

THE ENGLISH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Some Elementary Facts about it

BY

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PREFACE

IN writing this book I have had a very humble aim. Much information as to elementary education is floating about, but it is often rather out of reach ; it is to be found in official documents, various periodicals, and people's memories ; my endeavour has been to embody some of it in a convenient and semi-permanent form.

The Blue-books contain a great deal of interesting matter, but they seldom find their way into non-official hands. They can, of course, be ordered through any bookseller, but booksellers do not keep them on sale, and the public are unfamiliar with them. The blue covers soon wear out, and all Blue-books, except the very smallest, are apt to come unsewn, and break in two. The compilers generally write for experts, so far as they can be said to write for anybody except themselves. They do not begin at the beginning of anything, so to speak, but take for granted much that the ordinary reader does not know, and consequently they puzzle him. They are dull, because they have to write in the official language, and with official caution and reticence. They cannot pass judgment on persons with whom their Department has relations, or utter opinions on any point the Department regards as controversial. Lastly, the Blue-book is apt to be indigestible, because it contains, along with matter of public interest, a great deal which is printed merely for administrative purposes. The annual volumes of the old Education Department used to exhibit glaring examples of this fault.

Writers in educational periodicals, also, provide for

persons engaged in educational work, and take a great deal of knowledge for granted. They are not restricted, as the Blue-book writers are, by official conventions ; but, on the other hand, they are sometimes too much of partisans to be safe guides. What is worse, their productions are necessarily scrappy, and even more transitory than the Blue-book ; for the newspaper file, whether bound or loose, repels the most ardent seeker after knowledge.

My object is to describe, in as few and simple words as possible, the English elementary schools of to-day and yesterday, the regulations under which they work, and some of the considerations which influence those who conduct them. My treatment may be dull, but the subject is interesting, and I shall not have written in vain if this book will provoke some more competent person to write a better one.

In preparing what is something between a history and a guide-book on such a subject as elementary education, the main difficulty lies in securing accuracy, whilst avoiding useless statistics and useless references to Acts of Parliament and official regulations. Statistics and quotations from the Acts and regulations could be multiplied to any extent, but they would make the text unreadable, and I have omitted them almost entirely. At the same time, for the benefit of any person who may wish to verify my statements or embark on educational administration, I have supplied an Appendix, containing a list of the more important Education Acts, and certain other pieces of information.

I do not hesitate to use the first person singular in describing what I have actually seen and heard. Any honest person may be a useful witness, if circumstances permit, and I, through no merit of my own, have witnessed a great deal. On the recognised principle that a witness

must give his name and address, I supply the following information about my own experience, which goes back as far as 1880. After being assistant inspector in two or three different places, I have worked successively in Durham, London, Cambridgeshire, and Kent, and have, as what is called a divisional inspector, seen a good deal of the eastern and south-eastern counties generally. Also, I have acted for some years as an inspector of training colleges, and at two different periods as an assistant secretary of the Board of Education.

This book is concerned with England only. So far as education is concerned, Ireland and Scotland are absolutely separate countries. The Isle of Man and the Channel Isles are also separate countries, though they have relations with the English Board of Education. The Welsh system, it may be explained, is administered from the same headquarters as the English, but Welsh conditions are different from our own. I have no first-hand knowledge of them, and I only refer to them incidentally.

A. W. N.

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THE ENGLISH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

CHAPTER I

The Educational Machinery of England and Wales

AT starting it must be explained what the term "elementary" signifies, and what ground this book covers. Some difficulty attends a strict legal definition, but for all practical purposes an elementary school is a school which does not provide for scholars much over fourteen, and which is not a mere feeder for more advanced schools. Full-time schools that retain scholars up to the age of sixteen, seventeen, or eighteen are termed "secondary," unless, as may occasionally happen, they have a very strong industrial bias, in which case they are "technical." The elementary school gives an education which is intended to be complete in itself, or else a foundation for work in part-time classes, either "continuation" or "technical." Individual children in plenty leave elementary schools and enter secondary schools at the age of eleven or twelve, or more, but they are in a minority, and to prepare them for the secondary schools is never the elementary school's main business. A school that exists solely or mainly to prepare scholars for secondary schools is known as a preparatory school, and forms part of the system of

secondary education with which this book has little to do.

The terms elementary and secondary do not, of course, run well together. It would be better to speak of elementary and advanced schools, or primary and secondary schools, but the words in use are well established, and it is unlikely that either of them will be dislodged.

An elementary school that can give proof of its efficiency may be a private school, that is, it may be conducted without control or subsidy from the State, but private elementary schools are few and unimportant, and a study of English elementary education is practically a study of the State-aided and State-controlled system which arose in the first half of the nineteenth century. This system has had a short but crowded history, which it would be wearisome to trace in detail. I propose merely to describe very shortly the position that was reached at the time of the great Education Act of 1870, and rather more fully the position that we occupy at the present day. This is not a hard task, for the system of 1870 was simple, and that of 1918 is not complicated in its main outlines. These outlines have been determined mainly by the Act of 1870, which made the provision of elementary school accommodation compulsory on every district, and established school boards in certain places; certain subsidiary Acts which supplemented the Act of 1870, and made school attendance compulsory on all children; the Act of 1899, which established the Board of Education and was a necessary preliminary to the Act of 1902; the Act of 1891, which abolished school fees in most schools and reduced them in most of the remainder; the Act of 1902, which abolished school boards, instituted education committees, and placed all grant-aided elementary schools, except a very

few, under the control of the latter; and the Act of 1918, which simplified and strengthened the law of school attendance, finally abolished school fees, and introduced various improvements in administration.

At the time just before the Act of 1870 was passed, the State, through the Education Department, assisted bodies of private persons to build and maintain elementary schools. Under certain conditions, the Department paid building grants to the school founders or managers, and also annual grants for school maintenance. Interest no longer attaches to the conditions for the building grants, but it is otherwise with respect to the maintenance grants. These last, naturally, varied according to the size of the school, but they depended, also, on the results of the annual examinations conducted by the Department's inspectors. In 1870 the principle of payment by results, as it was called, was not of long standing, as it had only been introduced by Robert Lowe in 1862. In the main the examinations determined the work of the schools. The Department did not forbid teaching outside its own syllabuses, but nothing outside these counted for grant. The inspector, in his examination, was forbidden to go beyond them in practice. Speaking generally, they were formed, or supposed to be formed, in the interests of the average child, who was expected to go forward a standard a year. For a child who was at all above the average the work was easy, for a dull child it was often hard.

Before the Act of 1870 the Department had no power to force a school on any locality. Speaking generally, children were under no compulsion to attend school, but the Factory Acts,¹ of which there was a long

¹ For a concise and clear account of the early Factory Acts see "A Short History of Education," by G. Benson Clough. Ralph Holland & Co, 1904.

series, ensured the partial school attendance of children employed in workshops and factories. Indirectly, these Acts brought about the provision of schools in particular areas, for where there were no schools there could be no school attendance, and where there was no school attendance, employers could obtain no child labour for their workshops or factories. The child employed in agriculture, or not employed at all, was left theoretically to the mercy of his parents; he could be sent to school, where a school existed, if they cared to pay his school fees, or he could be sent to work, or he might simply run wild. In practice, some landowners and employers encouraged or enforced school attendance, but they did so by illegal, or rather extra-legal methods.

At the same time, the State, through the Science and Art Department of South Kensington, subsidised classes in various arts and sciences, but the Department had no compulsory powers behind it. No locality could be required to provide instruction in science or art, and no person could be required to attend science or art classes where they were provided.

