two-year probation for the child of eleven plus before he is allocated to a Grammar, a Modern or a Technical School to the age of fifteen; the reforms proposed for the School Certificate examination over a transitional period of seven years; the abolition of the Higher School Certificate; the complete overhaul of the University Scholarship system; the institution of a six-months' period of National Service; and the development of the Inspectorate. But others, who read, not summaries, but the Report itself, attached some importance to the principles on which these recommendations were based. 'What is the purpose of education?' asks the Committee. 'To help each individual to realize the full powers of his personality—body, mind and spirit—in and through active membership of a society.'[1] Yes, but not all of these powers are good and worthy of development: education must encourage some and restrain or control others. What ideals is it to take here as criteria? 'The ideals of truth and beauty and goodness', which are 'ultimate values', 'final and binding for all times and in all places'. And 'the recognition of such values implies, for most people at least, a religious interpretation of life which for us must mean the Christian interpretation of life'.[2] The findings of biology, psychology, sociology and other sciences can provide valuable means to the realization of education's true aims but they cannot dictate aims of their own. For they are concerned with 'the changing needs and the changing standards of the day'; whereas 'education from its own nature must be ultimately concerned with values which are independent of time or particular environment, though realizable under changing forms in both, and therefore . . . . no programmes of education which concern themselves only with relative ends and the immediate adaptation of the individual to existing surroundings can be acceptable.'[3]

I venture to invite attention to these important sentences, so easily overlooked, from the introductory paragraphs of the Report, because

[1] N.R., p. viii. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

to those who wholeheartedly agree with them (and many educationists, if they are honest, will have to confess that they do not), they offer a guarantee that the Committee's work deserves the most serious consideration. At a time like the present, when change is in the air, one might fear that revolutions were being advocated for revolution's sake: it is so perilously easy to assume that because an institution served the England of the past it will not serve the England of the future. Anyone who examines the Committee's proposals against the background of its principles will see that the two accord perfectly; for which reason, though some of the details of the edifice it has erected may be improved upon, its foundations are sound, its walls are strongly built and its extensiveness will make it a landmark in the educational world for a long time to come.

II

This chapter is concerned chiefly with the recommendations of the Report upon education as it affects the universities—and it is reassuring to find that in a document on Secondary education so much thought should have been given to the universities at all. Here, once more, its fundamental excellence becomes apparent. It could not, of course, have passed over university education, since so many boys and girls go on from school to university, but it could, and might very easily, have treated it merely as an adjunct to the Secondary school. On the contrary, it is at pains to make clear its idea of a university, which is so nearly identical with the idea I have already developed as to need little comment. First: ideals. Though they may 'extend their orbit in response to the demands of the technical branches of industry' the universities 'are traditionally concerned with the pursuit of knowledge as such'.[1] Quite so: research comes before teaching and all teaching should be alive with the spirit of research. Next, membership. 'In our view the University should contain students from all sections of the community capable of profiting to the fullest degree from its intellectual and social life and of making the fullest contribution to it.'[2] This principle, in a democratic State, must be regarded as unexceptionable. Then, standards; and here we seem to be on slightly less solid ground. 'It is essential that high standards should be preserved throughout the Universities, but we would not limit these standards to intellectual promise or achievement but include also such qualities as leadership, sense of responsibility, initiative—in short, qualities of character.' Apparently the Committee feels that

[1] N.R., p. 4. [2] Ibid., p. 23.

this may be misunderstood, for it immediately adds: 'We are anxious not to encourage any plan which will lower standards of intellectual achievement . . . and we do not wish to make any proposals which would overstock the country with University graduates of mediocre capacity and attainment.'[1] On paper, the Committee has successfully safeguarded itself, but in practice there arises a real danger. Its aim in laying down this principle is to recommend that entrance tests in universities should not be conducted solely by written examinations. There is everything to be gained by the practice which some universities make of supplementing this examination by an interview, and a further useful subsidiary testimony is the school's recommendation, based on the pupil's school record. But only harm will result if the interview, or the school testimony, is allowed to weigh equally with the written examination. For if some young people make an unduly good, or an unduly bad, impression in the examination room, far more are either over-plausible, or over-nervous, at an interview. When all has been said, no better single means has yet been devised of testing a young person's intellectual attainments than to put him, or her, into a quiet room for three hours with a set of questions composed by one experienced teacher and revised by another.

If it be argued that written examinations do not test character, I reply that character and scholarship are in fact inseparable. School life itself tests character, as well as forming it, and of some aspects of character the written examination provides a most searching test. Of concentration, for example; of a sense of proportion; of initiative, imagination, and the control of imagination by prudence and reason; of perseverance, staying power and the kind of courage which battles doggedly against seeming odds. True, the written examination is primarily a test of intellect; but, after all, it is with intellect that the university is primarily concerned. We do not, as the Norwood Committee realizes, want undergraduates who are all leadership and no brain. If we did, we should conduct our entrance tests on the parade ground and the playing-field. No; the weakness of the written examination is not that it fails to test character, but that it puts a premium on the quick thinker, the fluent and rapid writer and the type of brain which is smart and fertile in expedients rather than penetrating and sure. These faults the interview and the school record should be quite able to control.

'Before leaving the subject of universities,' continues the Report, 'we record our conviction that residence in a college or hostel, at any rate for the major portion of the course, is essential to the fullest

[1] N.R., pp. 23–4.

University life. It is often more important that hostels should be increased or enlarged than that more places should be provided in lecture rooms. We regard the encouragement of a more common life, together with an extension of the tutorial system to which residence would contribute, as among the most urgent needs in the development of the newer Universities.'[1]

It is encouraging to find that all post-war university planning seems to be recognizing this principle, and particularly so that it should be enunciated in a Report dealing primarily with schools. Residence at school age may or may not be desirable—we shall discuss that in a later chapter—but residence at university age is absolutely essential to an all-round education. It must become inseparable from university life; and not until the non-resident undergraduate is as rare at Redbrick as the day-boy is at Harchester will the position have become satisfactory.

Finally, the Committee touches the general question of pecuniary aid. The whole future of Redbrick is bound up with this vital matter. Thousands who should enter it go to Oxbridge because Oxbridge alone can offer the valuable open scholarships which, supplemented by local grants, will maintain them during their studies. Thousands more go to no university at all, because their parents cannot do without the income which they will earn in business. In the future, all necessary assistance must be forthcoming, either from the State or from local authorities, so that no boy or girl desirous and capable of profiting by a university course should be prevented from doing so. 'Proof of fitness . . . and proof of need should entitle the student to the assistance considered appropriate.'[2]

III

So far, I suppose, we are all in agreement. Where some of us may begin to dissent from the Report is in its classification of the different types of freshman. The categories it makes are three:[3] (1) the student 'of outstanding and exceptional intellectual ability and of scholarly mind, to whom work comes naturally and examinations do not come amiss; he takes both in his stride'; (2) the student 'of good intellectual ability, alert and able and interested', with broad interests and not over-academic in mind; (3) the boy or girl 'who is not a natural student but is of reasonable intellectual capacity': such students are generally interested in ideas, not good at examinations, able leaders, of strong personality and character. The Report implies that

[1] N.R., p. 24. [2] Op. cit., p. 24. [3] Op. cit., p. 36.

students of the first type, 'on sheer intellectual merit', will graduate with First Class Honours, forecasts 'at least' Second Class Honours for the second, and leaves the fate of the third in some doubt. Actually, if the course is well chosen and the teaching good, this fate should be a creditable place in the Pass (or General) Degree; too often, however, the craze for specialization leads such candidates to attempt Honours courses for which they are unfitted and they drop to a Third or fail altogether.

That classification seems obvious enough, but actually it involves excessive simplification and few university teachers would think it satisfactory. We incline always to see undergraduates as individuals rather than as types, but as soon as we begin to classify them we can distinguish, not three types, but five. The first class is the same as the Committee's—and a much smaller one than is usually believed: of my own Honours students, not more than ten per cent could claim membership of it. The second class comprises students of good ability and broad interests—'two-ones', we call them—who are thoroughly useful members of society and to my mind are often of greater value in university life than the pure scholar. The third class—a far too large one, yet omitted by the Norwood Committee—may be described as of good ability but narrow interests. The man in this class, if he works hard enough, may get a Two-one, or even a First, and must certainly be considered as justifying himself academically, but he takes from the University more than he gives it and is not viewed with much enthusiasm. The fourth and fifth classes are both of only 'reasonable' ability—sometimes of rather less—but the fourth is broad in interests and the fifth is narrow. The fifth class, in the view of many university teachers, should never have come up at all, and the fourth would often be more profitably employed elsewhere.

The rather serious omission of the Norwood Report, as will be seen from a comparison of these two groups of categories, is that of the two classes of 'narrow' student. Its first class has 'outstanding and exceptional' scholarship, which connotes breadth of outlook; its second class, 'alert and able and interested', spreads its energies 'over a wide field'; its third class is 'interested in ideas . . . an asset to any common life'.[1] Yet ninety per cent of the students of one modern university were described as narrow of outlook[2] and fifty per cent would probably be considered by most university teachers a low estimate. No scheme of sixth-form education which fails to take this into consideration can be a satisfactory one. For it is mainly the boys and girls at the top of the Sixth Form who go to the universities, and, if these are narrow in their interests, the majority of the others will be so too.

[1] N.R., p. 36. [2] *Red Brick University*, pp. 128–9.

Having already discussed over-specialization at this stage, I will say only one thing more. It is the unfortunate university which generally gets blamed for it—especially the modern university, which has not the means to be largely residential, as it would like to be. But the harm is done lower down. If a freshman of eighteen is not 'interested in ideas', the broadest university curriculum under the sun will not make him so. If he is, however much he may chafe at the narrowness of his course of study, he may be relied upon to educate himself in spite of it. I am not for a moment excusing the defects of Redbrick, and I am wholly in favour of a widening of its courses of study, but it is primarily for the school, which has the freshman of the future in his most malleable and suggestible years, to broaden his interests and give him a zest for ideas—and this is not done, on the one hand, by condemning him to play or watch games during the whole of his scanty leisure, or, on the other, by presenting to him such vital subjects as religion, geography, history and literature without reference to current movements, events and trends of opinion.

There ought to be some provision in the university entrance examination for keeping the 'narrow' candidate, unless he be of exceptional academic brilliance, out of academic life altogether. Then we should begin to see a number of changes in the curricula of the more ambitious scholarship-hunting schools. At the same time the University Grants Committee should satisfy itself that the curricula and the extra-curricular activities of the universities are such as to give all students with broad interests and ideas enough to feed upon. Nor should it forget that a broad syllabus is more expensive than a narrow one, and that, while Oxford and Cambridge have money enough to invite inspiring men into their midst, Redbrick is running on an annual deficit. The Government's White Paper of July 1943 announced that 'the path of the poor scholar to the university has been made broader and less difficult during the past twenty years'.[1] True, but what about the path of the poor university? For that matter, should there, in a country which takes its education seriously, be any poor universities?

IV

No period of school life is more unsatisfactory than the months preceding the departure of the boy to a university. At best, he has a Long Vacation, and, as a rule, nothing to do in it. If he has won an open scholarship he is left with from three to six months to mark time at school, doing the minimum amount of work himself and

[1] *Educational Reconstruction*, London, 1943, p. 25.

introducing varying degrees of demoralization into the work of others. If he is not attempting a scholarship, and elects to stay at school for a further year after passing the Higher School Certificate, he often wastes the greater part of that last year which he might be putting to good use. The Norwood Committee has devised an ingenious method of tightening up this part of the pupil's career, which deserves at least a trial.

Its first proposal is that all freshmen shall have had a six-months' break—i.e., from April to October—before entering the university. It may be that some form of public service—'in industry and agriculture, at sea, in the social services, and in similar fields'—will be required of boys and girls who are still in Grammar Schools at the age of eighteen; and, should that come about, the Committee suggests that this period might be so used: it would 'do much to fuse the country into a single whole with a common purpose and a common understanding'.[1] But its primary reason for making the recommendation is unconnected with national needs: it is that 'students would take up University work with increased sense of the relevance and significance of its problems if they brought to bear upon them a wider experience drawn from the realities of life, and would enter upon their new studies with added freshness of mind.'[2]

As a generalization, this seems incontrovertible. No doubt the occupation prescribed would not always fit; but, even when the square peg could only find a round hole, the period in question would be better spent than in idling through a summer term and getting over it by idling through a Long Vacation. And, where the occupation was profitable, the pupil's range of ideas would be more effectively enlarged, and his interests widened, than by any school or university curriculum. If the best form of rest, too, is a change of work, the six-months' span of broad, general activity coming between two periods of intense specialization should be the most beneficial thing possible. It has often been mooted in the past, but practical difficulties have stood in its way. These, the Committee believes, are removable.

The Report is anxious, at the same time, to do away with the well-known 'college tour' made by scholarship-hunters round Oxford and Cambridge. It would like all universities (and this, if we may assume generous treatment by the Treasury, would mean Redbrick as well as Oxford and Cambridge) to hold their scholarship examinations simultaneously, following them up, in March, by a special examination, conducted by University Examining Boards. Candidates recommended for awards on the results of this latter test would be classified as of 'high' to 'good' intellectual powers respectively. The recom-

[1] N.R., p. 23. [2] Ibid.

mendations would be sent to the candidates' Local Authorities, which would appoint small committees to consider them, together with school records and *ad hoc* reports from the principal of the school; finally, the candidates would be interviewed. The recommendations of the Local Authorities would go to the Board of Education, which would make the awards, all costs, including maintenance, being borne by the State. It would also be open to Local Authorities to make additional awards of their own, the State paying half their cost.

In March, too, and perhaps also in July, the University Examining Boards would hold a School Leaving Examination, which would satisfy the entrance requirements of Universities, Training Colleges and Professional Bodies. By April, therefore, both scholarship-holders and non-scholarship-holders who are going to the university in the following October would know where they stood.

On the question of emoluments, as well as on the time-table, the Committee has sound views. There should be no need, they say, as there is at present, for a candidate who has gained an open scholarship to search everywhere for means of supplementing it because without such means he will be obliged to relinquish it altogether. The winning of an open scholarship should in itself constitute a claim upon public funds for maintenance, provided this is necessary. Another sound objection is to the unevenness of scholarship-awards as between one Local Authority and another. With the inadequacy of the scholarships offered both by the State and by Local Authorities the Committee hopes to do away by means of the system of awards just described.

Where the Report fails to speak with sufficient directness is on the comparative allocation of scholarships to the old Universities and the new. The Committee had evidently to meet the suggestion—a very natural one in a country where most of the best brains are concentrated in two Universities out of eleven—that each of the Universities should have its quota of State scholars. They 'recognize the attraction which Oxford and Cambridge exercise and its effect upon the newer Universities'. Yet they will do nothing to raise these latter from the position of inferiority in which poverty has placed them. The fixing of a quota is 'neither possible nor desirable'. They are 'anxious to preserve the freedom of universities to admit whom they will and the freedom of the individual to make application for entry where he wishes'.[1] All they will agree to is a rule limiting the intake of scholarship-holders by Oxford and Cambridge, though they are somewhat dubious about its practicability. They 'hope that a satisfactory method can be devised for framing one'.[2]

[1] N.R., p. 41. [2] Ibid.

Some critics may call this the thin end of a wedge, but no permanent solution of Redbrick's problem will be arrived at by merely thickening it. The way to secure a fair apportionment of brains, which in the long run will be to the advantage of all parties, is for the newer Universities to be given recurrent and non-recurrent grants large enough to permit them to develop both their departmental work and their residential facilities so that they can compete with the older in everything but prestige, and, in addition, yearly grants to be spent on scholarships, chiefly in the fields where their best work is done, of such a size that all the Universities, new and old, can offer approximately the same number. If the School of Theology at Oxford, or the School of English Literature at Cambridge, is the best in the country, it is natural and right that the most brilliant boys and girls in that field should wish, and should be enabled, to go there. But if the leading Professors of (let us say) Chinese are at Leeds and Bristol, it is equally important that they should be able to train the leading Chinese scholars of to-morrow. At present they could not, because those Universities, like all the other recent foundations, have practically no open scholarships. There, in its crudest form, is the present inequality, and, until it is righted, the less said in this connection about the freedom of the university and of the individual the better.

V

One further point at which the Norwood Report touches the universities is the question of their influence, which is not always beneficent, upon the schools. This is too complicated a subject to enter upon very far, since any detailed discussion of it at once involves syllabuses of examinations. But the Report formulates a criticism with which most educationists will agree:

'Throughout the Secondary School course it is assumed that it will receive the crown of a University career; for this end subjects are included in the curriculum and related as they are, and to this end is directed the handling of them individually. Yet only a small percentage of pupils reach the objective assumed throughout their course; the remainder, to whom the purpose underlying their education is irrelevant, must necessarily leave school ill-prepared for the life and work which lies before them; they leave clutching as their most precious credential for their work a certificate which under certain conditions would qualify them for entrance to a University.'[1]

[1] N.R., p. 10.

I rather doubt if the Committee has given quite enough weight to this criticism. Its members are not at all sure that 'for a certain type of pupil not going up to the University, education up to a certain stage in the same classroom with future University scholars is in itself a bad thing'.[1] Obviously it is salutary for the less brilliant to work with the more brilliant, provided that the one group is not beyond the reach of the other: there is no question about that. The trouble is, not the company, but the curriculum, and the treatment of it in class and examination. The curriculum, devised with an eye to the Entrance Scholarship and the Honours School, tends to be over-specialized. The 'University' pupils must have eight hours' French a week or their names will never get on to the Honours Boards—therefore there is no time for a broad and modern treatment of History. There are seven set books to be crammed in the English Literature class—therefore there is no time for general reading, or for thought. The same criticism may be brought against examinations: the questions, mainly set by university teachers, are not as a rule of a kind suitable for pupils going out into the world, but conform to the type in vogue at the university. A great deal could be said about this, but any teacher of a Sixth Form can say it. The Norwood Committee may be described as being merely aware of it. 'It is by no means proved . . . ', they say. 'The question is whether . . . ', 'We suspect . . . ', 'We strongly suspect . . .';[1] and so on. But this is a nettle which needs grasping firmly.

To make an abrupt change of metaphor, we have here what is in effect a vicious circle. The schools are full of specialist teachers because the schools want specialist teachers; and the reason they want them is that the universities are saddling them with specialization. The Committee seems to be attempting to cut the circle when on another page it recommends 'the more general institution at Universities of degree courses which allow two or three subjects to be taken at a "general honours" level'.[2] But I doubt if either the best undergraduates or the best professors would hold that any kind of 'honours level' at all could be reached in even as few as two subjects wholly unrelated to each other. Nor is the trouble anything as simple as specialization. It is the permeation of the schools with the academic spirit.'

The true solution, I believe, is one that can only come when Secondary education is general up to the age of sixteen and when the three types of Secondary school forecast in the Education Act are well established. Then the Grammar School will remain largely academic —which will be natural and right, since the great majority of its

[1] N.R., pp. 11–12. [2] Op. cit., p. 65.

Sixth Form will be bound for the university and the remainder will be of a semi-academic type. The Modern School and the Technical School, on the other hand, will be free to build up their own tradition; and if the university is allowed to overshadow them with its dead hand the makers of that tradition will have only themselves to blame. For after all that has been said on this subject over so long a period they can hardly fail to have their eyes open.

Chapter Seven

THE McNAIR REPORT AND THE UNIVERSITIES

In the introduction to this book the McNair Report has of set purpose been treated rather more fully than most of the other documents mentioned in it, because its scope is much wider than that of our particular subject. Nevertheless, some aspects of it—to be precise, some parts of the first of its four sections—directly or indirectly affect the universities.

Even from the summary references to the Report made above it will be clear how far-sighted and liberal is the conception of education which inspires it, how determined an effort is to be made to raise the standards of our teaching and how cordial and generous an invitation is to be given to all who have the desire and the latent aptitude to teach to make teaching their profession. Would it be too much to say that this Report is the first educational document to be published which will gain the confidence of all who are interested enough to read it? Not only of the small circle of those already teaching in our schools and training colleges but of a far wider circle of persons who had never believed that the subject could affect their lives in any way whatever? It is a great thing that a body of educationists should have made such a vast number of people sit up and take notice. 'This', exclaims many a man in the Forces, many a clerk in the office, many a boy or girl in an upper class of a post-Primary school, many an ex-teacher who has become a bored housewife, many a middle-aged mother whose children will soon be leaving school, 'This—MEANS—ME.'