The State had begun to concern itself about secondary schools, and Parliament had just passed the Endowed Schools Act of 1869, which gave the endowed school commissioners certain powers to control the management of endowed schools, but did not create any efficient machinery for the purpose.¹

Pupil teachers in elementary schools were subsidised by the Department, though to a very small extent. Training colleges for elementary school teachers received large grants; indeed, in 1870, as at present, the grants constituted much the largest part of the incomes of the

¹ See "Inspection of Secondary Schools by the State," prefixed to the Report of the Board of Education for 1913-14.

colleges. The Department examined the pupil teachers during each year of their apprenticeship ; it examined candidates for entry into the colleges ; and it examined the students of the colleges and other persons who wished to become fully qualified teachers, or, as the phrase goes, to "get their certificates."

All these State activities taken together were small according to our modern ideas, and according to the ideas that prevailed in some foreign countries in 1870, but the State was doing much more than at any earlier date. Forty years previous to 1870 it was doing nothing. In 1830 the earlier Factory Acts were in existence, but they dealt merely with the hours of work and so forth ; there were no grants for educational purposes ; and there was no department in the State that had to do with educational matters. Everything that got done at all was done by private effort, by societies, or by the governors of various educational foundations,¹ who were really irresponsible people.

In 1870 the Education Department was, in theory, a committee of the Privy Council ; its nominal head was the Lord President of the Council ; its working parliamentary head was usually the Vice-President of the Council on Education, but the nominal head might, and at times he did, control more or less the work of the Department. As in the case of other Government departments, a permanent secretary ranked next to the parliamentary heads ; below him came assistant secretaries, and officers called examiners, because they were originally appointed to examine the reports of inspectors. The inspectorate

¹ There were foundations that provided elementary instruction ; I know of two in the small county of Cambridgeshire, both dating from at least as far back as the middle of the eighteenth century. The "Old Schools" in the borough of Cambridge are, I believe, older still as institutions, though their fabrics are more modern.

was divided into three groups on denominational lines : the Church of England schools, which far outnumbered all the other schools put together, were inspected by clergymen ; the Roman Catholic schools had inspectors of their own who were laymen ; the British, Wesleyan, and undenominational schools had a third set of inspectors, who also were laymen. It followed that enormous journeys over the same ground had to be taken by three different sets of men.

The Science and Art Department had an organisation of its own ; it worked independently of the Education Department.

It would not be literally true to say that there was no State organisation beyond that supplied by the Education Department and the Science and Art Department, for there were schools and school masters in various institutions controlled or subsidised by the State, but these schools were not available for the nation at large. The Endowed Schools Commission also, was just coming into being. Speaking broadly, however, the State did nothing for elementary education, except through the Education Department, and nothing for technical or higher schools, except through the Science and Art Department.

In 1870 the teacher's position was simple, but unsatisfactory. He was the servant of the school managers, and the conditions of his employment were a matter of bargain between him and them. Sometimes he was paid a fixed salary. Sometimes the school was farmed, *i.e.*, he was allowed to receive the Government grant and children's school pence, to staff the school as cheaply as he could, and to live on what he could make out of the arrangement. Very often an intermediate plan was adopted, *e.g.*, he received a fixed salary, together with a fraction of the Government grant. The word

“managers” was nearly always used in the plural, and, as far as I know, the Education Department always required three signatures to the returns and statistics sent in to it by each school, but it was not infrequent for all the managers but one to be men of straw. When this was the case, the teacher's employment depended upon the goodwill of a single person, who might or might not be competent to supervise a school. Occasionally, especially when the school was farmed, all the managers were men of straw, and the teacher, under a very thin disguise, was his own manager as well as his own treasurer.

In 1870 there was no compulsory superannuation for teachers; managers were absolutely free to employ a teacher of any age. Nor was there any kind of superannuation scheme. The teacher who failed through old age or illness had no claim either on the school managers who had employed him or on the State. It followed that a teacher was often tempted to struggle on, after he had become unfit for work.

In the fifty years or so since the first Education Act was passed, the whole situation has changed. The Board of Education¹ has come into existence and taken over all the work of the Education Department and the Science and Art Department, together with certain duties formerly assigned to the Charity Commissioners, who in 1874 took over the duties of the Endowed Schools' Commissioners. The Board has also been entrusted with certain other duties which were not discharged by anyone in the past. Before describing

¹ I use the singular number, but in official language, “Board” is a plural noun. “Department” was singular, but the Education Department's letters and publications always purported to be issued under the direction of “My Lords,” *i.e.*, the members of the Committee of Council on Education.

what the Board does, it may, however, be convenient to explain exactly what it is, and what are the educational authorities with which it transacts business. The present position is, in its main outlines, somewhat as follows. The Board of Education, as constituted by the Act of 1899, is an independent department of the State. It is concerned only with England and Wales; Scotland and Ireland, the Isle of Man, and Channel Islands have educational organisations of their own, as to which this book provides no information. The head of the Board is the President, who, until the small war Cabinet was constituted, was always a Cabinet Minister. It is also represented in Parliament by a Parliamentary Secretary, who is a member of the ministry but not of the Cabinet. Theoretically, the Board is composed of various high Cabinet Ministers, but, as members of the Board, they do not meet, and it is only the President and the Parliamentary Secretary that count. The permanent staff of the Board is divided into various sections, which correspond to the various kinds of schools and institutions with which the Board is concerned. There is a section for elementary schools, a section for secondary schools, one for technical schools and classes, one for continuation schools, one for grants to universities and training colleges. There is also a legal section, a medical section, and a Welsh section. The inspectors who constitute the outdoor staff are divided into corresponding sections.

Every part of England and Wales has its local education authority. In the case of a county or county borough the authority is its council, but the administration is left to a committee, always termed the education committee, which is composed mainly of members of the council, but partly also of co-opted members; the committee has charge of elementary, secondary, and technical education within its area.

Boroughs with a population of less than ten thousand, and urban districts with a population of less than twenty thousand, have no education committee; for educational purposes they are treated as parts of the counties in which they are situated.

Boroughs with a population of over ten thousand, which are not county boroughs, and urban districts with a population of over twenty thousand, stand in a different position. All these places have their education committees, but the committee has charge only of elementary education within its area; other kinds of education are under the care of the county in which the borough or urban district is situated. As in the case of county or county boroughs, the education committee is a committee of the borough or urban district council.

On the whole, then, the position is that there are about eighty-two committees for county boroughs, with complete charge of all kinds of education within their areas, about sixty-three committees for counties, each of which has charge of all kinds of education within its own area, and also of all education, other than elementary, of the various small boroughs and urban districts forming islands and peninsulas in its area. Lastly, there are about 174 committees for small boroughs and urban districts, which are almost entirely concerned with elementary education only.

Each education committee is bound by law to provide and maintain efficient elementary schools for the children living in its area and to enforce attendance; it is entrusted with control over the secular instruction given in all its elementary schools which it has itself provided, or which were provided by the school boards between 1870 and 1902. In the case of these schools, also, it has control over religious instruction, and complete control over all appointments to the teaching staff;

it may, and often does, delegate these controls to bodies of local managers, but it can resume them at any time. In the case of the elementary schools established by bodies of private persons, either before or after 1902, and recognised by the Board of Education, the position is different. In these schools, which are technically termed non-provided, the control of religious instruction rests with the managers of the school, and its nature is usually determined by the trust-deed, which each non-provided school is obliged to possess; supposing it is not determined by the trust-deed, it is settled by the managers at their discretion. Appointments to the teaching staff, also, rest with the managers, but they have to be confirmed by the education committee. Two-thirds of the managers of each non-provided school are appointed in accordance with the trust-deed, and are termed foundation managers; one-third are representatives of local authorities. The authority of the managers of the non-provided school may be considerable or very small, according as the committee does or does not delegate to them its authority over the staff and the secular instruction; the only power that necessarily rests with them is the regulation of religious instruction in accordance with the trust-deed.

Until the Education Act of 1918 was passed, no education committee was under any legal obligation to provide or subsidise any kind of education other than elementary. Up to a certain point, however, the committee of a county or county borough could do so without any expense to its locality, inasmuch as the amounts of certain taxes raised under the Customs and Excise Act of 1890¹ is paid to the committee for the purposes of education other than elementary, and this amount cannot be expended in any other way. But

¹ This amount is commonly known as the "whisky money."

though it was under no actual obligation, the county or county borough committee has since 1902 had very extensive powers. It can maintain secondary schools and technical classes, schools, and institutions; subsidise these schools and institutions; subsidise young persons intending to become teachers; and maintain training colleges for teachers. It cannot, however, until the Act of 1918 fully operates, enforce school attendance on any boy or girl over fourteen who is not blind, deaf, or defective. Furthermore, the education committee, or strictly the council, of a non-county borough or an urban district has limited powers of subsidising or providing secondary or technical education.

Conversely, just as the education committee is under no obligation to any secondary school, so the governors of an endowed secondary school, unless constrained by a trust-deed, are under no obligation to meet the educational needs of any particular district. They may regard their school as a national and not a local institution, and ignore the committee for the area. Neither need they qualify the school to receive State grant or put it under the inspection of the Board. The position and work of secondary schools are outside the scope of this book, but, it may be remarked, some of the best known endowed secondary schools receive neither guidance nor subsidy from the Board. It may be noted also that the number of pupils in the secondary schools, recognised as efficient by the Board, only exceeds by about 50 per cent. the number of teachers in the elementary schools, and that the number of these secondary school pupils over sixteen years of age is only about 11 per cent. of the number of elementary school teachers.

Education committees have also duties in connection with the feeding of school children, the medical

inspection of school children, the provision of information about the employment of young persons,¹ and the maintenance of schools for the deaf, blind, and mentally or physically defective.

The powers of an education committee are limited by those of the Board of Education. Every elementary school which a committee may maintain has to be conducted according to the Board's regulations, *i.e.*, the premises and the teachers have to satisfy certain conditions, and the course of instruction has to satisfy other conditions, which, however, allow a great deal of latitude. The committee is legally bound to conduct the school in this way, and, apart from the legal liability, an open defiance of the regulations or their serious breach would endanger State aid in respect of the school. A committee is not actually obliged to conduct its secondary or technical institutions in accordance with the Board's regulations, but, unless the regulations are observed, these institutions, like the elementary schools, can earn no grant from the State, and the committee will very rarely maintain, and seldom subsidise, an institution which is not grant earning. There is no apparent legal reason why an education committee should not subsidise even a private school, but cases in point, if they have ever occurred, must be rare, and on the whole, we may say that few schools, classes, and colleges with which the education committees have to do fail to conform to the rules which the State, *i.e.*, the Board of Education, has laid down.

The expenditure of an education committee is met in several ways. First of all there are the school fees. The elementary schools have been generally free for many years, and they are all made free by the Act of 1918, but the scholars' payments for secondary educa-

¹ Under the Choice of Employments Act.

tion are of considerable amount. In the second place there is the whisky money, which has already been mentioned as available for super-elementary education. Then there are a number of grants, at one time about fifty, which the Board pays to the committees for a variety of purposes, and under very elaborate conditions. Grants in connection with elementary schools included annual grants, grants in lieu of fees, aid grants to poor areas, all of which, with great advantage, are now amalgamated in one general grant. There are also grants in aid of medical inspection and medical treatment, and grants in connection with the Choice of Employment Act. Grants are also paid for secondary schools and technical schools and classes, but these grants are not necessarily paid to the education committee. It has always to be remembered that, whilst all State-aided elementary schools¹ are conducted by an education committee, State-aided secondary schools, State-aided technical schools, and State-aided training colleges may be conducted by various bodies of persons, provided that various conditions are satisfied, provided in particular that the institutions are not conducted for private profit. An endowed grammar school, for instance, may be aided by the State or by the education committee, or by neither or by both. The grants which have been mentioned do not exhaust the list ; under recent regulations the Board pays grants in aid of nursery schools, play centres, and the organisation of physical instruction. There are also certain miscellaneous receipts from endowments and the like, which may fall to a committee. The balance of an education committee's expenditure falls upon the ratepayers of its area. Speaking broadly, the ratepayers provide about half of the total income of

¹ Excepting certain schools connected with residential institutions, which are treated as being of a non-local character.

the education committees, *i.e.*, £31,000,000,¹ more or less, in the year before the war, and several millions more at the present time, whilst the taxpayers, or, in other words, the State, provide about fourteen-fifteenths of the other half. But, if we consider the maintenance of schools alone, the taxpayer provides more than the ratepayer, for every area has to meet its own charges for the provision of schools.

The Board's legal powers over the education committees lie mainly in the fact that it administers the State grants, and that the grants can be withheld if the necessary conditions are not satisfied. There is no machinery for coercing a committee which ignores secondary and technical education, and it would be by no means easy to deal with a committee which refused to maintain or provide elementary schools.

An education committee's information about the institutions within its area is obtained in various ways. When an area is small, members of a committee can have a first-hand knowledge of their schools; a person of reasonable industry and a certain amount of leisure could readily make himself acquainted with all the schools and all the senior teachers in a town of ten to thirty thousand inhabitants, and many committees have no larger population under their care. No doubt there are committee men who, from their own observation, know all about the schools which they maintain. But for this to happen is the exception rather than the rule. Committees are, for the most part, composed of people who are busy about their own affairs, and the mass of

¹ This figure represents the total expenditure of the education committees, and not the total expenditure in connection with State-aided schools; another million in round numbers may be added for the expenditure of all schools and colleges, other than universities, subsidised by the State, but not maintained by education committees.

our population does not live in small and compact towns ; it is either concentrated in great cities; or spread out over wide tracts of country. In many cases there are far more elementary schools than can be profitably visited by any committee man who is not prepared to convert himself into an unpaid inspector. In some cases, notably in London, the West Riding, Lancashire, Durham, Norfolk, and Kent, it would be physically impossible for any one man to visit all the schools within any reasonable period. It follows that the education committees usually have to obtain their information about particular schools either from their own paid staff or from the Board of Education's staff of inspectors.

Of late years it has been the Board's policy to reduce its out-of-door staff. Its estimate for inspection is actually lower than the Education Department's estimate twenty years ago, though the population of the country has increased greatly during the period, and the Board's staff inspects secondary and technical as well as elementary schools, whilst the Department was concerned with elementary schools only. There has been a small reduction in salaries, but the saving has been made chiefly by reducing the number of inspectors working in the very large boroughs, places which may be considered capable of selecting and directing their own local staffs of inspectors. Whilst the Board's inspectorial staff has decreased, that of the education committees has grown up ; the county of London, for instance, employs about thirty inspectors, besides inspectors of special subjects, and the county borough of Manchester about seven. Speaking generally, the more important committees employ inspectors of their own, and the less important rely mainly upon the reports of the Board's inspectors, but partly, also, on such information as their own

members may pick up. It is difficult to say how many local inspectors there really are, for some of the officers termed "inspectors" or "directors" are rather administrators than anything else.