And it was about time. One of the merits of the Report is that it puts on paper so much which for so long had been freely and emphatically said in the innermost circles of education and pretty widely guessed outside them. There are, for example, eighty-three training colleges in the country, mostly institutions belonging to religious bodies, and everybody familiar with them knows how unsatisfactory they are. The McNair Committee gives a frank and revealing account of them—no pleasant reading, this, when we reflect that ultimately they are responsible for the training and education of our children:

'The majority of the training colleges are small in size, many of them being too small for either effective staffing or economical

management. . . . Many . . . are exceedingly ill equipped and housed, not only from the point of view of adequate teaching facilities but also as regards reasonable living conditions for students and staff alike. . . . In 50 per cent . . . the laboratories, studios, workshops and gymnasia are inadequate. More than 50 per cent have no music room. . . . Only 27 of the colleges have study bedrooms for all their students and more than 50 per cent fail to provide two rooms for each member of the resident staff. . . . Washing and sanitary accommodation in some colleges is insufficient or unsuitable in kind and the sick-bay is often poorly equipped. In many colleges and college hostels the kitchens and kitchen equipment are out-of-date and the accommodation available for domestic staff is poor.'[1]

Then come examinations. Those for the four-year university student appear to be reasonably satisfactory. Not so the rest, which are conducted by ten Joint Examination Boards, established some fifteen years ago to take over a task previously done by the Board of Education. The Boards have been anything but a success. Oxford University stands right outside them; Cambridge University is concerned with only one college; the Universities of Manchester and Liverpool are both represented on one single Board, as are Leeds and Sheffield on another. The Birmingham Joint Board examines only 400 students, whereas the Bristol Board examines 1,000. Such details as these illustrate the 'haphazard and unequal distribution' of the colleges; and 'the fact that the several colleges of a group are all represented on the same Joint Board has not, in general, resulted in their having any closer relations with one another, save in the matter of examinations, than they had when they were more directly under the Board of Education. There is no co-operation between them about staffing, nor do they share amenities.'[2]

In the schools, and especially in the Primary schools, the size of the classes, though smaller than it was, is still notorious. The Committee has 'no hesitation in saying that one of the major educational reforms required, from the point of view of the recruitment of teachers alone, is a reduction in the size of classes'. Surveying, also from the standpoint of the teacher, the badness of many of the school buildings, the Report stresses their effect on efficiency, comfort and health. 'The contentment of teachers depends in large measure upon the spaciousness and attractiveness of the buildings and grounds in which the school as a community conducts its work and play . . . ; recruitment will suffer so long as there are school premises which are mean, niggardly, ugly, or otherwise ill adapted to their purpose.'[3]

[1] McN.R., pars. 37–9, pp. 14–15. [2] Op. cit., pars. 44–7, pp. 15–16.
[3] Op. cit., pars. 83–4, pp. 24–5.

Both teachers and those who train them need more leisure. Teachers, because the nature of their work is necessarily restrictive, and also because, of recent years, the number of out-of-school duties imposed upon them has greatly increased. They should be able to undertake forms of public service which entail their absence from school during the day—as J.P.s, on children's courts, education committees, university bodies, rural community councils, etc.[1] The staffs of training colleges are greatly overburdened: 'many of them cannot find the leisure for reflection, private reading and investigation'. This is partly due to the arduous demands of school practice but partly also to the poor esteem in which these colleges have been held. 'They have never ranked in the public mind as institutions which have a duty as regards the promotion of research and investigation in the field of education', and they have been financed according to cheap standards. Their teaching hours and conditions of service must be comparable with those of teachers in universities.[2]

Finally come teachers' salaries—still well below the standards demanded by the dignity of their profession and by the increased costs of living. That no woman assistant, even a graduate, in a Primary school, can in the lowest-paid areas normally earn more than £258; that a man assistant, even in a more highly paid area, should be earning only £366 at the age of forty; and that, in a provincial Secondary school, a woman graduate with First Class Honours will only be earning £384 at the same age:[3] these are anomalies which make one marvel that the profession should be as efficiently recruited as it is. The McNair Report, while leaving the composition of new salary scales to the Burnham Committees, lays down four principles by which, when they are framed, they may be judged: they should 'make possible the kind of life which teachers of the quality required ought to be enabled to live'; 'bear a relationship to the earnings of other professions'; give rise to no 'anomalies or injustices within the teaching profession'; and do no harm to the 'efficiency of the education provided in any particular type of area'.[4]

These are far from being the only abuses and disabilities of teachers and training-college staffs to which the Report draws attention but they will give some idea of its liberal outlook and of the generosity of the provision which it envisages as necessary for the future.

[1] McN.R., pars. 85–7, p. 25. [2] Op. cit., par. 239, p. 73.

[3] From all these salaries, 5 per cent is deducted as the teacher's contribution towards his pension.

[4] McN.R., par. 114, p. 32.

II

Coming now to those parts of the Report which particularly concern the universities, we shall devote our chief attention to the question on which the Committee was equally divided—that of area training.[1] In due course, note will be taken of the objections raised to the 'University' scheme, but I shall not hesitate to say, here and now, that I am entirely in favour of that scheme, the supporters of which made the following recommendations:

'(*a*) that each university should establish a School of Education, it being understood that some universities may find it desirable to establish more than one such school;

'(*b*) that each University School of Education should consist of an organic federation of approved training institutions working in co-operation with other approved educational institutions;

'(*c*) that University Schools of Education should be responsible for the training or the assessment of the work of all students who are seeking to be recognized by the Board of Education as qualified teachers.'[2]

Behind these recommendations there are arguments both constructive and critical. On the critical side, as we have seen, the entire Committee remarks on the lack of co-operation between the training colleges under the Joint Board scheme—and fifteen years is a considerable period for experiment. The group of members which favours the establishment of University Schools of Education (to be referred to in this chapter as the 'group'[3]) credits the Boards with having established useful contacts between universities and training colleges, which have been 'more intimate and fruitful in some areas than in others'. They have not, however, brought them together constitutionally, nor led to their 'sharing any work or influencing each other's activities', nor promoted any more intimate relationship among the training colleges themselves.

The group feels (and is not alone in feeling) that any attempt to remodel the Joint Boards 'would more or less perpetuate the present system.'[4] Unwilling that this should continue, and unwilling, for reasons which hardly need to be enumerated, to recommemd the establishment of a single centralized training service for the entire

[1] See p. 22, above. [2] McN.R., par. 182, p. 54.

[3] Or where the context requires, the 'assenting group'. Its opponents I term the 'dissenting group'.

[4] 'Universities and the Training Colleges', T.E.S., 15 July 1944.

country, the group looks for some regional entity to serve as the centre for each area of training, and finds it in the university.

Let us first consider in principle the claims which a university has to be so recognized. We no longer think of the training of a teacher as of the handing to him of a 'bag of tricks'. We want to educate his entire personality—not to impart to him the technique of presenting something which he may not possess. Now the university is concerned with the highest form of education and follows (or should follow) education's highest ideals. Again, the university serves (or should serve) its region in other respects, referred to in an earlier chapter, and it will therefore have certain regional contacts ready-made. It stands in a definite, and a twofold, relation to the schools in which, when educated and trained, the teachers are to work: first, its 'vitality depends in part upon the kind of education given in the schools, both primary and secondary'; second, the schools will look to it 'for some measure of leadership in educational, as distinct from administrative, matters'. 'There is no more significant way in which this mutual dependence can be expressed than for the universities to play a leading part in the initial education and training of teachers and for them to maintain a creative relationship with practising teachers and others concerned with the conduct of the schools.'[1]

So much for the principle; and it is encouraging to find it upheld elsewhere. Before ever the McNair Committee reported, the British Association Post-War Education Committee had come unanimously to the same conclusion as this group. 'The post-secondary education of a large majority of teachers', it holds, 'is the business of universities.'[2] 'To the impartial observer', commented *The Times Educational Supplement*, on the appearance of the McNair Report, 'there seems little doubt which scheme is preferable. The universities should be the leaders and main sources of direction and inspiration of any truly national system of education.'[3] I agree: the education of children is fundamental both to the life of the nation and to the life of the university. Providing the university is adequately fulfilling its primary task—research—and its secondary task—teaching—nothing that has to do with education is foreign to it and there is no activity of this kind in which it should not play its part. I hope, therefore, in the words of the Yorkshire Training College Examination Board, 'that the universities will accept the Schools of Education scheme as a great opportunity for them to play a vital and appropriate part in national education. By undertaking such a work the universities

[1] McN.R., par. 170, p. 50.
[2] B.A.C., p. 25. Cf. the President's letter in *The Times*, 19 May 1944.
[3] T.E.S., 6 May 1944.

would not only render a great public service, but would at the same time enhance their influence and significance in the general life of the community.'[1]

The question which has now to be asked is: Will the 'University' scheme work? The way in which it is regarded by two groups of educationists from the North should support the belief that it will. The Yorkshire Board just referred to places the two schemes in sharp contrast:

'Under the University Schools of Education scheme the whole field of teachers' training would be brought into immediate and direct contact with their great tradition. In contrast with this, the Joint Board scheme is little more than a matter of administrative convenience. The student in a training college could find inspiration in a closer connection with a university. He could not derive a similar stimulus from connection with a Joint Board.'[2]

And again:

'Variation of types of training there must be. The first scheme, while making possible the attainment of the necessary variety in training for various types of teaching, brings all within the compass of the University Schools of Education. The Joint Board scheme affords no advantage comparable with this and would tend to perpetuate the existing unfortunate divisions within the profession. Teachers will tend to remain a "race apart" so long as their training is kept separate from that of the other learned professions. The first scheme would bring them directly within the sphere of university influence during their training, the second would perpetuate the evil tradition of separate training and examination.'[3]

Another contrast is made by the staff of the Bingley Training College:

'The University School could undertake a serious study of education, and it is difficult to see how any other body could do it so well. A joint board . . . is hardly adequate to the task. It is a piece of administrative machinery created to function within set terms of reference; to attempt to develop it means spending time and energy on a side issue, when both are needed for the laying of a broad and new foundation.'[4]

These quotations indicate the kind of reception which the two schemes are likely to get from the bodies actually concerned in the task of training. What of the Opposition? It will be worth while considering, one by one, the objections raised to the 'University' scheme by the group dissenting from it.

[1] T.E.S., 15 July 1944. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid. [4] Ibid.

1. There would be a 'concentration of the many new training colleges required upon the university cities and towns, which for the most part are crowded industrial areas in which it is already difficult enough to find adequate accommodation for hostels on healthy sites and adequate ground for sports and physical training.'[1]—I do not think so. The newer universities already have affiliated colleges many miles away from their buildings and their relations with them are quite satisfactory. Further, not only will transport be quickened in the near future but the increasing stress now being laid on the importance of residence in the newer universities will tend to plant the new hostels, or colleges, some miles out of the city, and to these sites many of the university's main activities may eventually be transferred. If some of the training colleges were near the university hostels the result would be closer connections between non-degree students who are going to teach and degree students many of whom are going to do all kinds of other things. And that is what our future teachers most need.

2. Further disadvantages seen by the dissenting group in this urbanization of the training colleges which it so much fears are that there will be insufficient opportunity for practical training in schools (but would there be more in the country?) and that 'our schools . . . are already suffering from the unduly urban outlook of our teachers'.[2]—This defect seems to me to go back much farther than the training-college stage. It must be remedied, not by sending already urban-minded young people to colleges in the country, but by sending them to farm camps, scout camps or national service camps in the country as boys and girls, by giving them bursaries to country Public Schools or by making it possible for them to have country holidays at small cost. Said a Redbrick graduate who was 'doing Education' to me recently about a projected country holiday: 'I can't think what I shall find to do there.' If young people are left till the age of eighteen or upwards before being taught that lesson, they are left till it is all but too late. We must take them younger.

3. Another objection made by the dissenting group was that the 'University' scheme would intensify the 'too academic outlook' which teachers are said to have already. If that phrase denotes the desire to see both sides of a question, the scholar's scrupulous respect for truth, the eagerness to be always learning, then I say the training colleges want all this as much as the universities and neither can have too much of it. But if the phrase is meant to be synonymous with 'narrowness of outlook', and vices which are kindred with this—the worshipping of examination results, the preference given to fact over

[1] McN.R., par. 194, p. 60. [2] Op. cit., par. 195, p. 61.

judgement, the eagerness to accumulate knowledge rather than to acquire wisdom—the answer is that the universities too are striving against this and in all the educational reforms now being suggested there is a clear recognition of its danger. Actually the dissenters contend that 'many educational problems are not the sole concern of a department of education but involve collaboration with other university departments such as those of philosophy, psychology, divinity, physiology, social science or studies, fine arts, music and physical education'[1]—a range which is anything but narrow.

What the dissenting group means by the 'academic outlook' is far from clear. The 'predominant qualities', it says, which most of our teachers require are 'a good general education' (which one would have thought the universities could give), 'an interest in, and an understanding of, children and a desire to live one's life with them and help them to develop themselves on the right lines'. These qualities, it is true, 'have no necessary connection with university standards' (except in so far as universities teach psychology, social studies, and the Bible) and they may not 'receive due recognition and encouragement in an academic atmosphere'.[2] But that 'interest', 'understanding' and 'desire', which ought already to be possessed in some measure by anyone proposing to be a teacher, would not be developed any more in a training college, or any other place of higher education, than in a university. The school, or the family, is the milieu in which they are best 'encouraged'. As for the mysterious 'recognition' which they are to have, I simply do not know what that means; but, whatever it may be, I should not expect it to be provided by the university. The place of the university in the partnership is to induce teachers-to-be not to concentrate too exclusively upon their future profession, to give them wide interests, to bring them into touch with the best minds and to keep them from becoming mere seminarists, as they are apt to do in the atmosphere of the present-day training college, with its semi-monastic discipline, its few amenities and its low standard of culture. With all due respect to its learned authors, I am bound to say that the paragraph from which these quotations are taken strikes me as a piece of loose thinking.

4. Two further objections, closely related to each other, are that the three-year training course (if this becomes the rule), the greater demand for teachers and the expected increase in the numbers of university students will make excessive (i) 'the total number of students for whom the universities will become responsible', and (ii) the 'preponderance of students preparing themselves for one profession.'[3]

The first of these objections seems extremely weak. If a university

[1] McN.R., par. 185, p. 55. [2] Op. cit., par. 195, p. 61. [3] Ibid.

in the United States can cope with ten or fifteen thousand students, surely the universities of this country, with its longer tradition of education, can manage half that number. The assenting group makes full and, so far as one can see, perfectly practical suggestions for the working of the scheme. 'We do not say', they remark, 'that the universities here and now are equipped or staffed to undertake the task proposed, nor even that they could qualify themselves for it without the closest co-operation with the training colleges, the schools and the local education authorities. But there is no good reason why the universities should not be adequately staffed and equipped for the purpose so that their Vice-Chancellors and Principals and other officers who already have heavy responsibilities should not be directly burdened with the new duties we propose.'[1]

The second objection, however, especially in Arts Faculties, is a very serious one: undoubtedly the most formidable of all. Even now it would seem that two out of every three undergraduates in any Faculty of Arts are going to teach: after graduation they go across the road and 'do Education' in a body. The dissenting group rightly rejects any suggestion that the training-college student should be a kind of 'sub-student' of the university, instead of a full member of the student body: that would create 'a most undesirable differentiation'.[2] But what else would save the university Arts Faculty from being a mere pre-training-school and its undergraduates precisely that type of seminarist which we wish and hope not to see? Possibly there is no solution; and, if we accept the 'University' plan, we must accept this disadvantage and do what we can to counteract it. Possibly the solution may come partly in a large increase in the numbers of university students preparing for other occupations than teaching—notably for business; partly in a greater mixing up of the Faculties, which for every reason would be desirable; and partly in a widening of our whole conception of education, so that in every branch of it parochialism will decrease.

5. With the exception of the last, the objections of the dissenting group are not very serious: the supporters of the scheme themselves suggest another, which is that it might lead to a tendency to encourage all teachers, in whatever type of school, to graduate, which would probably have a harmful effect on Primary education and would also swell the universities beyond all reason.

As a matter of fact, the Committee's own recommendation of a three-year training course may increase the tendency among Primary school teachers to graduate. If in four (or even three) years a student can gain a university degree, and yet needs three years for a non-

[1] McN.R., par. 180, p. 54. [2] Op.cit., par. 195, p. 61.

graduate qualification, one would expect to see a rush for Secondary education courses rather than Primary, and this would eventually mean a considerable overflow of unsuitable material into the latter from the former. A parallel danger, pointed out by the Yorkshire Board, is that the three-year courses might come to be regarded as 'inferior versions' of degree courses. They would have to be 'planned specifically to meet the needs of the students, with due regard to the place of such subjects as art, handwork, needlework, music, gardening, and physical training, as well as other specialized teaching techniques'.[1] The board or delegacy concerned would have to steer the non-graduate course with great care. The need in Primary and (under our past system) post-Primary work is for teachers with wide knowledge, interests and sympathies, since they never touch pupils at any stage of specialism, but have to deal with the whole undifferentiated range of temperament and ability and will be doing the most valuable work where they can bring out and encourage latent and unsuspected talent at any point in that range. It is of no use to fill the Primary schools with frustrated would-have-been specialists, whatever the title that may be given them.

I have sometimes wondered if a three-year course should not lead to a special kind of degree—a degree of Pass, or General, type, with the mark of distinction allowed, covering the entire field of subjects studied, together with the theory and practice of teaching—to be called 'Bachelor of Education'. The prize does not seem excessive; so long and full a course, if it is planned and followed in close connection with the university, surely merits the recognized university hallmark. If such a gesture as this could demonstrate that the university does not despise the Primary teacher, but, on the contrary, is proud of him, it would probably arrest any stampede from the Primary school to the Secondary, of which there may be a considerable danger. However, the great thing is to be aware of the risk in order to guard against it and no doubt this will be in the minds of all concerned.

In favour of the 'University' scheme the chief positive argument has already been stated. 'The study of education, in theory and practice, is one of the proper functions of universities.'[2] It will be disastrous, in years to come, 'if the national system for the training of teachers is found to be divorced from the work of the universities or even to be running parallel with it'.[3] Here the dissenting group simply registers a contrary opinion. 'We do not consider it to be either practicable or desirable [that the universities] should accept respon-

[1] T.E.S., 15 July 1944. [2] McN.R., par. 180, p. 54.
[3] Op. cit., par. 179, p. 53.

sibility for the training of all teachers.' 'Their main duty consists and properly consists in teaching basic subjects and in the advancement of knowledge.'[1] Then one of these basic subjects, presumably, is not the theory and practice of education? And yet the dissenting group would have at least some of the universities specially equipped with staff and funds for the pursuance of research and investigation in those subjects.[2] Their arguments are certainly difficult to follow.

However, the issue is clear-cut and it is for every reader to decide between the one group and the other. My own decision is based on two reasons: first and foremost, I heartily subscribe to the principle involved; secondly, I can see no practical impediments to its being converted into practice.

Two more substantial advantages suggest themselves.

One is that this scheme, for the first time in our educational history, brings the universities into touch with Primary schools as well as with Secondary. Ever since I have worked at Redbrick and seen how close a contact with Secondary schools it can, if it likes, maintain, I have regretted that we, as a community, know so little of the schools from which about 90 per cent of our undergraduates originally came. If the 'University' scheme is adopted, the Primary schools as well as the Secondary will look to us as their leaders. We may even be able to promote reciprocity between the two, which is as important as reciprocity between Secondary school and university.

'We reject the idea', says the assenting group, in a fine passage, 'that the universities should concern themselves only with the education and training of teachers of older children. Such a proposal is both undesirable and impracticable. It is undesirable because the teachers of younger children need to be well educated and well trained, because the kind of education given in the primary schools profoundly affects the educational prospects of children when they reach the secondary schools, and because, particularly when the educational system is being unified, it would be doing a great disservice to education to take a step which divided the teaching profession. It is impracticable because some students, very sensibly, do not make up their minds about the type of school in which they intend to teach until towards the end of their course of training, and because there is and should be mobility of teaching staff between

[1] McN.R., par. 184, p. 55.

[2] The Yorkshire Board's attitude to this question of research is worth recording: 'A University School of Education would be an appropriate place for research into educational problems, while it is difficult to see how it could be organized and encouraged under the Joint Board Scheme.' (T.E.S., 15 July, 1944.)

primary and secondary schools. *Further the fundamental studies and disciplines of all teachers, primary and secondary alike, are, at their apex, the concern of the universities.*'[1]

The italics in the last sentence are mine. I should like to see that sentence prominently displayed in every University School of Education in the country.

Secondly, whatever the scheme does for the training-college student, it certainly widens the horizon of the university, both geographically, in the direction of regional development, and also with respect to the content of instruction and study. All kinds of institution may co-operate—and under the direction of the society which takes its proper place at their head. The assenting group specifies 'technical colleges, schools of art, schools of music and agricultural institutes'.[2] If the development of university activities takes place along such regional lines as I have ventured to lay down, it would not be surprising if the net were spread to take in wider interests even than these.

III

A number of miscellaneous points at which the McNair Report touches the universities may be referred to in conclusion.

In some important paragraphs on staffing the Committee deals separately with training colleges and the training departments of universities, though, as it says, whichever of its two training plans may be adopted, staffing 'must to some extent be considered as a single problem'.[3]

Some of the disadvantages under which the staffs of training colleges labour have already been referred to: there are also others. The need is for a marked up-levelling. Very few people combine high academic and specialist status with experience of teaching in Primary and post-Primary schools, and few, even of those few, would wish to join a training college with conditions as they are at present. The Committee would like to see the college staffs strengthened by the appointment, not only of Secondary school teachers—the general custom at present—but of 'the younger teachers or research fellows in the universities'.[4] I must confess to some hesitation about this. Unless these lecturers are seconded for periods to the schools for practical experience in them, they would surely bring to the colleges just that 'academic atmosphere' which one half of the Committee, if

[1] McN.R., par. 172, pp. 50–1.
[2] Op. cit., par. 175, p. 52.
[3] Op. cit., par. 227, p. 70.
[4] Op. cit., par. 231, p. 71.

not the whole of it, is so anxious to avoid. As it is, young teachers whose evidence was taken complained that even the instructors and supervisors in the art of teaching were not always sufficiently acquainted with school conditions and practice. This fault can be remedied only in one or both of two ways: (i) the continual intake of new members of the staff, fresh from the schools—a solution which also demands means of egress for others; (ii) periodical secondment into the colleges from the schools, and also, I think, into the schools from the colleges, of one or more members of the staff annually. The Committee discusses the principle of secondment at some length and makes useful proposals.[1] And it is perfectly sound on this main principle: the 'core of the staff of any training institution' must 'consist of men and women who not only have the requisite standing in their subjects but have proved themselves as teachers'.[2] If that aim is kept clearly in view, it should not be difficult to translate into practice.

Other recommendations and observations attempt to remove the disabilities of training-college staffs already referred to: in particular, it is urged that their salaries, at present little higher than in Secondary schools, should 'approximate to university levels'. Residence, it is suggested, should not as a rule be a condition of appointment, and 'there should be a residential rota so that few members of staff are required, or indeed allowed, to be permanently resident'.[3] This last condition, it is to be feared, would attract the junior members of the staff rather than the senior: how would the Fellow of an Oxbridge college, or the senior tutor of a Redbrick hall of residence, like to be turned out into lodgings? After all, to many unmarried teachers, as they grow older, their rooms in school or college become the nearest thing they have to a home.

It is to be hoped, especially if the university-centred scheme of area training is adopted, that there will be much more intermingling of the staffs of universities and training colleges than there has been in the past. More of this, of course, is possible, under any scheme, between the training departments and the academic departments of the universities themselves. It is chiefly because of our indifference that there has been so little in the past. The professor who was heard to say, apropos of some projected reforms in the Education Department, 'After all, we've nothing to do with Education', would never have dreamed of saying, 'We've nothing to do with education'—yet, when one comes to think of it, the two assertions are dangerously alike. The average professor sighs over his First Class Honours people, when they elect (or are compelled by the 'Pledge') to take an 'Educa-

[1] McN.R., pp. 146–7 (Recommendations 23–4). Cf. pp. 81–2.
[2] Op. cit., par. 232, p. 72. [3] Op. cit., par. 238, p. 73.

tion year' instead of staying on to work for the M.A., as though they had gone into the outer darkness. Suggest to him that he should sometimes go across the way and mix with them and see how shocked he is. Actually one or two lecturers with knowledge of schools are employed by the training departments of the universities as instructors or supervisors in the teaching of their special subjects, but to nothing like the extent that might be done, especially if there were greater reciprocity between universities and schools. The Committee recommends some extension of the practice: 'for example, instruction in hygiene might best be given by someone on the staff of the faculty of medicine, and the university department of psychology might contain some person with special knowledge of children'.[1] But for lectures on method and for supervision of practice it seems to prefer the part-time appointments of experienced teachers from local schools. This is another valuable possibility. But I should like to see university lecturers employed as well, always provided that they have had school experience and are themselves first-rate teachers. A system by which the man who has lectured to the undergraduate on Shakespeare, or the nineteenth century, goes on to discuss with the graduate how he may best present that subject to a class of children, and then perhaps goes down to the school with him and watches him do it, seems to me a system which will play a large part in that breaking down of the barriers between school and university which we so badly need. Both the training departments and the training colleges require frequent visits from outsiders, ostensibly for lectures and discussions, but, more essentially, to increase the students' vitality. 'Some schools, like some homes,' remarks the Committee very wisely, in another connection, 'never experience a breath of fresh air until a stranger arrives and is welcomed.'[2] The same is true of 'some training colleges'. Only those who go occasionally to such places know how warm a welcome can be. 'We so seldom see anyone from outside' is a pathetic form of greeting, but it is also a revealing one. Such contacts, in passing, would probably be easier to arrange under the 'University' than under the 'Joint Board' system.

In recommending that the training departments should have 'few formal lectures' the Committee is following opinion's current trend:

'The work should be done mainly in the way of small classes and discussion groups. We consider that every student should be allocated to a member of the staff of the training department as his tutor, using that term in the widest and in the non-technical sense—a person who would keep in touch with the student on the personal side, for it is not

[1] McN.R., par. 242, p. 74. [2] Op. cit., par. 96, p. 27.

possible for the Head of the department to do this for all his students.'[1]

As I have shown in *Red Brick University*, this ideal method of instruction is a very expensive one, and if training colleges and departments are going to be much larger than in the past, here will be another addition to the mounting bill for expenses. The recommendation might perhaps be adopted in a modified form. Principles and History of Education, Psychology, Hygiene, School Organization, and even General Method lend themselves to the lecture system, though in some of these subjects discussion classes should be superadded. It is Special Method (particularly for students who are to be specialist teachers) which can best be taught in discussion groups. For here the students are handling material about which they have considerable knowledge and all kinds of questions will rise to their lips at every moment. Further, before they go and give lessons at the schools they should have practice in teaching each other, and many problems in presentation can be best worked out by a group resolving itself temporarily into a class of children, with one of its members, or perhaps several in turn, as teacher.

On the question of hostels, the Committee follows the lines one would expect: 'in the near future' residence will play a much larger part in all institutions giving higher education and 'we urge local authorities and others . . . to explore opportunities of providing hostels, which will be available to students drawn from a variety of these institutions'.[2] It definitely prefers residence for a period to residence over the whole course. Would this apply to universities too, one may ask, and if not, why not?

Training-department students—university graduates—certainly need full residence: they have only a single year in which to prepare for their profession, and all experience suggests that it is not so much the lectures, or even the formal discussions, which they find valuable, as the opportunities provided by the year's breathing-space when their degree course is over. After three or four years' intense concentration on a comparatively narrow field, the graduate is introduced to a number of new and dissimilar fields, over which he can roam in comfort, for in none of them will he be expected to stay for long. He is able at last to sit back and think about his future career, about its potentialities and prospects, about his ideals and how far he can fulfil them, and so on. This, above all others, is the year in which he needs residence, in order to talk over all these matters freely with his fellows.

[1] McN.R., par. 244, p. 74. [2] Op. cit., par. 250, pp. 75–6.

The only objection which I can see to residence for the whole two (or three) years of training-college life is the seminarist one. 'Oh,' once exclaimed a distinguished philosopher who had accepted an invitation to spend a year as special lecturer in a somewhat isolated Anglican theological college, 'if only I could get away now and then from Church of England clergymen and men who are about to become Church of England clergymen!' Training-college staffs must often feel like that and perhaps students do too. Under the 'University' scheme there might be a provision of hostels in which different types of student could mix. I know how much our young Oxbridge graduates used to enjoy coming in from the distant Education department to Hall and Combination Room for the sake of mixing with men who were not going to be teachers. But against this there is the fact that training-college students, on their entry, are approximately of the age of undergraduate freshmen, and, whatever may be their position in the future, they have at present seldom lived away from home at all. They need residential life quite as much as the degree student, especially if the alternative is, not life at home, but life in lodgings. If their course is to be of three years, they might perhaps go into lodgings during the last year—and, as the Committee predicts, their numbers will probably make this necessary—but two of their three years, or the whole of a two-year course, should be residential.

Allied to the subject of the desirability of residence for training-college students is that of its nature. In many of the colleges, says the Report, social life is vigorous and provides ample scope for the development of initiative and powers of organization. The extent to which those conditions will continue and increase depends upon all kinds of factors which cannot yet be assessed: the sizes to which the colleges will grow; their location; the connections which each develops with the university, and with other places of higher education in its area; the staff-student ratio; the quality and 'turn-over' of the staff; the equipment and amenities of the college; the funds available for visiting lecturers; and so on. If the necessity for a full social life be borne in mind, and above all if a good proportion of students in each area can share membership of the University Union, conditions in all the colleges should improve beyond recognition.

The Committee writes at length about discipline, and, though it quotes no direct evidence, there can be little doubt that it heard a good deal which would make strange reading. Some of the colleges, says the Report, 'impose a discipline upon their students which is obsolete and wholly unsuited to young people of from eighteen to

twenty-two years of age'.[1] But it does not support the charge that either all or most of them do this. The reasons why the majority of students are 'unable to live a full and natural life'[2] are, first, 'the multiplicity of things they have to do in a short time'—hence the recommendation to lengthen the course from two years to three—and, secondly, material conditions: 'In some colleges the lack of study-bedrooms, of library space, of an adequate number of lecture rooms or workshop or studio accommodation, together with restricted domestic arrangements, necessitate a degree of regimentation which staff and students alike know to be undesirable but which they realize cannot be wholly avoided.'[3]

Lastly, a few words may be said on the subject of 'school practice', for, while it barely fringes university life, it is so essential a part of the teacher's training that it cannot be omitted.

At present, school practice, extending over twelve or more weeks in each year, is primarily directed by the staffs of the training colleges and no specific provision is made for it in the schools. That is to say, it is an additional burden thrown upon the schools, which, in the interests of the common good, they generally accept, collaborating in it in a way that is beyond praise. But, although most students are able to spend long enough in a school to get to know it, they are always 'students' and can hardly ever share in the school's life. So, as the Report strikingly puts it, 'school practice under present conditions has been criticized, perhaps with justice, as too brief, confused in objective and somewhat artificial'.[4]

The Committee makes an excellent recommendation under this head which alone goes far to justify the lengthening of the non-graduates' course to three years. There should, it suggests, be two types of practice: 'Practical training in schools', of about twelve weeks spread over the first two years, and 'Continuous teaching practice' of one complete term, preferably the sixth, seventh or eighth of the nine which it is hoped all non-graduate students will enjoy. (Without specifically recommending it, the Report also hints that a continuous term for graduate students would not be excessive, though I am myself a little dubious about this.) The 'practical training' would resemble the present-day school practice: it would be directed by the training-college staff and kept in close relation with the theoretical part of the training. The 'continuous practice', however, would be something quite new. Its aim is 'to provide a situation in which the student can experience what it is to be a teacher, that is, to become as far as possible a member of a school staff'.

[1] McN.R., par. 254, p. 76. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid. [4] Op. cit., par. 258, p. 77.

'To achieve this he must spend a considerable time continuously in a school, developing relationships between himself and his pupils and colleagues and being responsible to the Head Master for the work he undertakes. This kind of practice should be characterized by settled conditions and continuity. It should not be under the direct supervision of the staff of the training institution. It should normally be taken in a school at some distance away, or even in another training area, and the staff of the school should be primarily responsible for directing and supervising it, though a student's college tutors might visit him occasionally.'[1]

This is an excellent plan, if it is workable—and I believe it could be made so. It happens that I have just heard of an experience which illustrates its usefulness. A young graduate whom I chanced to know well did his school practice, during the second term of his 'Education year', at a local school of exceptionally high standards—a rather better type of school than he would probably get an initial appointment in, for, though a first-class teacher, as events proved, he had anything but a first-class degree. He enjoyed his work there, but, he said to me, 'I never really feel I'm doing the best I'm capable of. The boys are fairly responsive, but they're not natural. They label me "student"; and the person they're really interested in is my supervisor, sitting in a corner of the room. And there's another thing,' he went on in his impetuous, immature way. 'I want to get to know more about the school and find out why it's so good. I want to see something of the masters and hear about the work in other subjects than the one I teach. In fact, I want to get "inside" the school and I know my teaching would be more effective if I could.'

Now it so happened that during the Easter holidays one of the masters in my young friend's subject died, and, a substitute at short notice being very hard to get, the University was asked if it would be practicable for him to take regular classes for as many hours daily as his Education work allowed, until the date of his Diploma examination, after which he would be given a salaried full-time job until the end of the school term, and then, if satisfactory, retained on the staff permanently. In the special circumstances, the University felt it right to agree. One day in July I met the boy in the town and asked him how he was getting on. The McNair Committee would have been interested in his reply:

'Oh,' he said, 'it's marvellous. *The school's come to life.*'

It is chiefly because I think to-morrow's teachers ought not to be getting their initiation in institutions which they feel to be dead that I so cordially welcome this scheme for continuous practice. But it has

[1] McN.R., par. 261, p. 78.

also another advantage. The Report is rather concerned lest there should be too little for such a student to do, 'in which case the period would come to be regarded as a "soft" part of his training', or alternatively lest he should be 'overburdened with work and responsibility by being treated as someone who relieved the regular staff of some of their regular duties'.[1] I do not think this need ever happen: the division of a class would always be practicable, and, as a rule, profitable to all concerned. But, with the better type of student, there is another possibility. The addition of a capable student-teacher to the staff for one term should facilitate all kinds of arrangements for which some flexibility is essential. It could not free any one full-time teacher for a term, because the student-teacher would need supervision, and it might also at any time be found essential to alter his work, with consequential rearrangement of other teachers' classes. But his presence might provide some junior teacher working in his spare time for the M.A. with a few free periods for study; or, during the latter half of the term, give one or more teachers a few weeks' leave to go and study methods of education elsewhere in the country, or even abroad; or, in a girls' school, a married woman on the staff who found it difficult to combine teaching and household duties could be allowed to come, for a term, in the afternoons only, following a principle to which the McNair Committee so properly gives its approval. Many possibilities of this kind are waiting only upon an increase in the flexibility of our educational system, and with increased flexibility will come a vastly increased efficiency.

The Committee realizes that this proposal is a 'drastic' one which could only be put into practice gradually and should probably never be adopted for all students without exception. It will need to be studied very carefully both by the local authorities and by the schools, both of which would be faced with new responsibilities. The selection of suitable schools for what must at first be an experiment would not be easy, on so many and such diverse factors would it depend. The Committee, none the less, having made approximate calculations, believes that sufficient schools would be obtainable. On such imponderable factors as the divisibility of classes, the effect of the plan on school organization and the attitude of the staff towards an unfledged, single-term guest-colleague only experience can pronounce. But like so much else in the McNair Report this is a bold and imaginative solution of a problem which a few years ago we should hardly have recognized as existing, or, at best, written down as insoluble. There are whole mines of ideas in the Report for the experimenter to get to work upon and no-one who reads it with care should ever accuse us of being an educationally unimaginative people again.

[1] McN.R., par. 266, p. 79.

Chapter Eight

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL PROBLEM (I) SYNTHESIS

What, the reader may inquire, have the Public Schools to do with the Modern Universities? The simple answer might seem to be be: Nothing. One can look in vain among the serried ranks of the gaudily hooded 'teaching staff' at a Redbrick Degree Day for an Old School Tie. But the correct reply is: Everything. For, even to-day, the Modern Universities are starting to receive a trickle of boys from the smaller Public Schools, and there is ground for hope that in the not too distant future they will draw upon every type of school, from Drabtown to Eton.

There is no educational problem more complicated than this Public School one. The discussion-track is simply littered with red-herrings. First of all, what *is* a Public School? The less distinguished of the institutions represented on the Headmasters' Conference and the Governing Bodies' Association descend very nearly to the level of Drabtown Secondary. Some critics of the system (which, more correctly, is no system at all, but just a mess into which we have got ourselves) have in mind a mere score or so of expensive boarding schools. Some, on the other hand, are prepared to tolerate these and reserve their attacks for the scores of others which try to imitate them. Some, again, have no quarrel with the instruction given at these schools but object to so many of them being boarding-schools. Some would say nothing at all if all the Public Schools underwent Government inspection. Some condemn them as being the homes of privilege and the nurseries of class hatred and demand their abolition. But others would be quite satisfied if a proportion of the pupils in each were admitted freely from the Primary schools, upon the results of a competitive examination, at the cost of the State. Some believe that whatever may be wrong lies less in the Public Schools than in the exclusive establishments which prepare for them. And so we go on, each of our criticisms differing from our neighbours'.

In this necessarily brief discussion I propose to concentrate upon the boarding-schools, because it is in regard to these that the problem arises in its acutest and at the same time its most comprehensive form: once the future of the 'public' boarding-school is decided, that of the 'public' day-school will soon fall into line. I shall make no extended reference to public schools for girls, because, though similar

questions arise with regard to them, they are a more recent growth and far fewer in number. And I shall confine myself to Public Schools in England—not because there are none elsewhere but for what ought to be the sufficient reason that I have no first-hand knowledge of them.

I

Do we, to begin with, need any 'public' boarding-schools at all? Since they are Class Institutions and Homes of Privilege, why not (after a necessary transition-period) scrap the lot? Why not use them as 'short-term boarding-establishments; schools for advanced studies for Secondary School pupils; Youth Centres;' Junior departments (U.S.A. model) of the Universities; 'schools of instruction in special subjects like music, art and handicraft; Adult Education Colleges; Training Colleges for Teachers and Youth Leaders; Summer Schools; holiday centres; or Day Schools for their local areas'?[1] Why not make the future duke and the incipient dustman go through Primary and Secondary education together? Let Eton become New Windsor Grammar School, or better still, an experimental multilateral school on a large scale. Let the historic buildings of Winchester house a Technical School, a Modern School and a County College. Expropriate the endowments! Prevent the rich (and the not-so-rich) from educating their children as they desire! And so lay the foundations of true democracy!

There are a great many reasons why not: most people would think it a waste of time to consider them in detail. Disendowment, some would say, is uncomfortably like legalized robbery and a brave new world for the living should hardly begin by taking a mean advantage of the dead. Again, even the well-taxed rich have the right to freedom; and the granting of a fuller life to one class should not involve a restricting of life for another. I would much rather see England free than England sober, though I am as anxious as anyone else to see England both.

But there is another way of looking at this fundamental question. I believe that it is of the greatest value to education that there should be a few schools—or perhaps a good many—where Governing Bodies are independent. First of all, because in any country the State educational system can learn much from schools which have greater freedom to experiment than its own. And secondly, because I believe that, if any type of school is going to achieve a maximum development, it must give much fuller powers to its Headmaster than our municipal

[1] F.R., par. 6, p. 3.

schools do at present and its Governing Body must be more widely representative and contain no members who are not themselves well educated and have not a keen interest in education.

Now it is perfectly true that, on the Governing Bodies of the large Public Schools, there are pompous makeweights who seldom appear at meetings and whose names (with the titles which precede and the letters which follow them) are chiefly of value as giving tone to the school prospectus. But they do far less harm than the ignoramuses to be found on many, if not on most, Education Committees, who, with only the slightest knowledge of Secondary education, thrust their ungrammatical oars into every discussion and often get their obstinate way through sheer pertinacity. All Redbrick professors who have to sit on local Education Committees can speak of this from bitter experience. I recall the case of a brilliant but over-deferential headmaster who was in effect driven from his school by the unreasoning obstructionism of two illiterate and bullying Councillors. A less painful reminiscence, pointing the same moral, is of the farcical meeting of a sub-committee convened to choose a French master, whom the Headmaster, being a modern-language graduate, could have chosen far better himself. The best candidate, a London B.A., was turned down by a majority in favour of one who, having an Edinburgh M.A., was supposed by Alderman Mrs. Smith and Councillor Thompson ('a self-made man and proud of it, sir') to possess a superior degree. It was with the greatest difficulty, however, that these beauties were restrained from picking a Frenchman, who rejoiced in the exotic-looking qualification of B. ès L! Their argument was perfectly logical: having the same degree as the London man, they said, and being a Frenchman into the bargain, he must be better qualified for the teaching of French! Experiences like this are enough to make one renounce one's faith in the democratic control of education altogether.

The best Governing Body for any Secondary school will consist of genuine educationists from the area served by it, representatives of the nearest university and former pupils of the school who have proved their knowledge of, and interest in, educational matters. Having chosen its headmaster, such a Committee should encourage him to develop the school's potentialities by giving him as much power as it can. In particular, he should have complete freedom in the appointment and dismissal of his masters, subject to the right of a dismissed master to appeal. Very rarely a case of injustice may occur, but so it may under the committee system, especially where party politics enters the field, as it often does, but never should. The position is much the same as that of the Head of a university Department

or School *vis-à-vis* the Faculty or Senate: a Governing Body has everything to gain, and very little to lose, by trusting its headmaster.

Because the influence of independent schools should be a healthy one in that direction, I am all for the maintenance of that independent status. Indeed, I should like to see it extended. 'Whatever happens,' as the Headmasters' Conference recently declared, 'the freedom of the schools should be maintained; and not only freedom preserved for the independent schools, but the same freedom extended so far as is possible to other schools that do not at present enjoy it.'[1] The Modern Universities have virtual independence; no complaint is made, so far as I know, that they have misused it; and there is a general consensus of opinion in favour of its being continued. Why should not every large Secondary school in every large town, subject to such limitations as those suggested in the next paragraph, have virtual independence as well?

These limitations amount to compulsory inspection and certification of efficiency. Not only should the Local Authority be given the right of entry into every school which it helps to maintain, but there should be Government inspection of every school, of whatever type, in the country, and independent schools should be allowed to exist only upon the same basis as that on which grant-aided schools receive grants. Few people realize what a remarkably able body of men His Majesty's Inspectors of Schools are. I have sat with them, again and again, at their joint meetings with Governing Bodies of which I am a member, held at the close of the periodical 'Full Inspections', and I have been amazed to find how complete a grasp their few days' visit has given them of a school's complicated organization, how keen an insight they have into the personal and professional qualities of the teachers, and, above all, how constructive as well as incisive are their criticisms. Any group of Staff Inspectors might safely be described as the intellectual equals of any group of men in the country. Their status in the popular esteem should be that of the barrister, the bishop or the specialist in medicine. For they are in fact of that calibre. And those with inside knowledge can testify to the constant help which the keen-minded yet sympathetic District Inspector can give to the headmaster new to his job, uncertain of his position or vigorous, far-seeing and eager to advance. Thirty years ago, the Government inspector was popularly—though even then unjustly—considered as an Official Fault-finder; and Public Schools not dependent on Government grants used to take the jam of credit without the powder of criticism by inviting inspection from certain other bodies, whose nominees would stay with the Headmaster, make brief perfunctory visits to

[1] *The Times*, 14 September 1943.

classrooms, shower a few compliments and depart in an unhealthy atmosphere of intense cordiality. To-day these performances have rightly fallen into desuetude and the usual rule is Government inspection or none at all. It only remains to make Government inspection the rule everywhere.