The education committees employ, also, very considerable clerical staffs, and it is inevitable that they should do so, as large numbers of schools have to be controlled from central offices. The control, it must be understood, is usually financial and not educational. Few committees interfere with the school syllabuses or issue circulars about methods of instruction. They generally recognise that the broad lines of the school course are laid down in the Board's regulations, and leave criticism on points of detail to their own inspectors or to the Board's. In one large county, which I will not mention, a detailed syllabus of each school's work has, or had until quite lately, to be sent up to the Committee's office for examination and approval, but this arrangement is quite exceptional. It is, of course, worse than useless, inasmuch as most criticism of syllabuses, syllabuses of an actually absurd kind excepted, is idle, until it is ascertained how the syllabus is to be treated, and the treatment cannot be ascertained except by a visit to the school. But purely financial control from a central office involves a great deal of routine work in connection with the payment of teachers and caretakers, the supply of fuel, books, and school apparatus, and repairs to premises; there is also much work of a less routine kind in connection with the staffing of schools, alterations in premises, the provision of new schools, and the closing of old ones. Office expenses arise, also, in connection with the enforcement of school attendance, and the salaries of attendance officers are another charge on the education committees. On the whole, educational administration

is quite an expensive article ; in one form or another, it costs the nation about two millions a year ; rather more than one-fifth of this sum is expended by the Board of Education on its own officers, in-door and out-of-door, rather less than four-fifths represents the in-door and out-of-door expenses of local administration. The four-fifths, however, it must be noted, include the loan charges for both interest and repayment of principal, that the Education Committees have incurred in providing themselves with office accommodation ; whilst the one-fifth does not include the capital expenditure on the premises of the Board of Education. On the whole, the cost of administration is about one-sixteenth of the total expenditure in connection with the State-aided schools ; or, putting it in another way, the equivalent to a rate of more than twopence in the pound over England and Wales. Such an expenditure on mere administration is undoubtedly heavy, and it would have seemed enormous to our forefathers who expected to be governed by unpaid legislators, lord-lieutenants, justices of the peace, mayors, and aldermen.

What has been said about the functions and duties of the education committees will explain who are the employers of the teachers. As the State maintains no schools other than those for soldiers' children, and so forth, no teacher is a civil servant ; the army school-masters are under the authority of the War Office, which has an educational machinery of its own. As the Education Committees maintain nearly all the elementary schools in the country, some of the technical and secondary schools, and certain training colleges for teachers, most teachers are municipal servants. The teachers serving in Poor Law schools, though employed by the Poor Law Guardians and not by the Committees, also fall under the same head. Various governing

bodies maintain certain elementary schools connected with residential institutions, certain industrial schools which give elementary instruction, though they are not technically elementary schools, many secondary schools, some technical classes and schools, and many training colleges for teachers. These governing bodies employ a large number of teachers, who are neither municipal servants nor civil servants.

Lastly, there are teachers in schools conducted for private profit, who are not under the control of either a governing body or an education committee. The principals of these institutions work at their own risk, and for their own welfare; the assistant teachers are merely the paid servants of the principals. The private school teacher, however, though not aided by the State, and outside its control, is not, necessarily, beyond its purview, inasmuch as the Board is prepared to inspect any kind of private school, and it publishes a list of private secondary schools it has inspected and found efficient.

On the whole, the teachers who are municipal servants are far the largest class, inasmuch as the State-aided elementary schools conducted by the education committees contain about six million scholars, *i.e.*, many times more than all the other schools in the country added together.

Had this book been written before the Education Act of 1918 was passed, a chapter, or half a chapter, on the law of school attendance would have been necessary. This subject can now be dealt with in a very small space. Apart from the indirect compulsion resulting from the Factory Acts, there was no compulsory school attendance before 1870. Compulsion was introduced piece-meal, and after it had become general, all sorts of exceptions to the general rule

were admitted. There was a local option in the matter, and this option was exercised in various queer ways, which it is now needless to describe. Speaking generally, exceptions were most easily obtained in districts depending on agriculture and the textile industries, and least easily in London and some other large towns where there was but little demand for children's labour. The Act of 1918 has abolished all exceptions so far as children under fourteen are concerned. School attendance is now compulsory on all children up to fourteen, and it rests with the committee to say whether compulsion shall be extended to children between fourteen and fifteen. Furthermore, compulsory attendance no longer ends with a boy's birthday, as was always the case until 1918, but with the close of the term in which the birthday falls. Consequently, a school will henceforward have regular leaving days, and the teacher will no longer find his elder scholars dropping off one by one. This simple change will prevent a considerable waste in teaching power, and remove obvious difficulties in school organisation. The advantages of the change are so evident, that we may wonder why we waited for it until nearly fifty years after the first introduction of compulsion.

Until the Act of 1918 was passed, compulsion everywhere began at the age of five. The Act provides that the age may remain at five or be raised to six, or rather to the opening of the first term that begins after the sixth birthday. Something will be said upon this subject in the fifth chapter of this book.

Any amount of further detail as to our educational machinery could be supplied without difficulty, but it would be repulsive to the layman who does not wish to study Acts of Parliament and regulations, and useless

to the official who has already assimilated them. Henceforward, I propose to say as little as possible about Acts and regulations, but to describe as well as I can the teaching which they condition. Our system, like all other human things, might doubtless be better than it is, but any person who has patience to read the following chapters will, I hope, be convinced that elementary Schools, as they exist in England, are not inefficient institutions, and that the regulations which govern them are not altogether mischievous.

CHAPTER II

The System of Payments by Results—The Mundella Code—Later Modifications of the Code—The Origin of the System.

FOR a long time the Board's regulations for elementary schools have been of a very elastic kind. Annual examinations, such as Robert Lowe instituted, disappeared many years ago, and the Board exercises no minute control over the working of the schools. Its inspectors visit at uncertain, and sometimes very long intervals. Its regulations sketch out a curriculum, but, with one curious exception which will be discussed later on, they do so very vaguely, and the curriculum which they describe may be departed from on any reasonable ground. So long as the regulations are observed, the committee has the power to determine the curriculum of any school under its rule, but, according to the general practice, the head teacher of each school makes out his own syllabus. This syllabus stands unless it is challenged by an inspector of the committee or the Board. In the first case, unless the committee's inspector recommends something clearly contrary to the Board's regulations, the teacher must give way or appeal to the committee against its officer. In the second case, he must either give way or ask the committee to represent the case to the Board. As a matter of fact, however, very few syllabuses are seriously challenged, and the teacher has great freedom in planning out his work.

During the period which began in 1862-63 the

position was very different. The annual examination dominated everything, and determined in detail the work of every school; this was especially the case in the years beginning 1882-83, when some peculiarly elaborate regulations came into force. The examinations were conducted by the Department's inspectors; indeed, to conduct them was the inspector's main business. The examination syllabuses were set out in the Department's regulations. The results determined the State's grant to the school, and considerably affected the professional reputation of its teachers. The procedure varied with the regulations of the Department, but from 1863, and for about thirty years after, the inspector had to examine very large numbers of children in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and to record each of these children as having passed or failed in each of the three subjects. This was by no means all. For some years before 1880 examinations of the school as a whole had to be carried out in two subjects, known technically as "class subjects." Of these, one was English grammar; the other might be geography, or history, or elementary science, or needlework. In 1883 the learning of poetry, which had formerly been optional, was made compulsory, and the grammar and poetry together were christened English. Furthermore, children in the upper part of the school were sometimes presented for examination in various more advanced subjects, known technically as "specific subjects." Lastly, there was an examination in singing.

The results of all these examinations were reported to the Department, and each result affected the total amount of grant payable. This method of calculating grant according to examination results received its greatest elaboration in 1882 and 1883, when the Education Department was controlled by A. J. Mundella,

who was then Vice-President of the Council. Under the Mundella Code, as the regulations of 1882 were commonly called, the inspector had not only to report the results of his examinations, but also to assess the school as either "fair," or "good," or "excellent." In addition to all other grants, a grant of one shilling per child in average attendance was payable to the school assessed as fair, a grant of two shillings to the school assessed as good, and one of three shillings to the school assessed as excellent. The grant was known as the merit grant.