This granted, a current of independence should be allowed to circulate freely through the country. The London County Council, not long since, made the grave mistake of dissociating itself from any scheme of collaboration with 'independent day and boarding-schools' and of declaring them 'in the widest sense educationally undesirable while the present principles guiding their management and recruitment continue'.[1] Such a boycott of independence, if it became general, would lead to an educational totalitarianism which, assuming that the Englishman's sense of the fitness of things could ever allow it (and I think that unlikely) would reduce our schools to a level of monotonous uniformity. I do not want to be told, as the English visitor to the French Ministry of Public Instruction is once said to have been told, that at 9.30 a.m. every State secondary school in the country will be studying Contemporary History, and at 10.30 a.m. Mathematics. I want the majority of them to be proceeding along well-tried lines, but a large minority to be reaching out and experimenting in all directions, And I believe the toleration, and indeed the encouragement, of the principle of independence will go far towards effecting this.

II

Independent Public Schools, then, should continue to exist—perhaps only a few, more probably a good many. The next question is how far the system as a whole should be altered, how large a proportion of the schools should be allowed complete freedom, subject to certification of efficiency, and in what respects it would be advisable to change the rest. Perhaps the best method of approach here is to consider the claims which the Public Schools—never slow to remind us of the system's merits—make for themselves and to see how far they are justified. These claims fall into three categories, which may be roughly described as religious, moral and intellectual.

1. *Religious.* With hardly an exception the Public Schools would assert that the education they give is intimately bound up with Christianity. 'The whole basis of public school education is Christian,' wrote six well-known headmasters not long ago, 'which means not a

[1] *The Times*, 28 January 1943.

particular type of divinity syllabus but a headmaster and staff who look upon their profession as a Christian vocation.'[1] No doubt, given sufficient space, they would have gone on to say that, not only are their staffs inspired by this ideal but, being in touch with their boys all the time—morning, noon and night—for three-quarters of the year, they can imbue them with it in the most natural of ways possible. If any critic looks askance at the means which they employ for the purpose—compulsory chapels, with confirmation at fifteen or sixteen as a matter of course: the great majority of Public Schools are 'C. of E.'[2] —they would probably reply that, while these means are perfectly defensible in themselves, they form only a part of the process. The real strength of Public School religion, they would claim, lies in the standpoint from which it regards the details of everyday life: the attitude which the headmaster takes towards moral delinquencies, the things the housemaster says to a boy who comes to him in trouble; the conversation that takes place when any master has any group of boys to tea. It is not that any direct Christian teaching is given at such times but that the indirect influence of men who 'look upon their profession as a Christian vocation' cannot fail to make itself felt. The apologists of the 'system' contrast the Christian atmosphere which their boys imbibe at school with what they assume (sometimes too readily) to be the pagan atmosphere of the homes in which they spend the holidays. And they are genuinely convinced—of that we may be sure—that Christianity means much more to the average boy at a Public School than it would if he attended the Secondary school near his home.

But this attitude needs the closest scrutiny. Most critics of 'Public School religion' concentrate the vigour (sometimes the venom) of their attacks on compulsory chapel. This I am not myself going to attack at all. First, because even when the services were longer and duller than they are now they had a very real value: for a few minutes daily they withdrew the boy from the crude clamour of communal life into a quiet place where, if he so desired, he could worship God, and, if he did not so desire, could still think thoughts more likely to be profitable than those he thought anywhere else. Apart from this, he heard some of the finest literature in the world not too badly read. And, finally, most boys like singing and there are worse things to sing than psalms and hymns. In the second place, I believe the theory that boys who go to daily school chapel never enter a place of worship again for the rest of their lives to be sheer nonsense: any Oxbridge

[1] *The Times*, 16 September 1943.

[2] In the main, these paragraphs refer to 'C. of E.' schools. Roman Catholic schools are definitely excluded from them.

chaplain will testify that boys from boarding-schools are quite as constant in their religious duties as boys from day-schools. And, thirdly, there is no essential difference between compulsory chapel at boarding-schools and compulsory prayers at day-schools, and all day-schools have, or are in future to have, that. What difference there is between the two, in fact, favours the boarding-school, since 'prayers', if somewhat shorter than 'chapel', are also very much less inspiring.

The root of the matter lies much deeper. From a fairly wide acquaintance with headmasters I should say that most of them do most certainly look upon their profession as a Christian vocation, but it must be seriously doubted if this can be said of the majority of their staffs. Public School masters of my acquaintance tell me that, beyond perfunctorily attending chapel, a large proportion of their colleagues make no profession whatever of Christianity; that Scripture is a 'form subject', often taught by men who hardly trouble to conceal their disbelief in it; and that confirmation classes are conducted largely on an ethical basis ('Oh, I just tell them to buck up!' to quote the housemaster in a well-known book by A. C. Benson) supported by a bare minimum of doctrine. Boys, being the sharpest creatures on earth, will hardly fail to draw their own conclusions from all this; and, as between their fathers, who profess no religion, and their form-masters, who go to chapel as they might to a roll-call, but make no show of hiding their indifference to what it stands for, will prefer the first as being more honest than the second.

An equally serious flaw in Public School education is the type of Christianity which it encourages, and for which, to a large extent, it stands. Except in a few schools, such as those of the Woodard Foundation and one or two well-known 'Evangelical' institutions, the boy learns extremely little of Christian doctrine. He comes to regard religion as a moral code, which, as any objective reading of the New Testament will show, is only one part of it. Public School sermons are too often slightly emotional 'pep-talks', just as Public School Scripture classes are rather a dull form of history lesson. As a result, even the boy who has extracted from the Public School atmosphere all that the six headmasters already quoted would wish him to has very little idea of the reasons that lie behind his religion and is unable to make an effective reply to the most elementary questions put to him by the unbeliever.

That is the reverse side of the headmasters' attractive medal and anyone who has come into contact with ex-Public-School boys in the mass (not merely with the few who eventually become clergymen) knows how depressing it is. But with respect to each of these three groups of Public School claims we shall have also to ask how far, if

at all, it could be made for the day Secondary school; for clearly those who make it are doing so in order to assert the superiority of the one type of education over the other.

There is no doubt whatever that the headmasters of a large proportion of Secondary schools 'look upon their profession as a Christian vocation'—and in girls' schools the level of religious education and influence is, I think, higher than in boys'. Scripture teaching appears to be no worse in the Secondary day school than in the Public boarding-school, though in both types there is great need for reform. The view may even be hazarded that, from the purely religious standpoint, contrasted with the emotional and the sentimental, 'prayers' may mean as much to the boy as 'chapel'. The substantial pull of the boarding-school over the day-school is that the former has the boy seven days a week, for the whole fifteen-or-so waking hours of each day, and the latter five days a week, for about five and a half.

Now whether this is an advantage at all must depend entirely on the boy's home, and, no statistics as to Christianity in the home being available, one can argue only from impressions. My own impression is that, in the upper and upper-middle classes from which the Public Schools at present draw, the boy imbibes more Christianity, imperfect though it be, at school than he would at home. How far the holiday influence of the pagan home neutralizes that of the school it is hard to say. But, until England becomes as Christian a country in fact as it is in name, the Public Schools must be acknowledged, with the reservations already laid down, to have made good their claim. However sound the religious teaching of the day-school, and however beneficent its influence, it can do little against the atmosphere of a pagan home. The most that can be said—and it requires to be said very forcibly—is that the religious life of a boy or girl who is a definite and professing Christian, or comes from a Christian home, will be more likely to flourish and develop in the atmosphere of church and Sunday School than in that of the boarding-school. It is more natural and healthy that a boy should go to church with his father and mother, of his own free will, or even at his parents' wish, than to 'chapel', by compulsion, with a pack of his room-mates. It is more beneficial for him to be prepared for confirmation by a clergyman trained for such work than by an untrained layman. It is more salutary that he should acquire all that varied and variously derived knowledge which may be summarized as 'applied Christianity' from his father than from any man *in loco parentis*. Given a cultured and a Christian home, in fact, the 'religious' case for the Public Schools vanishes.

2. *Moral.* Here the claims for the Public School fall into two classes:

a general claim, that, to quote the six headmasters again, Public boarding-schools inculcate 'service, responsibility, integrity and discipline, and a particular claim, that they produce the nation's leaders.

(i) No-one speaking from knowledge would dispute that boarding-schools can, and often do, inculcate these virtues. So can, and so do, day-schools, especially where games are well organized and playing-fields are on the premises. But once more the boarding-school wins, simply because these lessons go on, as it were, from seven in the morning till ten at night, instead of from nine till half-past twelve and from two to four. But against this have to be set two grave disadvantages: the one of a positive kind, the other negative.

First, the Public boarding-school inculcates certain ideas and habits which are highly undesirable. One is that might is right: you can do things as a prefect which you can't in the Fourth Form—and things which, by any ethical standard, are as reprehensible in the big boy as in the small one. Another is that lying, cheating, stealing are not, in an absolute sense, sins, but merely things which in certain circumstances are 'not done', yet may perfectly well be 'done' in others. They are, as Dr. F. H. Spencer so admirably puts it, 'canalized'. 'The permissible forms of lying, the sanctioned varieties of picking and stealing, are pretty carefully defined. The public school boy must navigate his barge of peccadillo well in the middle of the established canal or he will taste calamity.'[1] Another is the worship of convention, and the stigmatizing of unconventionality and eccentricity as the first in importance of the deadly sins. It is far worse, according to the Public School code, to wear your trousers turned up when custom says they should be turned down than to neglect your work, to fail to confess a misdemeanour, or to intimidate a boy younger or weaker than yourself. Men who in the most impressionable years of boyhood have been brought up to accept so false a scale of values will often show its deleterious effects upon their character throughout their lives.

Then there is the question of morality in the narrower sense, which expresses itself least harmfully in the use of obscene and blasphemous language. It is difficult to write about this without seeming priggish and the last thing I should do would be to give a matter which in itself is often quite superficial undue importance. But no-one could deny that it has a certain influence upon character and to its ubiquity every Public School boy can, if he likes, bear witness. Why this particular form of self-expression results from the herding together of boys in conditions which after all are quite civilized I leave it to psychologists to explain. But there it is: never heard in public but rampant in house-room, playing-field and dormitory. Its prevalence is denied

[1] Spencer, p. 17.

strenuously (that is part of the Public School code) to outsiders, admitted only cautiously (that is how the Public School boy compromises with his conscience) by a prefect to a headmaster, but taken for granted among boys themselves. Some years ago a novel on Public School life appeared which laid a good deal of lurid stress on Public School language, and, without going so far as to reproduce actual boy-to-boy conversations, gave a pretty accurate indication of what they were like. At one of the smaller Public Schools the Headmaster (who had himself been educated at a large day-school) was greatly perturbed by this; so, convoking his monitors, he read them passages from the book and asked them point-blank: 'Does that sort of thing go on here?'

'Oh, no, sir,' was the all but unanimous reply. 'It's a completely false picture—quite fantastic.'

All but unanimous, I said, advisedly, because there was one monitor who, it is to be feared, was lacking in the Public School spirit—at any rate, he had not subscribed to the conventional code of truthfulness.

'Excuse me, sir,' he said, 'but it's all perfectly true.'

He went on to tell the disconcerted Headmaster that for the first few days of a term very little bad language would be heard; that then, as the atmosphere of home fell away, it began to reappear; and that, as term wore on, and boys got on each other's nerves, it reached such a pitch that to a sensitive person it frequently became intolerable. He believed that very many boys loathed it and would be glad if it were made as punishable an offence as being late for a game. But he added that he did not believe this would ever happen: the thing was a tradition and Public School tradition was sacrosanct.

Much worse than this is sexual vice, which, again, I should not wish to single out as being worse than any other vice, but which happens to be more characteristic of the boarding-school than of the day-school, and, with many boys, takes a more repulsive, because more unnatural, form. This is no question of Public School tradition, but a sterner one of physiological inevitability.' Enlightened opinion in schools may one day stamp out all forms of lying, swearing and bullying; but, while masses of boys are segregated for long periods during puberty and after, the results, though mitigable by various devices, can never be wholly avoided. It would be interesting to hear the candid views of the six headmasters upon this. The usual policy of those who defend boarding-school life is to say as little about it as possible, and sometimes to imply that it belonged to the last generation and is now dying out. I do not think that this is so. It was rife in my generation, and in my father's; it goes on in my son's and I see no reason to hope that it will be unknown to my grandson. The astonish-

ing thing is how many fathers and mothers will allow their sons to go to school without giving them the slightest hint as to what they may encounter, though they would shudder at the idea of exposing them to similar temptations in other milieux. A University colleague of mine, who had formerly been a Public School master, was asked by the vicar of the parish in which we both live if he thought it would be 'safe' for him to send his son, a Public School boy of eighteen, to study for a year in Paris.

'My dear sir,' was his reply, 'your son is unlikely to meet anything like the temptations in Paris that he met in the school where he has been passing the most difficult years of his life.'

He might have added that, even if the boy did meet comparable temptations, he would be less likely to yield to them; for there they would come to him with the deterrent of unfamiliarity, and in surroundings which provided numerous harmless counter-attractions, whereas at school they came accompanied by all the insidiousness of mass-suggestion and offered a welcome relief from sheer boredom. What pathetic eloquence there is in the plea of the boy whose first downward steps were taken on Sunday afternoons because, as he said, 'there was nothing else to do'.

Those are some of the unadvertised products of a Public School education; but it is also responsible for omissions, which a day-school-and-home education will supply. The boarding-school will train a boy to be reticent, smoothly spoken, and modest, even deprecatory, about his own qualities or achievements. But it will also incline him to refrain from making open and determined protest against something which he knows to be wrong—not in the least because he lacks the courage to do so, but because he fears committing the greater sin of being thought to be drawing attention to himself unnecessarily. The boarding-school will teach him, most effectively, and perhaps painfully, not to stick on side before his fellows, but home life is needed to teach him consideration for a weaker or younger brother or sister. Life among boys will show him how to behave among boys but not among girls. He will not learn in the house-room to shut doors quietly, to suffer fools gladly, to modulate his voice when there is sickness in the house, to get up early and make his tired and hard-worked mother a cup of tea. The Public School boy is well-mannered and nicely spoken, but he tends to be self-centred and intolerant. The football field will instruct him in the science of co-operation but not in the art of helpfulness: he learns there to pick himself up after a tumble but not to give up some amusement in order to do a job of work in the house. Yes, the Public Schools can produce virtues—but not, by a long way, all of them.

(ii) So much for the general claim to give a superior training in character. What of the particular claim to train for leadership? The theory that the nation's leaders come from the Public Schools ought by this time to be pretty well exploded. The Fleming Report quotes from tables drawn up by the Workers' Educational Association and showing 'that, in 1939, out of 830 Bishops, Deans, Judges and Stipendiary Magistrates, highly paid Home Civil Servants, India Civil Servants, Governors of Dominions, Directors of Banks and Railway Companies, 636, or about 76 per cent, were drawn from the Public Schools, and of these 394 (or about 47·5 per cent of the total) from twelve of the more important Public Schools—a result which is approximately the same as was worked out by Professor R. H. Tawney twelve years earlier'.[1] I cannot think that this proves very much. Leaving aside the question of exactly what types of post were included, and what were not included—a factor which would obviously affect the figures—one may first remark that a large proportion of the persons who obtained these posts would have obtained them in any case if they had attended Municipal Secondary Schools—some through influence, some through exceptional ability (which, wherever its possessor has been educated, generally comes to the top) and some because the education at such a school would have been as good as, or better than, the education at the Public School to which they actually went. But my principal criticism of the statistics is that, while the posts referred to are no doubt 'highly paid' posts, and most of them are 'posts of power and responsibility', those who hold them are by no means the nation's leaders. Many a Nonconformist minister is much more of a leader than many an Anglican Dean. Many Company Directors are figureheads; many Civil Servants are automata. No, if we want to find out where the nation's real leaders come from, let us form a representative committee to agree upon a list of from a hundred to a thousand people acknowledged to be outstanding in our national life—Ministers of the Crown, heads of all religious denominations, editors of our greatest newspapers, headmasters of our greatest schools, senior officers in the Forces, writers of unusual merit who command large publics, and so on. The list of the places where these were educated would make highly diversified reading.

Further, the Fleming Report goes on to give figures, supplied by the Civil Service Commissioners, which show 'signs of gradual change'.

'In the examinations for the Administrative Class of the Home Civil Service, between 1925 and 1937, there was a decrease of about 13 per cent, as compared with the period 1904 to 1914, in the proportion of

[1] F.R., par. 145, p. 54.

successful candidates who had been previously educated in Public Schools.' Although, too, even in the later period, about three-fifths of the candidates had been at schools which come under this heading, the Fleming Committee points out that the term 'includes a number of well-known and successful Direct Grant Day Schools and a number of important Scottish Day Schools' and that 'in both the earlier and the later periods mentioned there was a majority of successful candidates from Day Schools as compared with Boarding Schools.'[1]

This evidence throws a new light upon the situation and makes it clear that we have already to a great extent emerged, and shall emerge farther yet, from the deplorable *ancien régime* in which everybody who was anybody at all had been to one of the schools in an extremely small and select group. That was bound to happen while there was a governing class which had been exclusively educated within this exclusive circle and from this class our leaders were almost exclusively selected. But that state of things was a testimony, not so much to the quality of Public School education as to the unanimity with which everybody who wanted his son to be anybody subjected him to it. The position developed quite naturally. England, at a point in her history when she was rapidly growing in prosperity, needed a large number of leaders. Practically all the men who had inherited the tradition of leadership had, for historical reasons which have often been set out with some fulness, been educated at the Public Schools. They could therefore not do otherwise than come to the front. But since then more has happened. Prosperity has brought higher standards of living, including a better education for all: this has developed the *ability* of exceptional men from the working classes to lead. Contemporaneously with this development has grown up the modern Labour movement; and this has developed their *desire* to lead. This ability and this desire have jointly gone a long way towards overcoming vested interest and tradition; and, of the nation's real leaders to-day (excluding highly placed and highly paid nonentities), probably as many have been through the Elementary school as have been to Eton.[2]

Not long ago there appeared in the Press some striking testimony from an ex-officer who for more than two years in the War of 1914–18 commanded a body of never less than 200 youths from both Public and Grant-aided Secondary Schools. The system of training involved a constant selection of leaders.

[1] F.R., par. 146, p. 54.

[2] Dr. Spencer (pp. 18–23) has collected some interesting evidence on this question.

'The selected lads quite definitely needed personality. Much depended on them for the discipline and spirit of the whole unit. They were given serious responsibilities. They had, in brief, to have all the qualities which are demanded in the now much quoted term "leader". Did the residential public school boy show any distinctive qualities that placed him above the fellow who had gone to the day school and returned to his home at night?

'The answer to this, from actual experience, is that whether the boy had had a residential school education . . . or came from a day school . . . had nothing to do with his selection for the posts of responsibility described above. He was made a sergeant and became the trusted subordinate of the commanding officer and his permanent staff of N.C.O.s not because of the kind of school from which he happened to have come but because of qualities which, when he arrived, lay mostly dormant but which, sometimes speedily, sometimes fairly slowly, were seen to develop in him. . . .

'The residential school boys had good manners; they were, as a rule, courteous and without bashfulness; they spoke well and fell easily and readily into the prescribed routine. But these were not the attributes for which one looked. If, of themselves, and not by reason of the school from which they came, they merited promotion to responsibility and command over their fellows, they got it. But, so far as character and leadership are concerned, nothing in the experience of the writer would go to suggest that there is any particular magic in the residential school.'[1]

In the world of the future, more democratic as it is bound to be than the world of the past, we may be certain that a much larger proportion still of our leaders will come from the masses. For character has very little relation to birth and none at all to the means of one's parents; and it is developed, not created, by education. Now that rich and poor are to have more nearly equal chances, until we achieve the absolute equality which must be our goal, there is every reason to believe that our day-schools will be able increasingly to prove that they can compete successfully with the boarding-schools in every form of moral training.

3. *Intellectual.* Under this head the Public School has a weaker case than under either of the others. In fact, all that the six headmasters ventured to claim here was that 'classes are small enough to allow of some individual attention and understanding, instead of mere mass instruction'. If this was meant to imply a sharp contrast with Aided or Maintained day-schools, it is quite misleading. The proportion of

[1] T.E.S., 27 November 1943.

staff to pupils is probably larger in most boarding-schools than in most day-schools (in a few wealthy schools considerably larger); and this it must be, since boarding-school masters have duties which day-school masters do not. But the difference is not normally very considerable. Opening the most recently published copy available (1942) of the *Public Schools Year Book*, I find that the proportions in three schools, chosen entirely at random, are 11 to 150, 24 to 370 and 21 to 390—an average of 1 to 16. In the Secondary school nearest to my own home I am told that the proportion is 12 to 280, or 1 to 23. In language sets (generally smaller than forms), and in most Sixth Form groups (for boys leave Drabtown earlier than Harchester), there is practically nothing to choose between the two types. Here, then, the six headmasters appear to have been talking through their respective mortar-boards.