The Mundella Code has long been dead, and it is useless to dwell upon all its details, but an account of its main provisions may not be out of place. Some of these remarks apply equally to the earlier regulations which it superseded. The Code set out the work for each year of a child's school life. The "specific" subjects which have been mentioned were purely optional, and in the case of one "class" subject¹ there were various alternatives, but apart from this the same scheme of instruction had to be followed all over England. As far, also, as the Department could contrive, the same tests were applied. The Department did not obtain uniformity, inasmuch as it was impossible to bring all inspectors into line, but the "Instructions to Inspectors," which were published every year as a kind of companion to the Code, did something to establish an examination standard, and in the case of arithmetic the Department issued sets of questions for general use, and uniformity was actually secured. The Code provided seven standards, and its intention was that a child over seven years of age, but under eight, should be examined in Standard I.; a child over eight, but under

¹ Theoretically the class subjects were optional, in practice they were compulsory.

nine, in Standard II., and so forth. It was, however, generally understood that a scholar who failed in any standard in two at least of the three subjects, reading, writing, and arithmetic, might take that standard over again. Children also escaped examination by passing from school to school, or through illness, and, on the whole, the average rate of progress was considerably less than a standard a year. On the other hand, particular children in particular schools sometimes skipped a standard, and, consequently, went forward faster than the official rate.

So far nothing has been said about infant schools. In 1880 the grants on behalf of children under seven years of age depended, but to a small extent, on the inspector's report. Under the Mundella regulations, however, infant schools were assessed as "fair," "good," or "excellent"; and a merit grant of two shillings, four shillings, or six shillings per child in average attendance was awarded according to the assessment. Infant schools, like the schools for older children, were tested mainly by an annual examination.

Notice of his annual examination was always given by the inspector, and he was instructed to hold it in the first month of the school's financial year. He was supposed to assess the work of the past year, for which the grant was paid.

The inspector was not forbidden to visit schools at any time he liked. On the contrary, "visits without notice," as they were called, were encouraged by the Department, and the information obtained when they were paid could quite properly be combined with that obtained at the annual examinations, but the annual examinations, which were strictly obligatory, involved very heavy work, and many inspectors had very little time for anything else.

I think I may say that most persons whose work was conditioned by the Mundella Code were profoundly dissatisfied with their position. Different reasons led different people to the same conclusion. The teacher who took an interest in his profession was hampered and harassed in a number of different ways. The teacher who wanted to be idle was compelled to be busy. The inspector who wished to be idle suffered in the same way.

The inspector who endeavoured to do justice to everybody was disheartened by the impossibility of his task. I think, too, that competent school managers were generally suspicious of reports and grants that rested on the shaky basis of an annual examination.

The position of the good and conscientious teacher was very unfortunate. His curriculum was practically settled for him by the Code. He was not, of course, forbidden to extend his teaching outside Code limits, but he was unlikely to obtain credit for anything not required of him, and the work required of him was, in general, sufficient for his energies. Particular schools may have gone beyond the Code in certain directions, but, in a general way, the Code syllabus and nothing else was studied. Thus, all over England Standard V. children were to be found working at the addition and subtraction of vulgar fractions, practice, bills of parcels, and the rule of three, but very seldom at any other arithmetic. Similarly, all over England the same children were "analysing and parsing" simple sentences.

Furthermore, the teacher had little freedom in classifying scholars. The rule was that a scholar should mount up a standard a year; exceptions were possible theoretically, but each exception had to be explained to the inspector on the examination day, and it was the inspector's duty to require specific reasons in each case.

There were official rules as to the circumstances that would justify the exceptions, but these rules were interpreted in various ways, and there were even inspectors who rejected the principle already mentioned, that failure in writing and arithmetic, or in reading and arithmetic, was sufficient reason for the repetition of a year's work.

Moreover, the more scrupulous a teacher was, the more he was at a disadvantage, as compared with a less scrupulous man. If a tender conscience or professional pride prevented him from grounding his teaching on questions asked in neighbouring schools, he suffered. In certain districts, at all events, the inspector's questions were carefully collected, studied, and circulated amongst teachers. There was no dishonesty about this, inasmuch as no examining body can claim that its questions are confidential. The practice, however, did not foster enlightened teaching, and it was repudiated by some teachers, though followed by many. It tended, I may remark incidentally, to vitiate the results of the yearly examinations. The Code syllabuses, being adapted for children, were very limited, consequently the inspector's stock of questions soon got exhausted, and, in certain cases, to make children learn by heart the answers of all probable questions was easier than to teach a subject properly.

Cram of this kind, though uneducational, was not dishonest, but the Mundella Code put a distinct premium on real dishonesty and on something approaching cruelty. One large part of the annual grant was made to depend on the percentage of passes, which the scholars, with certain exceptions, obtained in reading, writing, and arithmetic. Every failure in these subjects took something from the grant and something from the school's reputation; consequently, a teacher was strongly

tempted to press hard on children who were likely to fail, and to remove from the school any who were certain to fail. So far as the Department's regulations were concerned, neither teacher nor school managers could exclude a child without serious cause, but in urban areas, where schools were close together, persuasion could do a good deal to make a child change its school, and it was possible to make a school so unpleasant for a dull or backward child that he preferred to go elsewhere. Conduct of this kind was very far from being universal, but the regulations were so framed that, unless it was detected, it was remunerative. As to pressure on dull children I can give positive and first-hand testimony. In my northern district extra lessons for groups of children were not unknown. These lessons were given either during the dinner hour or at the close of afternoon school; they were, of course, confined to children not quite up to examination standard, and yet not hopelessly below it. Even infants were sometimes kept back for extra work; I can recall at least two cases in point. Lessons of this kind were contrary to all regulations, and when the inspector of an urban district did his duty they could be pretty nearly suppressed. In rural areas the case was different, as geographical considerations made it hard to pay the necessary inquisitorial visits.

The case must not be overstated. The average teacher who worked under the Mundella Code was neither cruel nor dishonest, but the Code did something to foster dishonesty and petty cruelty, and the temptation to one vice or the other proved too strong for certain weak persons, not very many in number it may be hoped, who, under happier conditions, might have passed without reproach.

However efficient a teacher might be, and however carefully he might prepare his scholars, there was a risk that they would not acquit themselves as he wished when they came to be examined. Examinations are always uncertain things, and they are specially uncertain when the examinees are very young and the examiner has to work against time. The first point is obvious, but the second may need a little explanation. Every elementary school had to be examined every year; no school could be examined in vacation time, or for some little time after its long summer vacation, or on a Saturday, and, though the inspectorial staff was large, it was often difficult for the inspector to plan the work he was absolutely obliged to do. So much had to be allotted to each day of each week, and if it was not completed very considerable difficulties arose. An inspector's trivial illness, a heavy snowfall, or some other incident might throw the examination machinery out of gear, and lead to hurried examinations, which were particularly unpleasant for the teachers concerned. Difficulties in reaching schools, also, often resulted in examinations being held at unseasonable hours, and in well-grounded complaints that the children were unable to do themselves justice. I do not pretend that an inspector never hurried his work out of pure vice, to catch an early train home, and so forth, but far more often the hurry was forced upon him by circumstances. Whether he was to blame or not, the school suffered equally.

It is almost needless to explain why the Code was disagreeable to the would-be idle teacher; he disliked it because it subjected every part of his work to a scrutiny which was severe, if not very intelligent.

The teachers who liked the Code most, or, it would

be more correct to say, disliked it least, were neither, I apprehend, the best nor the worst of their profession. Generally speaking, they were laborious men of little initiative, who were quite content to follow the Code syllabuses and prepare children for the tests the inspectors were likely to apply. Habit tended to produce contentment. When the Mundella Code first came into operation, "payment by results" was twenty years old, and many teachers, consequently, had had twenty years' experience of annual examinations, and the younger men had had no experience of any other kind of inspection.