Then, again, any advantage that may be gained by the exclusive boarding-school through smaller classes is much more than offset by the unfashionableness of hard work and the excessive stress laid upon success in athletics. What is true of Oxbridge and Redbrick here is even truer of Harchester and Drabtown. For at Harchester—especially at some Harchesters—only a few scholarship-hunters work really hard and only a few eccentric masters trouble to keep in touch with the latest developments in their special subjects or in the technique of teaching. Among both boys and masters—again excluding an exceptional few—enthusiasm for work, or intense application to it, is as bad form as rounding on a boy who has committed some misdemeanour. It is probable that things have grown better in this respect in the last decade or two over the country as a whole, but only because in examination and scholarship results Harchester is being challenged by Drabtown. It is still true that the average Drabtown boy works much harder than the average boy at Harchester. Many a keen man coming straight to the Harchester staff from the University has striven bravely for years against the prevailing cynicism and indifference and ended by resigning himself to the easier way and becoming a disillusioned spoon-feeder or games-worshipper like the rest.

If an attempt to claim intellectual superiority for the Public Schools be based upon the much larger proportion of Oxbridge scholarships which they gain than the Secondary day-schools, the answer is that they still draw the boys with the best brains and the most cultured antecedents and can also afford to buy the services of the ablest masters. The leading citizens of most large towns would never dream of sending their boys to the local Secondary schools: they must all go to one place or another in the small group of exclusive boarding-schools. So these schools get the cream of English youth and the

Sixth Form at Harchester will be composed of boys who have travelled, whose parents are well-read, who in the holidays mix with knowledgeable people and who from childhood have been encouraged to spread the net of their interests very wide. Even those who are indifferent and lazy will often make a better showing than industrious boys from poorer schools who are completely devoid of the advantages of cultured surroundings and inheritance.

The only sense in which education at the boarding-school is better than at the day-school is that the former is able not only to profit by these advantages, but also to enhance them. Because Harchester pays larger salaries and offers greater amenities than Drabtown Secondary, it attracts a more cultured and often a more intellectual type of master and provides him with a comfortable sitting-room which he can furnish with easy-chairs and a piano and line with books from floor to ceiling. While the tastes of many of these men are frankly unintellectual, and their walls are lined, not with books, but with sporting prints, a considerable minority are bookish, well informed and eager to kindle interest and impart knowledge, and some, while disillusioned as to their work with the many, find consolation and stimulus in striking sparks from the few. In this way it may truly be said that education at Harchester is broader and more comprehensive than at Drabtown. On the other hand, if the Drabtown boy happens to have a cultured home, he is equally well off; while, even if he has not, he may be fortunate enough to have a master, or perhaps some clergyman or minister, who will educate him out of school with equal ardour. He has also the run of the local public library, and he is freer to develop his hobbies, to go to concerts, to visit the local museum and to attend Extension lectures. Even at its strongest, then, the claim of the Public School to intellectual superiority is not so strong as it looks, while in other respects it amounts to nothing. Were the Harchesters of this country to be attended only by boys who live within fifty miles of them, and all the boys who go there from London, Birmingham, Manchester and elsewhere to be educated at the Secondary schools in their localities, the intellectual standards would soon show a decline. Incidentally, Redbrick would also gain at the expense of Oxbridge.

III

Summing up, then, we find that, on its three self-chosen grounds, the advantages of the boarding-school over the day-school are considerably less substantial than is generally believed. But there are still some further grounds on which it claims superiority.

The chief of them is undeniable: it is even not sufficiently stressed by those whose case it favours. It is a sound principle to live, when you can, near to your daily work, for nothing is more wearing than a long daily journey, in all weathers, by train, bus or tram, before ever your work begins. If you are a growing boy or girl, the principle is sounder still; and, if your work is in a healthy, open place, soundest of all. Public boarding-schools are nearly always situated in healthy surroundings, often on high ground and in the country. Their playing-fields are close at hand, so that no time is wasted, either on daily journeys from home to school and back or in periodical journeys to and from cricket and football: the time saved is spent on games, which can be played, not once or twice a week, but daily. To my mind, this is the strongest of all arguments for the boarding-school: it goes to the root of the matter; it is fundamental. True, some day-schools are situated in pleasant suburbs with their grounds around them; but what they gain in the accessibility of games is offset, for all pupils whose homes are on the other side of the town, by the increased length of the daily journey. This means that many are unable to stay for games played after school hours; and, if Saturday is a whole holiday, they can play only by making six double journeys a week instead of five. Contrast the boarding-school, which can arrange its hours so that in winter the whole of the early afternoon is freed for exercise and afternoon school can begin when it grows dark. Even if we hold that the importance of games in school life has been exaggerated, as perhaps it has, the advantage still lies with the boarding-school, and this is the one advantage which, except in quite small towns where no-one lives far away, it will always possess.

A number of related advantages come to mind also. Though some of the dark old classrooms and unscientifically built desks of the ancient Public School would shock the educational expert, there is a spaciousness about it which cannot fail to have a beneficial effect upon the rapidly developing and highly suggestible adolescent. To be able to stroll for a few minutes over fields and among trees instead of through smoke-begrimed parks and dingy streets; to be free to browse for hours in a large library instead of consulting a catalogue and handing in a ticket; to have extensive fives or tennis courts and a large swimming-bath and gymnasium: these are things which penetrate deeply into the mind and the soul, though it may be imperceptibly.

'A boy may not be consciously responsive to the influence of open spaces, a beautiful countryside, nature untouched and unspoiled by man, but almost invariably there is a response. The enlargement of

visible horizons tends under suitable conditions and treatment to an enlargement of mental horizons. . . . The man who learns in childhood how to make use of the countryside, how to get into touch with the ultimate source of his physical being, has for the rest of his life a rich and unfailing reservoir of refreshment and satisfaction. Even if he takes no active part in it himself life has a richer meaning for the boy who has watched the soil broken, and the corn growing, ripening, falling before the harvester, and has heard the hum of the threshing machine in the still dusk of autumn evenings; and a milk cart with its jingling bottles is a poor substitute for a herd of cows.'[1]

Then there is the accessibility of boarding-school masters. At day-schools, except when 'on duty', they tend to disappear as soon as school is over, and no more is seen of them until the next day. This is not meant disparagingly: it is a perfectly natural thing for them to do. Many masters and mistresses in day-schools give willing help in out-of-school activities at great inconvenience to themselves. 'There are masters and mistresses in some Day Schools whose teaching and pastoral duties occupy the greater part of their waking hours from beginning to end of term, as well as much time in the holidays.'[2] And for this they deserve more credit than many of their colleagues in boarding-schools, who from the beginning to the end of term are comfortably ensconced only a few minutes' walk, if so far as that, from their duties. What we are considering at the moment, however, is not the merits of the teacher but the advantages of the pupil, and here again, with masters always available and sharing in the life of the community, the boarding-school wins every time.

Next comes the training which the boarding-school gives in community life and the nature of which the Fleming Report admirably summarizes:

'[It] enables the boys and girls to work in and for a society composed of very different types, to sacrifice their personal wishes to the general good, to find their place in the community and to be ready, if called upon, to take responsibility. . . . A boy or girl begins by being a nobody but still having a place in the community, and gradually grows in importance and usefulness, learning lessons of public spirit and habits of unselfishness in the give and take of the community life, acquiring self-reliance and confidence, learning unconsciously to give or obey orders without giving or taking offence, to work with people of all kinds, whether congenial or not, and by degrees to

[1] E. H. Partridge, *Freedom in Education*, London, 1943, pp. 18–19.
[2] F.R., par. 129, p. 48.

become fit for the responsibilities which a member of a community may have to discharge, whether holding office or not.'[1]

By no means every boarding-school teaches all those lessons to all its pupils and some of them can be learned equally well in a good day-school. None the less, it remains true that, as a general rule, they are better learned by a boy or girl at a boarding-school than anywhere else; and, now that the large family—the ideal community—is so rarely found, this opportunity of learning them becomes the more valuable.

All these advantages may be freely conceded, but one must also ask if the price paid for them is not too high. The masters are always accessible—but how frayed their tempers grow, and how tired they become of each other, with corresponding repercussions on the boys, before the term is two-thirds over! The boys always have company—but they also have far too much company; and lack of opportunity for solitude, amounting in some schools to an all but complete lack of privacy, has warped the life of many a sensitive and thoughtful boy, sometimes without his realizing it. There is community discipline—no 'spoilt boys' exist in boarding-schools; but cowed and terrorized boys exist, and frustrated boys, and boys whose natural development is irremediably repressed. To have open air in abundance is poor compensation for being cut off from a natural life for three-quarters of the year—and that is the really fundamental argument against the boarding-school, which can no more be disposed of than the fundamental argument, already enunciated, in its favour. The natural way for a boy to grow up is in his own family, with father and mother, brothers and sisters, nursery and garden. He should have contacts with women and girls as well as with men and boys. He should mix with people of different social classes, different backgrounds and different tastes. He should have opportunity and encouragement to develop his own tastes freely. He should play his part in the school world, but also in the home world, in the world of his own freely chosen associations and in the world of whatever religious denomination he may join.

This is a natural and a healthy life: any kind of boarding-school life, by comparison with it, is artificial. There may be a minority of boys for whom it is better—those, for example, of certain antecedents or temperaments, orphans, only children, those with no home or whose parents live abroad or in the depths of the country. But the average boy does not, and cannot, gain by being uprooted, for three-quarters of the year, and over a period of from five to ten years, from

[1] F.R., par. 123, p. 47.

his native soil. During this time he hardly sees, still less speaks to, anyone of the other sex, other than the matron and the wife of his housemaster, who can hardly be described as sufficient or suitable feminine company for a growing boy. When not in school or on the playing-field, he is dumped with some twenty of his fellows in a room large enough, under normal social conditions, for half a dozen. He has little opportunity—in some schools, none—to develop his tastes and practise his hobbies. Only to a very limited extent, and from a very limited circle, can he choose his own companions. Such an existence, carried on for long stretches of time and interspersed with periods of a more normal life too short to allow the making of contacts outside the family, could be described only by the hopelessly prejudiced as beneficial.

Contrast the natural life of the home community, which, like the artificial life of the boarding-school community, may be described in the language of the Fleming Committee's Report.

First, 'the home, being a natural community with a place and function in local society, can often supplement the influence of school. . . . Day School pupils are more in the company of their parents. . . . They often learn something of the different kinds of skill and knowledge connected with their fathers' trades and professions. . . . They feel the impact of government, local and national, on their own and their parents' lives and so are introduced in the most direct and natural way to some of the problems of citizenship which they will have to understand and help to solve when they grow up.'

'Secondly, co-operation between home and Day School is often very close and is promoted not only by Open Days and by Parents' Associations . . . but even more by the informal friendship of parents and teachers both in school and in the pupils' homes. . . .'

Thirdly, the 'interpenetration between the schools and the life of the local community cannot fail to give to Day School boys and girls, in addition to their natural pride in their own schools, a further sense of purpose and service comparable with that inspired by the wider connections and more widely known traditions of the famous Boarding Schools.'[1]

The defenders of boarding-school life will say that it works: that the boarding-school has made England what it is, even that Waterloo was won on the playing-fields of Eton; though if, as I suspect, Messrs. Dilly and Dally were educated at one of our ancient foundations, it may be that democracy and freedom came recently near to being lost

[1] F.R., pars. 116, 118, 119, pp. 45–6.

in a very similar place. The weakness of this empirical type of argument is its ignoring of the fact that the products rightly described as first-class are made of first-class material. Here is Ashley-Stephens, of Harchester, who distinguished himself in the War as a leader of men, obtained the D.S.O. with Bar and became a colonel at twenty-five. The Headmaster of Harchester claims this as a testimony to the efficacy of Harchester education in producing leaders, but has he not forgotten that Ashley-Stephens' father (not from Harchester) had an equally fine record in the War of 1914, and that both his grandfather and a great-uncle, plain unhyphened Stephenses, educated at a Board School, had served with distinction in the Boer War? What reason has he to suppose that the young man would not have displayed precisely the same qualities if he had been educated at Drabtown Secondary? And would he not, in addition, have exercised a far more beneficent influence at Drabtown Secondary than he did at Harchester?

If the Public Schools want to convince, not merely their own alumni, but the world, of their superiority they must argue from their average and sub-average boys, from boys of poor antecedents and of only moderate skill at either work or games. Can it be proved that Harchester makes more out of these than Drabtown would? Speaking from observation, I should say it makes less. My own recollection of such boys at a Public School is that they were maladjusted and often miserable. They acquired some of the superficial veneer and imbibed some of the conventional prejudices, which sometimes proved an asset to them in the world, and sometimes a liability. But deep down in their hearts they resented a system which had little use for them. In their houses they were passed over and dismissed as unprofitable, whereas in their homes they would have had much greater opportunity for development. And this empirical conclusion can, I think, be reinforced with argument. A boy of only moderate talent or of slow development needs an experience full of variety, so that he may attempt new activities and undergo many and diverse influences. The last thing that should be done is to force him into a mould and compel him to follow a set pattern of activity and conform to rigid standards of behaviour. At a boarding-school he will be compelled to play games (or sometimes, which is worse, to stand or sit for hours watching games) whenever he is not in classroom, dormitory or chapel. At home, he can pursue such activities as carpentering, gardening or the study of nature, of one of which he may make a greater success than of his school work. And, if his ambition is rather to succeed in the sphere of human relations, he can live as a boy among men and women of all types, and not merely among boys of

one type. Yes, the average boy pays a high price for the amenities and discipline of the Public School.

Why, then, ask the defenders of the Public School system triumphantly, do men of moderate means scrape and save—and often limit the size of their families—so that they may at all costs send their children to boarding-schools? One reason is the social distinction which a Public School education gives—and this is not as a rule attributable so much to snobbishness on the part of the people concerned as to a recognition of the snobbishness of the world in general and the determination to turn it to their own, or their children's, advantage. Another reason is the loyalty and affection which ancient foundations, with their traditions and their memories, can often inspire. Allied to this is the family tradition: many boys go to a certain boarding-school because their fathers did, and their fathers went there because in their day that type of school gave the best, if not the only good, education; it is natural enough that these boys, when they grow up, will want their sons to go there too. Another reason is the delusion that any well-known boarding-school will give a better education than a day-school. Another is a very understandable desire that the boy may continue his education without interruption and the father's fear that, if he himself should have to move about the country, his son would otherwise go from one school to another. Some parents, again, subscribe to the 'Lick him into shape and make a man of him' theory, regardless of their boys' temperament and ability. Others misdoubt their own powers of training children and prefer to entrust them to professionals. Others believe that the type of education which costs the most must necessarily be the best. And these are only a selection of reasons: no two parents ever seem to give the same, though all have plenty.

Despite these arguments, my conclusion about the relative merits of boarding-schools and day-schools is still that the boarding-school, while possessing certain substantial advantages, has been distinctly overrated. The average high-class boarding-school is less beneficial to the average boy than the average high-class day-school. While boarding-schools will always, for special types of boy, be desirable, and while many of the best of them will, it may be hoped, continue to flourish, it would be well if the children of the upper and upper-middle classes were, like those of the lower-middle and lower classes, educated at day-schools. In their homes they would live and develop more naturally; attendance at camps in the summer holidays would give them ample chances of gaining whatever virtues are implanted by the herd-life; there would be an end to the virtual segregation of the upper classes during adolescence; and the infiltration of the best

type of boy into the day-schools would help to level education. These seem to me much more solid advantages than the maintenance, largely for traditional reasons, of the *status quo*.

IV

So far, however, we have not touched the principal point at issue between those who attack the Public School system and those who defend it. The education they give, it is said, is so expensive as to be beyond the means of all but the comfortably off and the wealthy. This, continues the argument, not only amounts to segregating the children of the well-to-do from the rest of the nation's children (or about 2 per cent of the boys from the remaining 98 per cent) but also makes it impossible for children from the larger class, however able, to enjoy the best education. Is it to be tolerated, asks one of the most noteworthy of them, Professor R. H. Tawney, 'that a small group of relatively well-to-do families shall be entitled, in virtue of their incomes, to monopolize the use of one group of educational institutions and that the authorities controlling them shall be under no obligation to consider, in planning their arrangements, the needs of the majority who are differently circumstanced'?[1]

Now I do not myself attach as much importance to this aspect of the Public School problem as to those discussed above. To begin with, I agree with Dr. Spencer that 'the agitation against the public schools is not of proletarian origin. . . . The public school question does not pass spontaneously the threshold of "working-class" consciousness. . . . The proletarians . . . don't bother about public schools.'[2] I have talked to a good many brilliant Redbrick men, who have resented their parents' inability to send them to Oxford or Cambridge. But I have never heard one of them confess to the slightest regret at not having gone to Eton. I have often heard men educated at the small, rather struggling Public School wish they could have gone to one of the great foundations. But I have never heard an ex-day-school boy wish he could have gone to a boarding-school. Even less do their fathers and mothers wish it.

Indeed, if the whole of Drabtown Secondary were given the choice of finishing their education at Eton, free of cost, I doubt if many of them would want to go, or if many of their fathers and mothers would be gratified at the results when the boys came home for the holidays. They would dislike their new, refined accents, their slightly

[1] R. H. Tawney, *The Problem of the Public Schools*, London, n.d. (1943), pp. 31–2. [2] Spencer, pp. 28–9.

affected vocabularies, their insistence upon what would seem to them (the parents) senseless trivialities, their talk about aristocratic and wealthy companions—for it is not only the upper classes that are class-conscious. What the parent who summons the Primary-school headmaster for raising three weals on his son's body with the cane would think of the son's description of a prefect's flogging passes the imagination. The whole principle of prefectorial government, in the Public School sense, would take a generation to win acceptance by the proletariat.

'Yes, but' (the critics will retort) 'even if not a single Drabtown boy accepted the offer of an Eton education, it ought to be open to him, provided he had the ability to profit by it.' Now that is where I differ both from the critics of the system and also from a good many of its defenders. My contention is that every boy and girl should have the right to as good an education as he or she can assimilate—but not necessarily to an education at one of the exclusive boarding-schools. Since, as I hold, a first-class education can be obtained at a day-school—and I firmly believe that Dulwich College or Manchester Grammar School is as good in this respect as Harchester, if not better —the brilliant boy should have a place in a school of this type if he lives near enough to one to attend it. If not, let him go as a boarder to that same type of school, which has as good a claim as Redbrick to residential hostels, or else to a genuine, but not luxurious, boarding-school, according to his temperament, his kind of ability and his parents' wishes.

To put it in another way, a brilliant or an industrious boy has a right to the best of conditions for his work, to tuition by the most highly qualified and technically skilled masters, to contact with minds which will stimulate and enlighten his own. He has the right to hygienic conditions in which to work, to a well-stocked library, to playing-fields for recreation and to the education which team-games give. But he has not the right to a large amount of pocket-money, to the companionship of boys with more money than he can ever have, to historic buildings, immemorial elms, storied windows richly dight, and all the rest of it. Those are the luxuries of life. In themselves they do little for us: we can get what is of permanent value in them elsewhere. They can be bought with money; and, like most things that can be bought with money, they are of secondary importance to a good many things that cannot.

I want the man with wide interests and an inquiring mind to have the means to travel, but not necessarily to travel first-class. I want the man with an empty stomach to have a meal, but not necessarily a *table d'hôte* dinner at Claridge's. I want the book-lover to be able to

buy books; but I would as soon he read his classics in 'Everyman' as in calf-bound, gilt-edged presentation copies or in first editions. On the same principle, I want the boy who is industrious and capable to have the education which is best in itself and best suited to his particular needs. But where, I do not mind in the least, so long as he gets it.

'In the world of to-day,' wrote the Headmaster of Ardingly recently, 'it is not feasible that the social standard of all schools should be the same. But that does not matter. If a man travels, say, from London to Exeter, he will get to his destination just as quickly, and in most cases almost as comfortably, whether he travels first- or third-class. And it is where the public schools land a boy which matters, not the exact nature of the accommodation provided on the journey.'[1]

That is how I should put the matter myself to the boy, or the parent; and I believe that, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, both the boy and the parent will agree with me.

[1] *The Times*, 4 March 1944.

Chapter Nine

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL PROBLEM (II) SOME SOLUTIONS

We now come to the most vital matter in this survey of the Public School problem. To what extent, and in what ways, is the system to be reformed?

I

Is it practicable, in the first place, for fees to be reduced so that Public School education can be made available to a very much larger circle than at present? If it is not, it would seem, on the face of it, as if many of the smaller Public Schools will have either to seek State aid or to close. Whether it is practicable or not, only those who have the facts and figures can say: the veil is too seldom lifted from these to make public discussion possible. The Headmasters' Conference, in a recent report, declared that 'what kept the fees high was not expensive standards of living but, most of all, the scale of salaries paid to the teachers and the number of teachers employed in each school.'[1] The salary scales at an independent boarding-school 'might range as much as 40 per cent above the Burnham scale'—but that does not take us very far. For at the comparatively exclusive County School nearest my home in the country the annual tuition fees are £15, whereas those at Winchester (before the War) were £85, at Harrow £75 to £90, at Rugby, £112: that is not 40 per cent higher, but over 400. Or contrast the pre-war cost of living, for about 36 weeks, at Winchester (£115), Harrow (£120 to £150), Cheltenham (£100 to £120) or Wellington (£100 to £135) with the cost of keeping a boy at home. Again, that is a great deal more than 40 per cent—and it costs proportionately much less to feed a large family than a small one.

The higher costs are, of course, partly due to the fact that these schools receive little or no aid from public funds—and there seems little doubt, as I have said, that more of such aid will have to be sought if some of these schools are to survive. But, before being able to judge if internal economies could be made, we should need to see a few Public School balance sheets—which we are never likely to. We should need to know the cost of keeping up large buildings, of maintaining a staff of gardeners, of providing entertainments, hospitality

[1] *The Times*, 14 September 1943.

and many other things of that nature. But most of all we should need to know the annual incomes made by masters with independent boarding-houses for conducting these somewhat expensive hotels—for the most part devoid of hotel comforts. And we observe that the report of the Headmasters' Conference just referred to, as it appears in *The Times*, coyly avoids mentioning the salary of the headmaster. This, too, is slightly more than 40 per cent above that of the day-school headmaster. At Harchester, as a matter of fact, there are 400 boys and the Headmaster's salary is £2,500 with a house free of rent, rates and taxes, and various other perquisites, including a substantial allowance for entertainment. At Drabtown Secondary, which also has 400 boys, the Headship was advertised last spring at £600 gross. There we have a difference of well over £2,000—say 450 per cent—which represents an increased annual cost of £5 per boy before we go any further. And incidentally, I wonder if the Headmaster of Harchester, a veteran of twenty years' standing, was worth so much more, when he went there, than the man of thirty-five who has just been appointed to Drabtown: a Redbrick graduate with First Class Honours in Mathematics and with thirteen years' experience in three types of school, including the senior post in a well-known Grammar School in the Midlands.

There we must leave the question of expense, and come to consider the reforms of the Public Schools which various critics have suggested. We shall take two of these, which are strongly contrasted, and I shall then venture to suggest a third, involving a somewhat different policy from that of either, before coming to the proposals of the Report of the Fleming Committee.

1. Professor Tawney, who has constructive as well as sometimes rather shattering comments to offer, is nothing if not thoroughgoing. He first makes the demand, which we have already approved, that all schools should be required to undergo Government inspection, adding that their continued existence should depend upon their holding a certificate from the Ministry of Education, 'to be granted, in the case of local schools, after consultation with the Local Education Authority'.[1] He would then have a Government investigation to determine

'(*a*) how many boarding-schools it is expedient to maintain in existence, (*b*) what schools are to be included in that number, (*c*) what special functions such schools are to perform.'

[1] The quotations from Professor Tawney's pamphlet will be found on pp. 25, 26, 28, 29 and 31.

The policy which he thinks should be adopted as regards the boarding-schools is their conversion, as far as may be possible, into day-schools. Those situated in large towns can be converted outright; the remainder must be required to admit 'as large a proportion of day-boys as local circumstances allow'. Some boarders, in even the former class, would be allowed, but the policy recommended would be 'to substitute day-schools, with a minority of boarders, for boarding-schools, with a minority of day-boys'. The Governing Bodies of the Public Schools 'should be constituted in a manner to be laid down by the (Ministry), and should include a majority of governors consisting of representatives of Local Education Authorities nominated by national organizations, such as the Association of Education Committees and the County Councils Association, together with representatives of other social and educational interests appointed by the (Ministry)'. Finally, the financial arrangements of these schools, including, of course, boarding-house charges, should be under the Ministry's supervision.

Examining the suggestion, which we shall discuss in a moment, that 'the public schools should open their doors to a certain number of free place scholars from the elementary schools', he considers that this 'would be a useful beginning, but it provides no real solution'.

'The mere infiltration into public boarding-schools of a small minority of pupils from elementary and secondary schools would (be) of little value. Such boys should enter in substantial numbers or not enter at all. All places should be special places. Selection for admission should be made by committees representing, in addition to the boarding-schools concerned, the public teaching profession and the Local Education Authorities.'

With Professor Tawney's remarks on infiltration I am in substantial aggrement: from his other views I dissent. I hold that Harchester, like Oxbridge (I wonder what the Professor would like to do with Oxbridge!), has a useful function to perform, which on the whole it is fulfilling well, and, once it is faced with severer competition, will fulfil still better. I would check this belief by the findings of the Ministry of Education, and, if they confirm it, allow Harchester to go on its way. The idea that the Ministry should be given a free hand to compel schools which are doing good work to change their character I find repugnant. It is one thing to say to a school: 'Your teaching staff and your classroom space are adequate, but your boarding accommodation is not, and we therefore recommend that you take a larger proportion of day-boys'; and quite another to say: 'With neither your accommodation nor your boarding arrangements do we find any

fault at all, but you are situated in a large town and you must therefore send away the majority of your boarders, convert your superfluous dormitories into new blocks of classrooms, increase your teaching staff and admit five hundred more day-boys'. That is not reform, but tyranny. It might produce results in Nazi Germany, but it would produce only discontent and disruption here.

2. At the other end of the scale from near-abolition comes pure infiltration. With the mildest form of this Professor Tawney has dealt so faithfully that little more need be said of it. Whenever the Public School question springs up in the Press, some headmaster writes to say that his school has for long been admitting a proportion of Elementary-school boys and that this system works admirably. (That the proportion is about one per cent, or one-half of one per cent, is not added.) No-one can possibly tell, he asserts, which are the ex-Elementary-school boys, so perfect has been their assimilation. In fact, no-one thinks anything about it at all.

Last time the Press ventilated this subject, the correspondence was stimulated by a highly sentimental letter in *The Times* from a Labour M.P. named Mr. George Muff, who, with ten colleagues, had visited five leading Public Schools and found in them 'an utter absence of snobbery', 'no pampering', 'a fine simplicity of living'—most of the boys actually made their own beds!—and so on. It would be unkind to quote from the letter further, but its chief point seemed to be that the door to the Public School should be left 'at least ajar for the boy who has passed the entrance examination to the local grammar school, whose parents are ready for their boy to go to a boarding-school, and who is temperamentally suitable'.[1]

But this solution is no solution at all. First, if your ex-Elementary-school boy merely assimilates, the process does nothing to bring the social classes together: in fact, it may even cause strain when the boy returns to his environment—which will make the gulf between the classes still wider. Next, if the Secondary-school entry is to be creamed for the benefit of the Public Schools, it will be the Oxbridge-Redbrick story all over again:[2] Drabtown will become one degree poorer and the gulf between it and Harchester will be further widened. Thirdly, so small a transference as Mr. Muff apparently contemplates will do practically nothing to remedy the grievance of those who complain that the best education is open only to those with the means to buy it. Admit one per cent, or even ten per cent, of ex-Back-Street-Council-School boys to the historic precincts of Harchester and you are still faced with the fact that one-third, or one-half, of the ninety,

[1] *The Times*, 8 July 1943. [2] *Red Brick University*, pp. 33–7.

or ninety-nine, per cent are less able boys than a similar number who come in by bus every morning to the Municipal Secondary School built thirty years ago on a noisy site in Harchester High Street. It is merely money that has secured that percentage, whatever it may be, a place in the School on the Hill; it is merely lack of money that condemns the others to queue for the daily bus and to play games only once a week after queuing for another bus to take them two miles in the opposite direction.

The modest infiltration, then, announced with such pride by schools which fear that they may be reformed from without unless they reform themselves from within, may be discounted altogether. Any effective step that is to be taken must be a much longer one.

But as soon as any large proportion of ex-Elementary pupils are admitted to Public Schools there arise new difficulties. Not only are the Secondary schools deprived of still more boys of ability, their standards thereby being lowered and those of the Public Schools rising at their expense, but assimilation of the lower type to the higher becomes more and more difficult. Into *The Times* correspondence already mentioned a gust of realistic fresh air blew away some of the sentimentality engendered by Mr. Muff when a correspondent signing himself 'Education Officer' reported the views of a boy at a Public School to which ex-Elementary boys were admitted. 'We think,' said the boy, 'the "backyarders" are simply frightful.'[1]

That is precisely what the average Public School boy thinks, and always will think until there is one system of education in the country, and one only, at the lower stages. And for a Public School, under present conditions, to have thirty or forty per cent of its yearly entrants coming from Elementary schools is going to cause a schism within the school which can only do harm. Even if its traditions are strong enough to prevent open clashes (and they may not prove so indefinitely) there will be 'pockets of resistance' everywhere. Should so complete an intermingling be thought desirable, it must take place long before the age of thirteen at which boys normally enter Public Schools—at some point, in fact, not long after the age of Primary entry. And this innovation, in its turn, implies an extension of the State Primary school system to include a very large proportion, if not the whole, of the children of the country.

Questions also arise affecting the curriculum. The majority of Public School boys come from Preparatory Schools, which are not only stiff with amenities, and supervise every moment of the boy's time, but are wedded to a type of instruction expressly devised to fit into the Public School system. In the classes, which are small, the

[1] *The Times*, 12 July 1943.

ablest boys are fattened for scholarship purposes, and in Latin, and sometimes also in French, even the average standard reached is very high. The 'backyarders', on the other hand, have been taught in large classes, have studied neither Latin nor French, and have had to spend a good deal of time learning things which their more fortunate contemporaries absorb naturally at home. So long as only a few such boys, of exceptional ability, are admitted to a Public School, the deficiencies in their education can be dealt with by individual tuition: their own brilliance and industry will do the rest. But as soon as the numbers admitted become too large for that, a new problem arises, with which it would be difficult to deal except by methods of segregation; and these would postpone assimilation considerably.

It is only fair to say that a few schools of special types claim to have solved the problem. One of these is Christ's Hospital, whose Headmaster told the Fleming Committee 'that the mixture takes place very naturally, and that he could only remember half a dozen boys who would have done better if they had stayed at home or gone to a day school'.[1] This would presumably apply to the girls' school on the foundation also, and is very striking testimony, since the numbers involved are considerable: in 1943, no less than 179 pupils out of 1,300 on the roll had come from the Elementary schools of London. The fact that the schools on the Christ's Hospital Foundation have no fees and the identical uniform worn by the pupils no doubt helped to form this enviable tradition. Less surprising is it that at the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, 'scholars from the grant-aided schools mix successfully with those from private Preparatory schools' and that 'there are no social barriers and no tendency whatever to form groups or cliques;'[2] for here all the boys are united by the tie of the common profession which they are to enter. A special case of another kind is Rendcomb College, in Gloucestershire, where 'boys from Preparatory and Elementary Schools are admitted in about equal numbers'. 'Friendships', it is reported here, 'present no difficulty. Continuance of them during the holidays depends almost entirely on the attitude of the parents. Within the school there appears to be no "class-consciousness" at all. Problems have not arisen around the question of speech.' But this is a very small school, recently founded, and for both these reasons it can be easily moulded to a special pattern. Furthermore, as the Fleming Committee was informed, 'the buildings and the general life of the school are sufficiently different from the home environment of *all* the boys not to encourage comparisons'.[3]

[1] F.R., par. 142, p. 52.
[2] Op. cit., par. 142, p. 53.
[3] Op. cit., par. 142, pp. 52–3.

These exceptions apart, the experiment of infiltration on any substantial scale appears not yet to have been tried; and when, early in 1943, it became known that the Headmasters' Conference desired it to be tried, many who read the news felt that it was somehow permeated by an air of unreality. The proposals of the Conference were described in general terms, with characteristic urbanity, and not without a touch of fervour, by its then Chairman, Canon Spencer Leeson, Headmaster of Winchester. The Public Schools, he declared, 'should be made accessible to parents who would at present be unable to afford the expense'.[1] 'We shall be ready to enter into discussion with any person or body of persons interested, in order that misunderstandings may be removed; and we would earnestly press that this great question may be approached in a spirit free from prejudice or partisanship on either side.'[2] This was the proper spirit, but the proposals, though potentially drastic, were vague. In the following September they were somewhat clarified:

'What the Headmasters' Conference desire is: "First, an extension of boarding-school accommodation so that every parent who wishes to have a boarding-school education for his boy (and the boy is thought by those who know him best to be suitable for it) shall be able to have it. . . . Next, that the parents of these boys should pay what they can afford on the lines of the plan already applied by local education authorities and colleges at the universities in settling the value of their scholarships. Thirdly, that schools should make a contribution where they are able to do so, while the remainder of the cost should be met out of public funds."

'In some such way as this—the plans have already been worked out in several cases along these lines—the benefits of boarding-school education would be extended, and all taint of financial privilege would be removed. Nothing less than this will satisfy the nation and nothing less than this is right. . . . We believe that this is the wisest method of advance; it is not revolutionary; it builds on existing foundations and it provides for the extension and growth of a principle already widely admitted.[3]

Even at this stage one felt that much more must be known of what was likely to be done before detailed criticism could become practicable. Assuming, however, that any large number of parents were to take advantage of such a scheme, all the disadvantages already mentioned would seem likely to follow. It was not merely a question of throwing open the schools of the privileged classes to a wider circle:

[1] *The Times*, 30 January 1943. [2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid., 14 September 1943.

it involved nothing less than the incorporation of the Public Schools in the national system of education and the ensurance that they should be of maximum utility to the entire body.

II

The type of solution which I should like to see attempted, and which, like the two others, is given here only in outline, is quite different from either. It would assume the regular inspection of all schools and the presentation to schools found inefficient of the choice between ending and mending. It would then, for the time, proceed by disregarding the Public boarding-schools altogether and concentrating attention on the day-schools. Harchester Municipal Secondary School, for example, would be moved from its noisy buildings in the High Street to the site, two miles away, of its playing-fields, adjoining which there is further land for sale. School buses, with room for all, would run the boys to and from their homes. The new buildings would be light, spacious and airy (far superior in these respects to all but the most recent buildings of the School on the Hill). They would include library, reading-rooms, a social room, swimming-bath and gymnasium. The grounds would be planted with trees, and the gardens of a large house near by, which had come into the market and been purchased cheaply by the Governing Body, would be available to any boys for the purpose of gardening, or merely for strolling or reading in the summer. The house itself would become a boarding-house, where boys whose parents so desired could spend a year or more of their school life at a nominal cost, which might even be covered by the maintenance allowances granted by the local Education Committee.

Much more could be said of the new Harchester Grammar School, as it would be called, and my belief is that, with masters' salaries raised, and as much attention devoted to the curriculum as to amenities, the School on the Hill would soon become an object of considerably less envy than it is now. True, all this would cost money; but it would be largely capital expenditure and it would be better laid out than in the violent annual detachment of scores of boys from the same school and the planting of them, at too late an age, in a new and unfamiliar environment.

Adopt this policy all over the country and what will be the result? Well, there is no doubt that the level of Secondary education would rise to an unbelievable extent, and that would have the sort of effect upon the Public Schools which I myself most desire. The tendency of

previous discussions on the subject has been either to lump all these schools together, which is quite an unrealistic thing to do, or else to attack the larger and more expensive ones exclusively. But anyone who has seen much of Public boarding-schools knows that, with exceptions that would be generally agreed upon, it is the large and expensive ones that are the best. Those that need either abolishing or reforming (by means of substantial grants, for their chief trouble is lack of money) are some of the small places where both the education and the food are of poor quality and masters live a Perrin-and-Traill kind of life which is good neither for themselves nor for the boys under them. My belief is that an up-levelling of Secondary day-school education would cause some of the weaker of the Public Schools to apply for State aid on the State's terms or die a natural death and would convert others (automatically, not by authority) into day schools. Even the larger Public Schools, with a few exceptions, might feel the draught; for parents, in a none too prosperous world, would begin to wonder if it was really worth their while to pay something like £200 a year each for their children's education away from home when they could be educated equally well, and perhaps enjoy some of the benefits of boarding-school life, without its drawbacks, at a school half an hour from their own doorstep. And without tuition fees, I hope, for I strongly advocate the abolition of these in all State-aided schools for any form of education which has been made compulsory.

To what extent this improvement of Secondary school education would produce such a result nobody can predict, if only because nobody can make an accurate assessment of the reasons for which impoverished parents send their children to schools they can barely afford. But, apart from being so well worth doing in itself, it would certainly start a two-way traffic between the two types of school which would enrich both; it would probably contribute to a raising of the birth-rate; and it would lead to a weeding out of inefficient schools, by the gentle process of natural development.

A similar process of evolution may be hoped for with regard to Primary education. The ideal educational system for a democracy seems to me that, with negligible exceptions due to special circumstances, all children should attend State Primary schools—the duke's son with the dustman's. If I am told that the present-day Primary school is not good enough for the duke, I reply that, for the same reason, it is not good enough for the dustman. Actually, of course, it is not. Things have improved since I went to such a school myself, where two classes of over sixty boys each shared the assembly hall and were divided by a wooden partition so thin that a boy sitting near it could hear the teacher in the next class almost as clearly as his own.

But Primary-school education still suffers from grave disabilities. The classes are still far too large; teachers fall far short of the standards set by the schools of the well-to-do; the curriculum is not adapted to the needs of the brightest children; and neither the school buildings and playgrounds nor the homes from which many of the children come are all that they should be. One cannot expect parents who are not forced to do so to send their children to schools of this type. Nor, with a clear conscience, could one force them.

No doubt they are better than the worst of the preparatory schools, the sub-average 'dame's school' and many other schools conducted for private gain. No doubt, since the badness of these is often concealed by a veneer of culture, many parents send their children to them quite unsuspectingly and only discover their mistake years afterwards, if at all. But the existence of an alternative which is also unsatisfactory does not make a bad thing better and the condition of our Primary schools, despite all the improvements that have already been effected in them, raises a serious and unsolved problem of our national life and remains a blot on our system of education.

On the other hand, we have a large number of efficient Preparatory schools, four hundred of them belonging to an Incorporated Association, which of its own accord has made submission to inspection by the Ministry of Education a condition of membership. Not everybody may approve of the precise type of education which they give, but it fits into the curriculum of the Public School to which all the boys go, and, while the one type of curriculum remains unchanged, the other will too. It would therefore be ridiculous, and, at present, even were it practicable, detrimental to education, to abolish Preparatory schools. What one must do is to weed out the bad ones and allow the good ones to continue, with such modifications as circumstances may demand.

First, then, let all schools for children under, as well as over, thirteen be subjected to regular Government inspection, those not reaching the minimum standard of efficiency to be closed. Then let ample money be spent in raising the level of the State Primary school until its conditions and amenities are comparable with (I do not say equal to) those available to the children of the well-to-do. No useless luxury should be provided, for it is probable that the more expensive of the Preparatory schools will have to scale down their standards of living in the years to come. But reasonable comfort, and conditions in which healthy lives can be lived and good work be done, are the rights of all.

The result of this scaling-up of the State school should be that an increasing proportion of upper-middle-class people will send their

children to the genuinely 'public' school instead of to the private one. This process will automatically increase the number of State Primary schools and allow a much greater differentiation of curriculum. Assuming, as we probably may, that most of the Public Schools which remain in existence will be prepared to meet the Primary schools in the adaptation of curricula, a proportion of these latter should soon be preparing children as adequately for Harchester as for Drabtown. As the 1944 Education Act will standardize the age for entering upon Secondary education at eleven plus, the difficulty that one type of school takes children at eleven and another type at thirteen will no longer operate.

It seems to me, in short, that both the problem of the Public School and that of the school which feeds it can be dealt with by a method similar to that which I have already proposed for the modern university. It only remains to add that progress made along any one of those three paths will undoubtedly stimulate progress along the others. We are still far from complete educational solidarity, but, when the advance begins in earnest, we shall find that there is more interaction than we should have expected.

III

One disadvantage of discoursing upon education during these vital days is that new happenings crowd upon you even while you are in the act of writing.

The foregoing sections were completed in draft form some weeks before this section was begun; and hardly was the ink dry upon the last page of them than there appeared the Report of Lord Fleming's Committee in a pamphlet entitled *The Public Schools and the General Educational System*. The Committee was set up 'in response to a request made to the President of the Board of Education jointly by the Governing Bodies' Association and the Headmasters' Conference, both of which had been considering for some time previously by what means the Schools which they represented could be of service to a wider range of pupils'.[1] At the time of writing, however, little is known of the attitude taken to the Report by the Public Schools themselves. All I can do at this stage is to outline its proposed solution and to add a few comments which will be both brief and personal.

The Report begins by rejecting proposals for the abolition of the Public Schools and for the bringing of them wholly under the control of the Local Education Authorities. It also rejects a proposal similar

[1] F.R., par. 4, p. 2.

to, though not identical with, that made in the last section—'to leave the Public Schools as they are, allowing them to work out their own future without receiving any payments from public funds and without making any contribution, other than a purely voluntary one at their own cost, to the education of pupils whose parents are unable to afford Public and Preparatory School fees'.[1] The Committee seems to me to have dismissed this alternative too decisively, for, if combined with a policy of up-levelling the bulk of the nation's schools, it is by no means such a policy of *laissez-faire* as the enunciation and rather summary consideration of it in the Report would suggest. The plan which the Committee proposes is based upon the ideas set out by the Headmasters' Conference[2] and has several striking characteristics.

First of all, it is a unanimous report, and, coming from a body which had been so sharply divided on the question of school fees, this fact alone would prepossess one in its favour. Next, any action to be taken is to be initiated, not by the Government, but by the Public Schools themselves. So far as the Committee is concerned, if the Schools cold-shoulder it, or disagree about it, it will fall to the ground. Another point to be noted is that it applies to Girls' Public Schools as well as to Boys', though with slight variations in detail. One or two other notable features in it will be remarked upon in the course of this exposition.