The inspector's views of the system were parallel to the teacher's. Supposing he were idle—and there were idle inspectors just as there were idle teachers—he disliked the Code for much the same reasons as the idle teacher. The Mundella Code made much greater demands on his time than any of its predecessors. Supposing he were of a phlegmatic and non-neurotic type, he plodded on, tolerably satisfied with himself and his work, and generally discovered some more or less mechanical method of assessing schools as "fair," "good," or "excellent." The difficulties connected with this assessment pressed the hardest, I should say, on the best inspectors; and the more competent a man was, the more distasteful the process was to him. Merit, in the technical sense of the Code, included merit in both discipline and instruction, consequently a very wide field had to come under observation. The judging of discipline was particularly difficult. As a rule, the inspector saw the school only under the abnormal circumstances of the examination day, and from what he saw he had to infer how it was conducted at other times. He might certainly discover manifest faults in discipline, *e.g.*, open disorder, which spoke for them-

selves, but these faults have always been rare, and their absence gave no proof that the discipline was really sound. In estimating the instruction, allowance had to be made for the circumstances of the school; work which would justify an excellent report in one case would not justify it in another. It was, of course, always doubtful how much allowance the circumstances did justify. Finally, there was the extraordinary difficulty in drawing a line between the fair school and the good school, and between the good and the excellent. The task of classification, as is known to all who have conducted examinations, is serious enough in a written examination, when each candidate has a definite numerical mark. It became overwhelming when the examiner had to summarise a number of judgments, each of which was of uncertain value.

Enough has been said of the way in which the Mundella Code presented itself to those who had to carry it out, but nothing of its influence on the children whose education it controlled. Unfortunately, this is a point on which it is impossible to speak with confidence, but certain observations on it may be offered. In the first place, it may be remarked that children of average ability, or more than average ability, were seldom over pressed; it was the dull and backward who suffered. Probably, then, we should obtain untrustworthy results were we to circularise representative persons who were taught under the Code, and collate their views as to the value of their education. Most of the dull and backward children have presumably grown up to be dull men and women, who, if they answered inquiries at all, would answer vaguely and inconclusively. Hence it is unlikely that in this way we should obtain clear evidence of any mischief resulting from the examination system. We might, however, quite possibly find complaints that

the subject matter of the school course was meagre and unsuitable.

The syllabuses contained in the Code were certainly open to criticism. English grammar was a compulsory examination subject. The grammar of the lower classes consisted in pointing out parts of speech, that of the upper in parsing and "analysis." The value of these exercises has been defended by at least two distinguished inspectors, Sir Joshua Fitch and Matthew Arnold, from whom a humble individual may hesitate to differ; but, according to my own experience, the teaching of grammar was particularly arid and mechanical, and a lamentable amount of time was spent over the "nominative" and "objective" cases of English nouns, the "person" of nouns, the "indirect object," and so forth.

The Code contained some weird syllabuses of science. According to a scheme for science as a class subject, which appeared in one edition of the Code, the year's work for Standard IV. was set out as, "the names and positions of the internal organs" of the human body.

It was also possible for a school to ignore important subjects, and yet obtain very high grants. There was, for instance, no reason why a school should teach geography, and girls' schools in which no geography was taught were common. Consequently, a child might leave school without having discovered that Liverpool was in England, and New York in America, or that a map had any meaning at all.

Even a Code, however, deserves justice, and it is necessary to say that some of the criticism passed upon the Mundella Code was not fair. Its syllabuses were better, rather than worse, than those of its predecessors. It was not the first Code that offered temptations to overpressure, though it certainly aggravated them.

Neither was it the first Code that offered temptations to trickery ; these were greater rather than less in the Code which it replaced. The complaints that the teacher had no real freedom of classification were, I think myself, quite well founded, but, to a certain extent, they were answered by the opposite complaint that many children failed to complete their school courses. This last complaint was as common then as it is now.

Critics sometimes forget we cannot eat our cake and have it. A child cannot complete a seven years' course in seven years unless he moves forward at the normal rate of a standard a year or a quicker rate. If we set our standard of work low enough, the children can move forward together in a regimental way, but the better scholars will not be making the progress they could easily make. If we adapt the teaching to the needs of children rather above the average, we must allow the teacher to arrange promotions at his discretion, and refrain from grumbling if the slower children never reach the highest class. Most of us would prefer good progress for the brighter children and freedom for the teacher to uniformity of progress, but the opposite view that a school's business is to bring as many children up to a certain minimum has advocates abroad, if not in England, and it cannot be dismissed as altogether absurd.

In another respect again this Code can be successfully defended. Between 1880 and 1890 the advocates of science teaching were perpetually contending that the Department's regulations laid too much stress on what were termed "literary" studies, and too little on scientific. This criticism was founded on ignorance of the facts, for whatever were the faults of the schools and the Code, the education given was not "literary," and had very little to do with literature. Arithmetic

was always the subject as to which the teacher was most anxious, and the time devoted to it varied from one-fourth to one-sixth of the whole time available for secular instruction. Singing was included in every school time-table. Needlework was always taught to girls, and often for four hours or even more per week. Drawing was nearly always taught to boys in preparation for an examination by an inspector from South Kensington, and drill of some kind was common in boys' schools. Geography, which was a common subject in boys' schools, had certainly no literary bias. Most of the hours allotted to what we may call book learning were spent in mastering the mechanical difficulties of reading, and training children to write dictation correctly. The literary work, unless the English grammar which has been described may be called literary, amounted to little more than the learning of a certain amount of poetry. At the same time there was a considerable amount of science teaching, especially in the Board schools of London, Liverpool, and Birmingham. This teaching was not well directed by the Code syllabuses, and it was hampered by the conditions of the annual examination, but it was quite genuine ; boys in London and some other places learnt a fair amount of elementary physics.

According to the Code which followed the Mundella Code, schools for infants had still to receive their two shillings, four shillings, or six shillings per head according to their general merit, but the merit grant for other schools was abandoned. Instead of the merit grant and the grant depending on the percentage of passes in reading, writing, and arithmetic, there were two other grants. One of these was a grant for discipline at the rate of either one shilling and sixpence or one shilling per child in average attendance, the other for reading,

writing, and arithmetic at the rate of either fourteen shillings or twelve and sixpence. The grants for other subjects remained as before. It would be too much to say that all pressure on children now vanished, but its causes were to a great extent removed, and it was enormously alleviated. The results of these changes were welcomed on all sides. The classification of schools, infant schools excepted, disappeared, and the pass or failure of the individual child no longer had a pecuniary value attaching to it. The examination itself could be carried out with less hurry than in earlier days, for it was no longer necessary that every child's work should be tested; the inspector had to satisfy himself only how the children, as a body, were being taught. He had now time to look about him, and he became less of an examining machine than formerly. At the same time, he was still not without his difficulties; these arose in great measure from the variations in the grant for discipline. Discipline, from its very nature, is not an article that can be measured out in sixpenceworths; and, whilst the inspector could be confident that the discipline of some particular schools was quite sound, there were very many cases in which he had not sufficient materials for an opinion. It had been the intention of the Department that the eighteen-penny grant should be reserved for cases in which the discipline was of some conspicuous merit. This standard was, as might have been foreseen, not maintained in practice. The school expected its eighteenpence unless there was some specific reason to the contrary, and the award of eighteenpence became the rule rather than the exception.

Apart from the difficulties connected with the discipline grant, the Code, as it was now framed, was probably as satisfactory in essentials as any Code could

be which embodied the principle of payment by results. The principle, however, is very difficult to defend, even in its least objectionable form. A low grant and a bad report certainly served to stimulate the teacher, who was able but unwilling to fulfil his duties, but the teacher of this kind, though he has always existed, has never been very common. The reduction in grant did nothing to provide either brains or energy when these were wanting, and supposing, as was often the case, the weakness of a voluntary school arose from want of staff or want of school material, the reduction intensified the mischief. The large school boards cared little for a reduction of the grant, but the less money the managers of a voluntary school received from the State the less as a rule they could spend. Consequently, the only use of the complicated machinery was to coerce the idle man, and he could have been coerced without it. In most cases, two or three unfavourable reports would have resulted in his dismissal. Supposing his managers supported him, either because they distrusted the reports, or because they were related to him, or because they found him useful in non-educational work, they could have been brought to reason by the Department threatening to refuse all recognition to the school.

It is worth pointing out that payment by results did not encourage bad school managers to make their institutions efficient. So long as they kept up to the very low standard which the Department actually demanded, it paid them financially to starve their schools. The highest probable grant under the Mundella Code did not exceed the lowest probable grant by more than five or six shillings per child in average attendance. Under the Code that followed the Mundella Code, the usual differences between a good

grant and a bad grant was even less. The difference between the cost of a good staff and that of a bad staff has always been considerably more.

A reader may ask why, if payment by results was such an unsatisfactory thing, was it ever adopted, and why, if adopted and found wanting, it was maintained so long. The first question may be answered. The report of the Newcastle Commission is on record, and Lowe's motives are set out in his speeches, which are to be read in Hansard and elsewhere. He was determined that the State should receive something definite in return for its grants. As he phrased it, the system which he instituted would ensure either efficiency or economy. If the schools were bad, they would earn low grants and be cheap, if they earned high grants they would be efficient. All this, however, lies outside the period about which I am writing. I need only say that in the earlier part of my official career I met various persons who had had considerable school experience before 1862, and that from time to time I heard expressions of their opinions. Generally they would say that Lowe was right in tightening the Department's control over the schools, but quite mistaken in his choice of methods. Some of the schools were, according to my informants, pretentious, and others very lax, but both kinds could have been reformed without fixing a money value to the examination passes of individual children.

The second question is certainly puzzling. The blame can hardly be put on the politicians as such, for "payments by results" never was a party watchword. The system pressed harder on voluntary schools than on Board schools, consequently it might commend itself rather less to the Conservatives, who defended the former, than to the Liberals, who advocated the latter, but,

speaking generally, it had no relation to politics. On the whole, I can only think that until the appointment of Mr. Kekewich, now Sir G. Kekewich, as Secretary, the country was badly served by the Education Department, and especially so at the time when the Mundella Code was framed. I cannot altogether explain why this should have been the case. Mundella, when he took office, probably knew very little of the work he was to supervise, but this may be said of many other ministers, and he honestly endeavoured to do his best, which cannot be said of all. Sir Francis Sandford, who was then the permanent Secretary of the Department, was well known as an able official—the contrary has never been suggested. He was anything but an idle man, he had many friends and no enemies, and he was thoroughly well acquainted with the work of the office staff which he controlled. The two men, however, had little in common, and it may be suspected they found it hard to co-operate. But the mischief, unless I am mistaken, arose mainly from the fact that the Department was badly advised by those inspectors to whom it looked for guidance. At that time there was no chief inspector, but there were fifteen senior inspectors, whose opinions would naturally be obtained. Of these, Matthew Arnold was by far the best known to the general public. In the time of Lowe he was strongly opposed to payment by results, and, probably, he was opposed to it to the end, but the force of his opposition was greatly weakened by his attitude to all official work. It was known that routine duties were irksome to him, and it would be assumed as a matter of course that a Code which increased these duties would meet with no favour in his eyes. H. E. Oakeley, later Sir H. E. Oakeley, one of the ablest of the fifteen, was, I am pretty confident, suspicious of the merit grant from

its first institution. The remainder naturally varied in character and usefulness. Two or three were arbitrary, and inclined to be tyrannical; two or three, on the other hand, were amiable and decidedly easy going, but, taken as a body, they were not men whose opinion on matters of policy would carry great weight. Two or three were well advanced in years. J. G. Fitch, afterwards Sir Joshua Fitch, however, was one of the fifteen, and his ability was unquestionable. An exhaustive process would seem to lead to the conclusion that he had more than any other inspector to do with the making of the Code; yet it seems strange that the Code commended itself to the author of "Fitch's Lectures on Education." It was maintained in 1882 and 1883, as it has been maintained since, that the Department inspectors were unsafe guides because they had not, as a rule, been elementary teachers, but the faults in the policy of the Department cannot be explained in this way. It was good sense, rather than technical knowledge, that was missing in the regulations. Of technical knowledge, Fitch, at all events, had plenty.

CHAPTER III

Voluntary Schools before 1902—Their Finance and Position

THE Education Act of 1902, though it preserved denominational schools, put an end to voluntary schools as they existed previously. Hence the position of this kind of school has only historical interest, but it was so curious that it seems worth recording. Any person, or body of persons, could start a voluntary school and obtain a Government grant for it, provided that the Education Department could be convinced that the school was "not unnecessary." The wishes of the parents hardly bore upon the matter. A Church of England squire, if he was first in the field, could provide a Church of England school for a Non-conformist parish. Similarly a Roman Catholic school could be imposed upon a Protestant area, and I remember a place where this was actually done. So far as the Education Acts and the Department's regulations were concerned, a Moslem school or a Jewish school could have been provided for a Christian area, but I never heard of a case in point. In every case the Conscience Clause of the Act of 1870 was supposed, as it is still supposed, to protect the rights of parents. The protection was real whenever the parent apprehended the legal position, and did not fear to take his stand upon it. In a town he could safely do this, but in 1870, and for many years afterwards, there were villages in which no prudent person of humble rank would withdraw his children from any instruction that the local potentates might think essential.

According to the Act of 1870, the ratepayers of any parish could demand a School Board, but the Board when formed could not build a Board school unless the Department determined that a new school was not unnecessary. It followed that those who had the power of the purse could nearly always stave off a rural Board school. They could only fail to do so when the need for a new school arose after the formation of a School Board. In such a case the Department might possibly allow the School Board to build the school, even if private individuals came forward.

The friends of the voluntary system could have kept schools everywhere pretty much in their own hands, if they had been rich enough. But ever since 1870 the needs of most towns have been far too great to be met by voluntary subscriptions.

In the northern towns which I knew during 1886-93 voluntary school managers found it easy to maintain schools once the premises were paid for. Indeed, it was much too easy. Before the School Fee Act of 1891 school fees were universally charged. In London and the south of England generally they were comparatively low, but in the north they often ranged from threepence per week to sixpence per week or more. It was found that a large school with a sixpenny fee would pay its way, and sometimes do more. Consequently many Tyneside school managers had no need to collect substantial voluntary subscriptions, and a few applied parts of the school income to non-educational objects. This could be done in one way which was not dishonest. The school managers could rent a building, provided that it was not held in trust for educational purposes, and pay the rent out of the school income. To provide school buildings and to hire them out to school managers would not have been very profitable as a pure com-

mercial speculation; a school costing £5000, and accommodating 500 children, for instance, would have been unlikely to let for £250 per annum. But the owners of a parish room, Sunday schools, etc., were enabled to let their premises to school managers, and obtain a reasonable interest on their original cost, without any detriment to their use for parochial purposes. The practical result of this arrangement was that rooms for various non-educational purposes could be maintained in part, if not altogether, out of Government grants and the children's school pence. The owners of the room might be the same individuals as the managers of the school; consequently they received as owners the rent they paid as managers. All this was strictly legal.