The Committee is clear, first of all, that if a boarding-school education is desired for many more children than at present receive it, new accommodation will be necessary. The Public Boarding Schools are all full—many of them have entries booked in advance for years to come. The whole of the boys' Schools have, in any case, only one annual vacancy for every fifty boys in the age-group population of thirteen; the girls' schools have only one-third as many vacancies as the boys'. If public authorities are to pay part or all of the cost of boarding-school education, and parents make any kind of response to this offer, the Committee anticipates that Local Education Authorities will use the powers to be given them of providing boarding-houses for aided schools and also that facilities for what is generally called 'weekly boarding' will be provided at Secondary schools in areas of sparse population.

We now come to the main recommendations, of which the eventual aim is that all children, irrespectively of their parents' means, should be educated at the kind of school which is best suited for them. The Committee has evolved what is in intention a single plan, divided into two 'schemes' to meet the different cases of the two categories of school under consideration.

[1] F.R., par. 9, p. 4.

[2] See pp. 186–7, above.

Scheme A, which concerns schools 'fully accessible to all pupils', is essentially a variation of present-day procedure. There are at present a number of schools, known as 'Direct Grant Schools', which receive fixed capitation grants on all their pupils over eleven years of age, on condition that they accept a minimum percentage of Free Place or Special Place pupils. This system would disappear; and all schools accepted for association with the plan under Scheme A would, so far as cost was concerned, be open to all pupils: either tuition fees would be abolished or the fee would be graded according to the parents' means. Local Authorities would be able to reserve a reasonable number of places and the Ministry of Education would see that the admissions from Primary schools constituted a sufficient proportion of the whole.

Scheme B, which involves a complete departure from past custom, concerns independent Public Boarding Schools. A number of places in these would be given to pupils who would have their fees paid (or, as under Scheme A, made up), and necessary expenses provided, either by their Local Authorities or by means of State bursaries. The Ministry of Education would require these pupils to have been for at least two years at a grant-aided Primary school, though if and when the proportion of bursars in each of the accepted Public Schools increases, as the Committee anticipates that it will, this requirement will be modified.

To my mind, one of the provisions on which the success or failure of such a plan as this must hinge is the proportion of pupils in these schools who would enter as bursars. In the first instance, says the Committee, schools entering the scheme must offer a minimum of 25 per cent of their annual admissions. Any which have already accepted in advance so many paying pupils as to make this impossible may offer a smaller percentage, but only for the period of their actual commitments.

Another important point is the method by which these bursars are to be selected. Applications will be made by the parents, through the Local Education Authorities, to the Ministry of Education. They may specify any school in the country which has come into the plan, and more than one may be named, in an order of preference. On the advice of a Central Advisory Committee, the Ministry of Education will set up Regional Boards, of about four persons each, which will interview candidates, and, with the assistance of a school report and record, make their choice. The authorities of the Public School chosen will be free to reject recommended candidates, but they will have to satisfy the Ministry of Education as to their reasons for doing so.

Then there is the question of age. Bursaries will be available, according to the plan, at the age of either eleven or thirteen. Pupils accepted at thirteen would pass straight to the Public School; at eleven, either to the preparatory department of the school, if it has one, or, if not, to a Preparatory school approved for that purpose.

At the end of the regulations for each Scheme is a paragraph modifying the composition of the Governing Bodies of schools which come into it. In Scheme A schools, at least one-third of the Governing Body should be nominated by the Local Authorities concerned, and, in boarding schools of this type receiving pupils sent by the Ministry of Education, the Ministry will reserve part of this nomination to itself. In Scheme B schools, however, the Governing Body must include at least three persons nominated by the Ministry and may include more than these up to a figure not exceeding one-third of the whole.

IV

The foregoing section has attempted to pick out the main points of the plan from amid a mass of details all of which would need to be mastered before the plan could be discussed in full. I shall now venture some preliminary comments upon it.

Certainly it is a determined plan, making a frontal attack upon a difficult problem, and showing at every turn both appreciation of its complexity and a notable understanding of human nature. In several respects the Committee has foreseen and done its best to meet legitimate criticisms:

1. As to the percentage of bursaries to be given to the schools in Scheme B, the plan avoids the stigma of 'mere infiltration' and at the same time makes a bid to avoid schism. In a passage written before its publication, I suggested that if 30 to 40 per cent of a Public School's entries are to come from Primary schools a schism in some form will be inevitable. If infiltration is to take place at all, a more suitable proportion than 25 per cent could not be found. For five or six years such an entry will have little effect, but, to compensate for this, the school will only very gradually be leavened. The percentage can always be increased or diminished as may be dictated by experience.

2. Even better—and this is perhaps the plan's most imaginative and reassuring feature—is the method proposed for choosing the bursars. My greatest objection to the solution by infiltration has always been the drain which it would make upon the grant-aided schools, and since it is they, after all, which constitute the main body of schools, it must be on their progress that will depend the progress of Secondary

education. If there are 6,000 boys of thirteen entering the Public Schools, to nearly 290,000 entering the other schools, we are not going to do much for the standard of education as a whole by adding two or three thousands to, and improving the work of, the smaller group, while decreasing the numbers, and lowering the standards, of the larger. This the Committee has fully taken into account and the admirable passage in which it is discussed merits extended quotation:

'The suspicion is sometimes voiced that any scheme such as we propose in this Report will, in fact, entail the selection of the most promising pupils from the Primary Schools for a Boarding School Education, and their withdrawal from education at Day Schools. To send a boy or girl to a Boarding School rather than a Day School would very often entail a greater expenditure of public money, and there is an evident danger that pupils likely to attain academic distinction would be chosen, since, on a superficial judgement, their education might appear to give greater value for the money spent. We should regard any such segregation of the particularly gifted children of the country as altogether unfortunate. The harmful effect on the intellectual standards of the Day Schools will be obvious. Although the numbers involved would be extremely small, the Day Schools could hardly be expected to accept with equanimity the removal of those pupils who were outstanding either intellectually or in their all-round contribution to the life of the school. Further, we believe that any advantage which might appear to accrue to the Boarding School would actually be quite illusory. If a school is to be a true community, it must contain children of varying intellectual qualities, as well as those of different temperaments and interests. This is one reason why we have rejected without hesitation any plan for a competitive examination for the bursaries under the Scheme we propose.'[1]

It may be said, with some reason, that all but a few Public Schools have already such a surplus of either brawn over brain or mediocrity over talent that the annual importation of 25 per cent of talent and brain will still allow ample variation in intellectual quality. But the Committee's recognition of how much day schools would suffer by the loss of their abler children is everything. The proper criterion for an Interviewing Board to adopt is precisely that of a father who sends his boy to a boarding school at his own expense. He does not, as a rule, say: 'I will send John to Harchester because he is brilliant', or even 'because I think him to be a born leader', but because 'a boarding school will make a man of him', or because 'it will be good

[1] F.R., par. 188, p. 71.

for him to mix with boys of a different type than the boys at a local school', or often 'because I was there myself'.

Some such criteria will in fact guide the Interviewing Boards to their decisions. They will cut out applications from children who are intellectually below the standard of the school applied for, or who are temperamentally unfitted for boarding-school life (if such apply), giving preference to children 'who would not derive the fullest benefit in a Day School because of exceptional home circumstances', to 'those who seem lacking in initiative or self-reliance' (a dangerous criterion, since such lack is so often due to nervousness or timidity) and to 'children who stand in greater need than others of the continuous discipline of a Boarding School'.[1] So there seems no fear that the Hoxton boy will go to Harchester just because he is good at his books or appears to have the stamp of a future 'leader'. In fact, it seems likely that Hoxton will lose some of its 'toughs' to Harchester as well as some of its 'swots', and by this transfer, unless I am much mistaken, the mild régime of the one, as well as the spartan rule of the other, will benefit.

3. Then there is the age at which the bursars are to be chosen and the suitability of the curricula which they have been following to the schools to which they are about to go. As between the ages of eleven and thirteen, the former is obviously the more appropriate, because it gives the Primary school child, who will have done no Latin, and hardly ever any French, two years to acquire the type of knowledge he will require before entering the school in which he will require it. Presumably the provision for accepting candidates up to thirteen is made in order to allow for cases of slower development. This was as much latitude as could have been given, but the Committee probably realizes that there still remain serious difficulties. Most Secondary schools whose percentage of free-placers is comparatively small have to make provision for children from Primary schools insufficiently equipped for their work, but their task will be light compared with that of the old-established Public School with a strong Classical tradition which has to cope with anything up to 25 per cent of its new entry completely ignorant of any foreign language and, for all anyone can tell to the contrary, completely incapable of learning one. And that is only a single problem: there will be many more. To say that 'the schools themselves should be prepared to make any special provisions which may be necessary to meet the needs of particular bursars'[2] is to hint at the existence of many and diverse problems, but not at the method of solving any one of them.

4. Finally, there have to be considered the effects of the plan upon

[1] F.R., par. 195, p. 73. [2] Op. cit., par. 192, p. 72.

the Public Schools themselves. At present, most of these schools—even those which were in difficulties before the War—are quite full, and, except that some of them have been hit by the expenses and inconveniences of evacuation, are rejoicing in war-time prosperity. But, once money ceases to circulate so freely, their troubles will return, and they may then be very glad to fill up their gaps with bursars.

But more important than their rehabilitation is their reform. Not only will the Ministry of Education be represented on their Governing Bodies, but it will learn a good deal about their expenditure and be in a position to exert some influence on costs and prices. Here the Ministry makes its entry, according to the plan, very neatly. It cannot be assumed, says the Committee, that public authorities would pay Scheme B schools the full prospectus fee for each bursar. If they did so, public funds might be contributing 'to extravagant or luxurious standards or to unnecessary expenses due to inefficient administration'.[1] On the other hand, they cannot arbitrarily fix one sum as the maximum they would pay, because this sum might be so far below the actual cost to the school that the difference would be more than it could bear. So, unless schools with high fees are to be omitted from the Scheme, which would leave a smaller, but more distinctive, socially privileged group in our educational system, it is essential that the Ministry should have sufficient information from each school to enable it to calculate the rate of payment. Schools which, like some of the independent Public Schools, submit voluntarily to Government inspection already furnish some such particulars, but all schools which enter into the Scheme will now have to do so. One gross abuse which has sent up costs in a considerable, though a decreasing, number of the more expensive schools has been the system by which housemasters make an annual income many times as large as that which they get for teaching by acting as hotel-keepers and making profits on their boys' food and lodging. 'We assume', remarks the Report hopefully, 'that all schools wishing to become associated under either Scheme would be willing to place their Housemasters on salaries which are independent of the profits of the House, if this has not been done already, and we recommend that schools coming into either Scheme should be required to undertake the abolition of Housemasters' profits as soon as existing contracts permit.'[2] The assumption is perhaps excessively optimistic but the recommendation will have the force of a *sine qua non*.

[1] F.R., par. 217, p. 79. [2] Op. cit., par. 222, p. 80.

V

There seem, then, to be numerous advantages in the Fleming Committee's plan. What, if anything, is there that places its success in doubt?

1. First, will the schools join? And especially the old-established or aristocratic schools the names of which are more closely associated than any others with the Public School system? Both the Committee and the Headmasters' Conference evidently think so. Without minimizing the difficulties that lie ahead, and the need of 'vision, courage and understanding', the Committee represents the future as 'consolidation of the ground already won, combined with a steady and gradual advance to new gains'.[1] The moment for such a plan to be initiated is a propitious one. The War, with its evacuations, pre-Service training, harvest and forestry camps, and the like, has done much to bring together schools of different categories and individuals from such schools in large numbers. If the Public Schools are not ready to take the first step towards closer relations now, they never will be.

And there is every reason, on external grounds, to expect their collaboration. They asked for the Committee; they expressed their desire to open their doors more widely; and they sketched the vague outlines of a scheme which resembles that now proposed. Further, the great tradition of religious education which they profess is in the plan's favour. *Noblesse oblige.*

2. Will those parents who already pay for their children to go to Public Schools continue to do so when they find that the school of their choice is admitting each year children of poor background and antecedents? That is very much less certain. It may be that there will be an unheard-of rush for the exclusive schools that stand aloof from the plan and that the numbers of the schools that enter it, unless further reinforced by still more bursaries, will dwindle. It may be that, with taxation still heavy and money tight, many parents who at present make sacrifices to educate their children with others from cultured homes will give up the struggle and save money with which they can give them other advantages (such as foreign travel) by sending them to the grant-aided schools in their own localities. After all, they might argue, if Johnny is going to Harchester to mix with boys from Shoreditch and Whitechapel, he may as well go to the Grammar School at home, which is at least in a decent residential district, and then, besides saving £100 or more each year which can go to his later

[1] F.R., par. 185, p. 69.

education, we can ourselves, by means of home influence, do something to counteract any bad effects of school companionship.

3. Will boarding-school education be sought after by many parents beyond those who would have bought it for their children out of their own pockets if they had had the means? That too is an unknown quantity. If, of course, the bursars are all to be the children of Public School men, the gulf in our educational system will be bridged only in appearance. What really matters is if children from really poor homes will seize the opportunities presented to them, especially if the quality of the education given in day schools and the amenities found in them improve also. In several parts of the country, if not everywhere, the Committee envisages such a rush for the bursaries that it may well prove impossible to find room in the boarding schools for more than a fraction of the applicants.[1] My own feeling is that the novelty of the plan, together with post-war financial stringency, will produce an immense rush for the first few years, after which there will be a reaction in favour of the day schools in their new and improved form.

4. Will the decisions of the Interviewing Committee as to which children they accept as bursars and which they refuse cause frequent discontent and foment a new class grievance? That, too, seems a very real danger. The examination system is so well established that the ordinary person never questions its findings. There is something about the idea of allotting numerical marks for questions answered on paper which inspires confidence in him, though, if he knew at what speed some examiners mark some papers, and realized to how many things it is impossible to assign numerical marks at all, it might inspire less. But there is a kind of unanswerable finality about '58 per cent: Pass' which there is not about 'Quite a good boy: I think we may let him through'. You can argue about the latter; about the former, however much you want to, you cannot. If the Back Street parents who want to send their young hopeful to Harchester are informed, in due course, that, after undergoing the ordeal of a written and oral examination, he has come out sixteenth on the list and there are places for only the first fifteen candidates, they may chide the said young hopeful for not having worked harder, but it will no more occur to them to question the examiners' accuracy and good faith than it would to question the vote-counting in a general election. They may receive the result with tears, with protestations that the boy must try again or merely with a half-indifferent shrug of the shoulders, but they will accept it as naturally as if it were an act of God. The contention of, let us say, the author of this book that the result of

[1] F.R., par. 199, p. 74.

a written examination sometimes fails to record the precise degree of an examinee's merit would seem to them as ridiculous as that a clinical thermometer could fail to record the precise level of a patient's temperature.

But what are such parents going to say when their Jamie, who has always been top of his class at Back Street, his weekly or termly achievements being expressed in percentages which cannot lie, is passed over for a bursary in favour of two boys from the same street, half-way down the same class, without any kind of 'exam.'? Why did he fail? they ask. Not on the school record, because, as stated, he was always top of his class, which is the only criterion that Back Street has ever heard of. Not on the interview, because he always speaks up proper, does our Jamie: you should hear him giving lip to his father. Well, then, what about the people who interviewed him? High-ups, that's what they were. Class prejudice, that's what it was: just Class Prejudice. Or can it have been something the headmaster said about him? Mr. Smith he never did take to our Jamie.

In time, no doubt, the theory of the infallibility of the written examination will be broken down, but for some time to come I can see considerable discontent being bred by those Regional Interviewers in Back Street bosoms.

5. I have kept until last the crucial question: Will they mix? This is clearly the question which makes the Fleming Committee feel most uncomfortable, and the Report is scrupulously fair in quoting evidence on both sides. Some of the more reassuring testimony is of the kind referred to above as affecting so small a percentage of children that it has little significance. At the same time, the testimony on this side is based on firm experience, and no school that has admitted Primary children seems willing to confess that the experiment has been unsuccessful. The evidence of Christ's Hospital, Rendcomb and Dartmouth has already been referred to, and the limitations to its validity have been examined. Scattered over current books on education are further testimonies—all of the same general nature and all based upon experience. Only the other day I chanced upon one from Dr. F. C. Happold, the progressive headmaster of Bishop Wordsworth's School, Salisbury, who is 'impressed by the capacity of boys coming from quite humble homes to develop high powers of leadership and selflessness and to appreciate a real and disinterested culture'.[1] And that view is representative of most of the witness borne by Heads who have made the experiment.

The testimony on the other side, by contrast, appears to be merely the statement of opinion. The evidence given on this side to the

[1] *Towards a New Aristocracy*, London, 1943, p. 49.

Fleming Committee was full of misgivings. There was felt to be, not merely the risk of unhappiness at school—the old-style arm-twisting for boys who pronounced 'one' as 'wan' and dropped their 'h.s' or sounded their final 'g.s'. That was mentioned: so was the risk that 'most of the children would . . . suffer from an inferiority complex'[1] —a condition under which education could not possibly be profitable. The real difficulty was generally felt to be one of adjustment: 'that there would be too sharp a contrast between the standards of living of the school and the home, and between the ways of thinking, the tacit assumptions of each; so that if a boy so introduced did make himself happy at school he would be unable to do so in his holidays at home'.[2] Here are two typical quotations from the views of the witnesses:

'There is no gainsaying the fact that a boy from a poor home who is sent to a Public Boarding School is going to find acute difficulty in adapting himself to both environments, and the result may possibly be the reverse of beneficial to the boy or advantageous to the community.'[3]

And, from 'the Head Master of an East London School':

'I cannot see anything but acute unhappiness arising from the well-meaning desire to throw open the Public Schools to all classes. It would entail a complete change of living and habit, and would engender mischievous thought in the victims, to say nothing of the effects on their families. Imagine the Stepney boy during vacation.'[4]

The Headmaster of Harrow, Mr. R. W. Moore, has 'no fear of the reception which awaits the State Bursar', because he will 'be accepted as all new boys are, for what he is, not who he is or where he comes from'.[5] Yet he must know of boys whose school life has been made a misery merely because they had a Cockney or a Northern accent, because through pure ignorance they offended against school etiquette, or, worst of all, because they had a nervous or a hesitating manner. Unfortunately, boys in the mass are often much more unfeeling and even cruel in their conduct and much more superficial in their judgements than any one of them would be individually. The Headmaster is equally idealistic in his reasons for having 'little fear of unhappiness arising from social disparity between the new school and the old home'.[6] One of these is sound: that 'candidatures for these bursaries will largely depend on parental initiative'[7]—a view which presumably implies that only parents of culture, or with a keen desire

[1] F.R., par. 141, p. 52. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid. [4] Ibid.
[5] 'Why Public Schools?' In *Sunday Times*, 12 August 1944. [6] Ibid. [7] Ibid.

that their children should have culture, will wish them to have a Public School education. The other two reasons are very weak. It is true 'that many homes of present Public School boys have become increasingly modest' of late; but the disparity has nothing to do with 'modesty'—its causes are to be found in grinding poverty, or squalor, or gross materialism, or complete lack of breeding. It is also true that this disparity has 'never been alleged' as a reason why poor boys should not go to Oxford and Cambridge.[1] This is the weakest argument of all. For 'poor boys' do not pass direct from Primary schools to Oxford and Cambridge, but from Secondary schools, where a proportion of their fellows are well-bred and come from cultured homes; they are five or six years older than the boy entering a Public School and therefore have had more time to adjust themselves to the double existence; they are freer to go away from home in vacations if the contrast between family and university life is overtrying; and, above all, they are mature enough to realize that social disparity exists everywhere in life and to learn to accustom themselves to it.

I have gained a good deal of first-hand experience of this kind of adjustment, both from my own school-days (where I met it in reverse, circumstances obliging me to go daily from a cultured home to a poor type of Elementary school) and from my later years at Oxbridge and at Redbrick. And I well know what strain can be caused even to a sensitive undergraduate by living for several hours of each day, or months of each year, in a humble, perhaps a desperately poor, home, and for the rest of the time in a cultured and well-educated community. It is not just a matter of helping Mother by scrubbing the front step when a fellow-student may be passing, or of feeling hesitant about asking someone from a more comfortable home to come to tea. It is the mental and spiritual adjustment of values that tells: if the 'tacit assumptions' could be dragged out and debated in the open it would be easier. But they are not, and cannot be. And if at Redbrick, where most of the students come from humble families, the strain is so severe that a comparatively mature and not hypersensitive young man can exclaim, in real distress: 'I simply can't go on living at home any longer', what is going to be the effect upon the ex-Back-Street bursar of fourteen, with all the exaggerated sensitiveness of that age, living for forty-odd weeks in the new and artificial community and for twelve in the community into which he was born and into which he has already sent down deep and strong roots? Fortunately, youth, being flexible, can stand a good deal of strain; but, looked at objectively, the constant uprooting hardly bears thinking of.

1 'Why Public Schools?' In *Sunday Times*, 12 August 1944.

Well, if the experiment is going to be tried on a large scale, the outcome will in due course become apparent. For myself I do not know what it will be, but I own I am apprehensive.

Two further considerations should, I think, have been given greater prominence in the Report—one favouring the one side and one the other.

The first reinforces the sound argument just quoted from the Headmaster of Harrow. The conditions postulated by the more pessimistic of the Committee's witnesses tend to be exceptional. Not every bursar will come from Back Street and only a minority of scholars will have started life in Stepney. Even supposing the requirement that every bursar shall have spent two years at a Primary school is enforced—and it seems to bear hardly on parents in poor areas who have scraped to send their children to better schools—there are plenty of Primary school children in whose homes culture is not unknown or is only temporarily submerged. And if in time the doors are opened more widely, a very considerable proportion of the bursars will come from some of the gentlest homes in the country. The misfitting and the maladjusted will in that case be only a small minority.

On the other hand, I do not think the Committee has taken serious enough account of the risk of schism. Assuming that all the bursars come from Primary schools, there might easily arise a time when they would band together to rebel against trivial customs of immemorial antiquity and incredible silliness, to protest in a body against compulsory games-watching or the excesses of prefect-rule or even to decide that they would pronounce English precisely as they liked and not as anyone else considered that they ought to. Since the other party would be larger and not less determined, the result would be some form of civil war. An extremely tactful headmaster might turn the flank of the attack, or an extremely tough one might subdue it and keep it under. But if it persisted, and gathered momentum, it is difficult to see where it would end.

Those are some of the possibilities of the Committee's plan—the good and the bad. Taken as a whole, it fully merits success. Let us hope that it may be, at the very least, the beginning of a successful movement.

VI

But all I have said about the importance of up-levelling the aided and maintained Secondary schools still holds good. First, as a

matter of principle, and secondly, as an essential measure of practical policy.

In principle, because however high the percentage of bursars in Scheme B schools may become, and however many the schools that enter Scheme A, the huge majority of children will always get their education in the others. And these deserve as good an education as the rest. Those who style themselves the opponents of privilege sometimes talk as though the only advantages inheritable by a human being were money and gentle birth. On the contrary, brains are inherited; capacity for leadership is inherited; the qualities which make one *persona grata* with all the world are inherited. It is no more equitable that the bright boy from a poor home should have the best education solely because of his brilliance than that the duffer from a wealthy home should have it solely because of his wealth. I want to see it provided also for the sub-average boy from a sub-average home who strives by sheer hard work to overcome natural and inherited disabilities. That is one reason why the up-levelling of all State schools, Primary and Secondary, is essential.

Equally so is it as a matter of practice. For, in the new enthusiasm with which we are going to regard semi-democratized Public Schools as they positively beg for Back Street bursars, we must not forget that, whatever the method of selection, they will still be the gainers; that those who have everything to lose and nothing to gain are the unfortunate Drabtown Secondaries. Worse though their plight might have been were they creamed of intellect pure and simple, it will be quite bad enough. Every year, if the plan is adopted, they are going to lose a few of the ablest of their potential scholars, of their would-have-been leaders, champion athletes or best 'mixers', and of those good all-rounders on whom so much of the strength of any school always depends. If they are to be robbed of these, even though in the public interest, they must in all fairness be given substantial compensation. For this reason, as well as for the other, all State schools *must* be up-levelled.

APPENDICES

1. The Aims of Higher Education

(Broadcast in the B.B.C. African service, November 18th 1943)

I always think the founding of a university is rather like throwing a stone into a deep pool. As the stone strikes the water it makes a hole in it, and then, when it has sunk to the bottom, and you might think it had never gone in at all, you see circle after circle of ripples spreading over the surface of the pool, each one wider than the last.

1. The very heart and centre of university teaching consists in the *enlarging and increasing of knowledge.* That is the throwing of the stone into the pool. It takes a great many different forms. One of them is discovering facts about the world of nature. Another is the invention of things that advance civilization and make life run more smoothly. Then there is the attempt to reach a better understanding of foreign peoples by getting new light on their history and culture. And so on: there's a great deal more than that. To all those activities we sometimes give the name of *research.* And it was to enlarge the boundaries of knowledge by means of research that the first universities were founded.

It's not a thing that advertises itself, this fundamental activity of a university. Only occasionally, when some really startling discovery has been made, does it get into the news at all. As a rule, it's no more noticeable than the stone when it has been thrown into the pool. But it's there all the time. And by no means in the sense that discoveries are being made all the time—which they're not. But that the minds of the people who work in the university, and of the people they influence, are growing sharper and keener, and more and more alert and alive; refusing to take things on trust just because some book or newspaper says they are true; straining after truth and intent upon finding it out for themselves, so as to pass it on, in due course, to other people. The spirit of adventure, discovery and free thought is more important in a university than even the results which it may bring. If its members are eager, questing men and women, then the university is a power-house of initiative and energy.

Remember, then—that is what makes a university. That is what distinguishes it from a mere teaching institution. A university might

have no classes or lectures at all, and yet, provided it was pursuing research, it would be fulfilling its primary function. *Research comes first.*

2. Secondly—and this is the first of the widening rings on the surface of the pool—comes *the training of others to enlarge knowledge*, or to teach others, some of whom may eventually do so. We who are university teachers have a responsibility to all with whom we come in contact, but a most special responsibility to those whom we are training to follow us. Any university, however young, will be creating a tradition—good or bad—right from the first. And the greatest universities are not necessarily those with the most palatial buildings, or with the most expensive equipment, or with the most highly paid workers; they are those whose workers (I mean by that the professors and lecturers), are themselves most completely possessed by the eager thirst for knowledge and truth and most assiduous in their attempts to create it in their pupils too. They must keep their own torch burning, so as to hand it on to those who succeed them, but all the time they must be lighting their pupils' torches from their own as well.

3. Thirdly comes *the training of many more young people* who are not going to work in universities themselves and the fitting of them both for their professions and for the duties of citizenship. That's a much wider circle than the last. You may wonder why a university, which was founded primarily to advance and increase knowledge, should spend so much of its time teaching young people who are going to become lawyers and doctors and clergymen and engineers and chemists and heads of business houses. The reason is that a society whose primary aim is the advancement of knowledge is felt to be the most suitable body to disseminate knowledge, and to set up the standards by which the levels of these professions and occupations can be tested, as well as standards of Higher education in general. So people whose real job is to advance knowledge within a certain field in which they have specialized, such as History or Physics, become not only students, but 'professors' of History or Physics, and 'lecture' on History or Physics, and so communicate their knowledge and their ideals and habits of mind to a much wider circle than they would if they spent all their time in their study or laboratory. And that is good both for themselves and for the people they teach. For if one is a capable teacher, with an alert mind and a passion for truth (and all university teachers ought to be that), nothing stimulates one's own teaching so much as one's own research and nothing freshens the mind for research so much as the entirely different activity of teaching.

Before we go on to the next circle there's one more important thing to be said here. The teaching and training of young people, whether

they're going to be teachers and scholars themselves or not, means far more than lecturing to them on History, Physics or whatever it may be, far more than marking papers and correcting essays, far more than preparing them for examinations. It means talking to them about the problems of the world they live in and inducing and habituating them to study those problems from all angles, calmly and objectively. It means teaching them to strike a just balance between things of the mind and things of the spirit. It means encouraging them to discuss among themselves, quite informally, the things that matter. It means training them to consider thoughtfully, or to look squarely at, the career that lies ahead of them and to be sure that they have chosen the right career and are viewing it in the right way. So one very important part of university life is *residence*, for only by living in close contact with those who are studying other subjects than their own can young people get the broadest possible education. And for the same reason, especially where residence on a large scale is impossible, *student societies* of all kinds are a valuable element in university life too.

4. Then there comes a very wide circle indeed, which we may call *University extension*. It's so wide that I can say only a very few words about it here. Briefly, it means that every university, as a society, has a duty, not only to its own individual teachers, and to its students, past and present, but also to the community in which it is set and the area from which its students are mainly drawn. By its influence the university must penetrate the schools; it can do that partly by sending out its own former students, imbued with its high ideals, to teach in them, but it must devise other and more direct methods of contact as well. It must influence its town, city or district: the citizens must come to look to it as the place where there are people who will take, not a narrow or partisan view of personal or national problems, but a broad, objective, human one. The formation of lecture societies which are visited by professors and lecturers from the local University is good, but the actual drawing of people to the University itself is better, and later on we shall consider how that can be done.

There are wider circles than these—so wide that, like the farthest circles of ripples on the pool, we can hardly trace them. For the influence of the greatest men, from the universities with the best traditions, is literally incalculable. One of them will write a book which may be read in every part of the world for generations after his death. Another—not a talented writer, perhaps, but a soul athirst for truth and aflame with zeal—will, by his work and example, inspire hundreds of his pupils, and they in their turn hundreds more.

But, if the ripples are to circle as widely as that, the stone must be flung into the pool with a firm hand and a sure aim. That is to say, the work done at the university must be inspired, not by desire for material gain, nor by intellectual snobbery, nor by an ambition for social prestige, but by a genuine and unquenchable ardour for truth. The university of the twentieth century might well take a motto from the nineteenth:

> Let knowledge grow from more to more,
> But more of reverence in us dwell;
> That mind and soul, according well,
> May make one music as before,
> But vaster.

APPENDIX II

2. Responsibility of the University Towards the Public

(*Broadcast in the B.B.C. African service, December 16th* 1943)

You heard last week[1] that the British universities are not so much in the public eye as they might be, but also that they are none the less in close touch with opinion. What I want to talk about to-night is the *responsibility* of the university to the public: that is to say, not so much about what it actually *does*, as about what it owes, and so, by implication, about what it must endeavour to do.

1. First of all, they have a debt to pay to their past and present benefactors. This is very keenly realized by the older Universities, which can boast long catalogues of benefactors in every field of activity, and especially by the Colleges of those Universities which have an independent origin and a communal life of their own. Sometimes the influence of a benefactor can be traced back through three or four centuries because he has left money for the promotion of some particular study and this endowment has stimulated that study and given it a remarkable list of famous names.

But the newer universities also have a debt to their benefactors, many of whom, of course, are still living. And this is a more personal debt—in fact, in a sense it is a greater one. You see, many of these benefactors have been graduates of Oxford and Cambridge, and it must have been a great temptation to them to give, or leave, their money to Oxford or Cambridge. To have their names associated in perpetuity with an Oxford or a Cambridge college would have brought them much more prestige. If they were members of such a college it would have brought them a very deep and lasting satisfaction as well. And yet they deliberately chose to help found a local university instead, a society with no traditions and even with an uncertain future. 'Why?' do you ask. Because they had vision; because they had initiative; because they had faith. And we, of the newer universities, want to show ourselves worthy of that faith. To put it colloquially, we can't let them down.

Then, again, these modern benefactors have done much more than give money: many of them have given themselves as well. They've been members of our governing bodies. They've spent time and

[1] The reference is to a broadcast on 'Relations between the University and the Public' by Sir Hector Hetherington, quoted on pp. 106–7 above.

thought in helping us through our early difficulties. They've shown us that they believe in us by sending us their own children—and no-one can give his faith more practical expression than that. We know them —or at least we know their sons and daughters. Some day they may be just names which our descendants will still venerate. But to-day they are real, warm, living persons, inspiring us as no mere name, however great, ever can. We can't possibly let them down.

2. Secondly, and from this point onwards I am speaking of modern universities alone, we have a debt to pay to the local authorities—that is to say, to the towns and cities and counties in which our universities are set.

Now here I must digress for a moment to say that I am not one of those people who want to see the new Universities grow up as purely local societies. I don't want all the students at Bristol or Manchester to come from just Bristol or Manchester, or the areas around those cities, and the young people with the best brains from all over the country to go to Oxford or Cambridge. I want all our eleven universities to develop the branches of study which they best can and I want public and private money to be available to help them do it. And then the young people with the best brains will go to whatever universities have the strongest schools in their particular subjects, irrespectively of social prestige—and I'm afraid it's to gain that that so many boys and girls at present go to Oxford and Cambridge and not because of the superiority of those universities in any particular branch of study at all. That is the way to a strong university system—to encourage initiative and industry; to reward merit; to do away with privilege. That, above all, is the way to the only university system suited to a democracy.

None the less, even if such a goal could be reached to-morrow instead of after a great many years, our universities would still owe as much to the cities and districts which have helped them through their difficult beginnings as any grown-up man owes to the nurse or governess who shaped his character and intellect during his childhood. And in any case it is probable that all our newer universities will always draw largely on boys or girls from local schools, because it is to the university of their own district that those who want general, and not specialized, Higher education will naturally go. So we can reckon on a continuance of local grants and a piling up of our local debt, which we shall try to repay in ways that I shall describe in a moment.

3. Thirdly, and to an increasing degree, the universities will owe some of their progress and prosperity to the Treasury—that is, to the taxpayer, to the ordinary citizen. And, quite apart from the material

question of funds, they will always owe the ordinary citizen a debt of quite another kind. You remember, perhaps, how in my earlier talk I described the primary aim of the University as the quest of an ideal of the very purest kind—as the disinterested pursuit of knowledge. Now it is surely not the least among the duties of a society formed with so high an aim to set an example to everybody of objective and unbiased study. In other words, we reach here one of the widest of the circles of influence which are formed when the stone is thrown into the water. Let us see now in what ways that influence may be exerted.

Here are a few of them: I can only outline them very briefly.

(i) The university of any city should be the place to which people come from all around for considered, unprejudiced, balanced interpretations of current events and of both particular and universal problems. When the country is riven in two by some question which makes cleavages between friends and colleagues, and even between members of the same family; when party cries and vested interests and agelong prejudices made it difficult to think tranquilly and sanely, then the words on everybody's lips should be: 'What does the University say about it?' I long to see our modern universities, with their doors flung open, and their lights blazing, inviting young and old, rich and poor, to come and hear, not the tainted advocacy of partisans, but the sound and prudent judgements of scholars—of men who are in close touch with the world, but who have spent their lives in thought and who are thus (or at least should be) better fitted than other people to view events and problems with a clear and steady gaze.

(ii) To its own graduates, to teachers in the schools from which it draws and to workers of other kinds who are in close touch with it, the university should offer, and sometimes does offer, periods of mental and spiritual refreshment, in the shape of short courses of study based on some particular theme.

(iii) When they have a generous supply of books, instead of an allowance, as at present, too meagre for even their own students, university libraries should invite any thinking people who wish to do so to register with them as readers, and they should help them in their reading in every possible way.

(iv) Every university should have a press, conducted, not for profit, but for the common good. The books it issues should not be priced so high as to be beyond the reach of students, but as low as is possible. It should, I think, also publish magazines, and perhaps even weekly reviews, which would counteract the degrading tendency of much modern popular literature. In time we shall come to see that a University Press is only one degree less important than a University Library.

(v) All this implies a two-way traffic. The people must come to the university, but the university must also go to the people. Already the myopic, absent-minded professor of fiction is very nearly a thing of the past. He has emerged from his study and he operates in Extension societies, in the Workers' Educational Association, through the radio and in the Press. Sometimes he even visits the schools—and I don't mean as an examiner, an inquisitor, but as a friend. But he must develop in that direction still further. He must become a familiar figure in schools of all kinds, and indeed in the life of the nation at large. Why should not the distinguished professor be as dynamic and influential a personality as the distinguished ecclesiastic, or lawyer, or statesman? In the future I believe he will.

My time is up. But I have not finished. Indeed, I have hardly begun. For the public responsibilities and potentialities of the universities are literally boundless. It is only when we have done all I have described that we shall discover how much more still remains. All the time new horizons will come into view. Every achievement that we accomplish will reveal new possibilities. That is one reason why the career of a university teacher, once popularly regarded as so narrow and circumscribed, is really one of the finest careers in the world. I envy the young man or woman starting out on it to-day. And most of all I envy the young universities which will be born into the post-war world and will become the heirs to all the resolution and practical idealism which are emerging from our past sufferings.

APPENDIX III

3. Contact with the Student Mind

(Paper read on April 15th 1944 at a Conference of the Association of University Professors and Lecturers of Allied Countries in Great Britain)

There is no kind of doubt that at present the gap between professor (or lecturer) and student is a very wide one—far wider, for example, than the gap between the average Secondary schoolmaster and quite a small boy. That is entirely wrong. The exact contrary ought to be the case. For by the time, at any rate, that the latter part of an Honours Course is reached, the undergraduate should be seeing the professor as a fellow-worker, a fellow-seeker. What he actually does see is a figure, completely inaccessible, on a dais, or a figure in an arm-chair, less remote than the other in the physical sense, but essentially, in matters of the mind, as far from him as the dead-and-gone author of a text-book.

The freshman comes up to the university expecting to find his professors and lecturers a kind of super-schoolmaster. And what he expects, he finds. I wonder, indeed, if, as his course proceeds, they do not become *more* remote instead of less. They well may, as he grows more and more absorbed with his examinations, his societies, his games, and so on, and makes closer and closer contacts with his fellows. Had he been fortunate enough, in his first term, or his first year, to get into intimate touch with some lecturer, that relation too would no doubt be strengthened. But, because no such contact has been formed early, there is nothing there to strengthen. The majority of undergraduates go through their entire course without coming into personal and living touch with any member of the staff at all.

How can this be remedied? That is one of the most difficult questions to answer in the whole range of academic problems. Some little time ago, not with this end in view, but for other reasons, Mr. H. C. Dent, in his *New Order in Education*, proposed a raising of the age of entry 'by at least three years'. Entry to the university, in fact, says Mr. Dent, must be possible at any age. That means that in any first-year classroom, instead of boys and girls fresh from school (or possibly, as things are at present, *stale* from school), the youngest members will have had three years or so to unlearn their habits of learning acquired at school and that with them will mingle elderly ladies of means, working men who have won belated scholarships, elementary

schoolmasters deciding late in life to improve their qualifications and merchants or stockbrokers who have unexpectedly discovered an academic vocation. I do not believe that such a change in our system would be beneficial or that it would do the things hoped for from it. And I am quite certain that it would not bring about closer contact between teachers and taught. Strange creatures, indeed, under the present system, the professor may think his undergraduates, but this new and motley breed would undoubtedly be stranger still.

I can think of three steps, however, which may be more effective.

1. The first concerns the universities alone: it is the development of group-teaching of the seminar type, and with it of the tutorial system. Both are expensive and the tutorial system has a good many limitations. I had two tutors in my four years at the University and neither reading essays to them nor begging exeats from them ever brought me an inch nearer to either of them than to my professors, whom I saw less but respected a good deal more. Still, with the right men, both seminar and tutorial hour will do something. But that merely substitutes for the problem this equally difficult one: *How can one get the right men?*

2. More important is it—indeed, it is all-important—to establish a closer contact between the universities and the schools. At present very few professors enter schools except to lecture or examine. There must be a great many who have literally never been inside a Secondary school since they left one. I can suggest several remedies, but in the present state of opinion they may be thought too idealistic to be worth consideration. As a very young man, I remember attending a joint conference of school and university organizations, and suggesting that a good way for university lecturers (I would not have ventured then to say 'professors', though I thought it) to improve the technique of their teaching (then, as now, notoriously bad) would be for some of them to take a term off from time to time and teach in a school. At first the suggestion was received in stony silence; then there was a kind of muffled explosion and an elderly gentleman, his face scarlet with indignation, rose to his feet.

'What!' he said, '*we* are to go and teach in Secondary schools? University people—teach—in Secondary—schools?'

But why in the world not? I don't mean that my old friend Professor Inaccessible should descend upon the Lower Third, though between ourselves he would be all the better for having a few inky darts thrown at him. I mean that a term spent round the table of the Sixth Form master's small Classical or History Higher School Certificate class would bring him nearer to the minds of his own freshmen than anything else. And meanwhile the Sixth Form master, somewhat

jaded after many years of twenty-five-period weeks, would be lecturing on his special subject to first and second years at the University. I repeat: Why in the world not? It would be as good for the school as for the university. So would regular visits made to the schools by professors and lecturers, for the purpose, not so much of giving lectures as of initiating discussions. So would regular lectures for schools at the large urban universities, such as Birmingham or Leeds. These are, it is true, occasionally organized, but nothing like as often as they should be.

3. But the prime requisite is to establish a two-way current of staff progress between schools and universities. 'You mean of progress and *regress*?' the critic will say. But I don't: it is, or should be, just as much progress for a junior university lecturer to migrate to a school, provided he will do better work there, as for a junior schoolmaster to go to a university. The contrary idea is as ridiculous as the convention, which is unfortunately current enough in universities, that the first and second year must always be taught by lecturers and that professors lose caste if they lecture to any year below the third. Let us try to smash that kind of intellectual snobbery to pieces. The man (or woman) who starts a school career and finds the idea of university work increasingly attractive should not be discouraged from entering it. The lecturer who finds that his teaching is becoming more absorbing than his research should be able to pass on to a school without creating any feeling that he is taking a step down. 'Parity of esteem', to use a phrase which will be frequently heard in the next few years, is nowhere rarer, and also nowhere more necessary, than here. What practical steps must be taken to help bring it about? We want it for many reasons—but for none more than that of making closer contacts at the universities between teachers and taught. I have often thought, when talking to a bright Sixth Form and their brilliant teacher—a good example of a perfect team working in perfect harmony—what a pity it is that, with so intimate a knowledge and understanding of them, the teacher cannot go on with the pupils to the university. Well, that, of course, is hardly possible: the drawbacks are too obvious. But at least we ought to be able to ensure that the freshman finds as skilled a teacher and as sympathetic a friend as the one he has just left. With nothing less should we be content—and if any of you can devise better methods than these to obtain it I hope they will at once be put into operation.

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