A substantial commercial profit could be made by the owners of a building which housed an elementary school in the daytime, and science and art classes in the evening. During the period of which I am speaking, *i.e.*, 1886-93, the Science and Art Department had its own system of payment by results quite independently of the Education Department's. Every spring it held a series of examinations in science and art, and, according to the results obtained, paid grants to the schools and classes which it recognised. Large and successful classes earned quite large grants. Large classes could not, of course, be organised everywhere, for the supply of possible pupils was limited, but a large day school, with a high fee, was an excellent feeder for the evening work. The most profitable combination of day school and evening classes, of which I had knowledge, was one organised in Newcastle by a well-known Nonconformist minister. He had more or less successful imitators elsewhere. The Newcastle institution lay outside my district, and I cannot say how its surplus

income was applied. Notoriously, however, it had a large surplus, and the yearly cash account, which I once saw, of its elementary side showed a very heavy payment of rent. In this Newcastle case, unless rumour was altogether at fault, the profits were swelled by the sweating of teachers. But there was nothing illegal or dishonest in this practice; the teachers were free agents, and could go elsewhere if they thought fit.

Dishonest school treasurers were not unknown. In general they augmented, or tried to augment, the school funds at the expense of the State, but there were also treasurers who practised to plunder the schools for their own personal benefit. Just as the Code tended to foster cruelty and petty trickery on the part of teachers, legislation tended to foster fraud on the part of school managers. The commonest kind of fraud arose in attempts to evade a clause in the Education Act of 1876, which limited the grant to seventeen shillings and sixpence per child in average attendance, or to the amount of the school income from sources other than grant, whichever sum was the larger. "Income" signified money spent in meeting the running expenses of the school, and not funds spent on capital account, *e.g.*, in providing new class-rooms. The object of the clause was, of course, the encouragement of local effort. Whenever, as was generally the case, under the Mundella Code, the grant rose above the seventeen shillings and sixpence per child, it was the managers' interest to raise the rest of their income beyond the same limit. Hence it was that payments that were not really incurred in maintaining the school were sometimes introduced into the school account, and sums met in meeting these expenses were set down as income from voluntary contributions. In instances which I remember expenditure on improvements of

premises was entered as expenditure on ordinary repairs, and, I believe, this was commonly done in the north of England. A casuist might, perhaps, maintain that this practice was not immoral; he might contend that there was no real deceit, inasmuch as the inspector knew what changes in the premises had been carried out during any particular year, and could therefore report to the Department whether the charges for repairs were genuine or not.

However this may be, I can bear witness to misdeeds on the part of northern school treasurers which no casuistry could justify. In one case, in defiance of regulations, a school was farmed out to a teacher: in other words, he was allowed to receive all the grant and the school pence, to pay the salaries of the staff and the rest of the school expenses, and to make what profit he could. These irregularities were concealed by a sham cash book and sham vouchers, which made it appear that he received a fixed salary.

In another case the treasurer, who was practically sole manager, economised the school funds, so that for several years the income from grant and school pence exceeded the expenditure. Consequently the balance, which nominally stood to the credit of the school, continued to mount up, but at the bankruptcy which ended his treasurership this balance was found to have vanished. He had deliberately applied it to his own purposes.

In both these cases the treasurer was a clergyman. A third clerical treasurer exaggerated the expenditure of his school, not with any idea of defrauding the Department, but in order that he might demand more subscriptions from a large and poor congregation. He supported his statements of expenditure by altering the receipts for the payments which he had really made;

e.g., he would convert a "one" into a "two" or a "four"; in one case he went so far as to turn £10 into £100 by adding a nought. This procedure was made perfectly clear on a microscopic investigation of the altered documents. The official whip, I am glad to say, fell heavily across the shoulders of this scoundrel. He retired from a position of considerable responsibility to one of great obscurity.

A fourth treasurer charged a school a substantial sum for his own services in looking after its finances. Perhaps he should be called impudent rather than dishonest.

It is always dangerous to draw general conclusions from particular instances, but I should explain that my district was, in the main, a district of Board schools. The total number of voluntary schools was somewhere between sixty and seventy, and many of these were rural schools in which there was little room for dishonest finance. It follows that quite a large percentage of the town voluntary schools were not beyond reproach. Whether a similar state of things existed in all the northern counties I do not know; I can only say that, if the inspector was not vigilant, and of an arithmetical turn of mind, there was plenty of room for fraud. The accounts were always audited by someone or other, but until 1898 there was no guarantee that the auditor was a responsible person. He might be a mere cipher, or the treasurer's confederate in crime. Even after 1898 the security against fraud was not complete. I have heard of a case where the managers purchased a worthless piano from one of their own number, and paid for it out of the school funds. Such a transaction would not be detected at audit, for the auditor would not know the instrument's real value.

I believe that voluntary school finance was much

more satisfactory in the south than in the north, but in my London district there were few voluntary schools, and, consequently, I can only speak from hearsay. Twice, however, I found the treasurers of London voluntary schools at fault. One of these grabbed at an undue amount of the "fee grant," the other at an unfair share of the "aid grant," and neither of these acted honestly.

Three bad financial customs which were common in the north were not confined to the voluntary schools. In the first place, it was not unusual to pay the head teacher a large fraction of the grant as part of his salary. Sometimes he received half the grant ; sometimes the rural teacher even received the whole. The result was to accentuate all the mischiefs that have already been described as arising from payment by results ; a bad scholar who brought down the percentage of passes became the source of pecuniary loss to the teacher, and sometimes, consequently, his enemy. Moreover, the teacher often gained or lost unduly from circumstances which he neither foresaw nor controlled ; for instance, by the opening of new works near his school, or by the closing of old ones. The managers, of course, transferred to him the responsibilities they should have undertaken themselves.

Another common bad plan was to make the school fee increase as the scholar moved up through the standards, sometimes the fee rose a penny a standard, or a penny every second standard. There might be a twopenny fee in the lower part of the school, a four-penny fee in the middle, and a sixpenny fee in the upper. I have never heard this arrangement defended, and it was probably continued from mere force of custom. It may have originated in old days from an idea that the lower and middle classes were generally

taught by pupil teachers, and the upper by the head teacher, and that the more advanced instruction by him was worth more than that which the pupil teachers could impart. Whatever the origin of the differentiated fee, its consequences were unfortunate, as the poorer children were encouraged to leave school at the earliest possible moment.

The third bad plan was to make children provide their own reading books. The child who paid for his books, of course, became their owner, and it was not the school's interest to see that he treated them properly. Child nature being what it is, his treatment was often rough, and books which should have lasted several years were in tatters at the end of one. The three reading books with which each scholar had to be supplied were sometimes regularly taken home, not that they might be studied, but either because it was the tradition to take them home, or because there was no safe place for them in the school. They were apt to suffer in the journey. In these ways the children obtained a bad training in the way in which books ought to be used, and considerable expense was laid upon parents who could ill afford it. It was doubtless said that, if books were supplied free, fees would have to be raised, but this contention failed, for, as the books were ill-used, the arrangement I have described cost the parents much more than it saved the managers. It was also said that at the end of the school year the careful child could sell his books to a new entrant into the class he was leaving. This was correct; no doubt particular books were preserved and sold second-hand, but most children and their parents had not the forethought to save books for a sale which might never come off after all.

The northern schools about which I write did not

all live on grants and school pence. Some received substantial help from individuals, but the subscriptions that were called voluntary were not uncommonly paid under a kind of indirect compulsion. The ratepayers of every parish knew that a School Board would be imposed upon them unless they maintained a voluntary school, and the rural School Board had few friends. It was a tiresome and extravagant institution, and it could do little that voluntary school managers could not do equally well. In most cases the members of the School Board, when there was one, were the very people who would have managed a voluntary school had there been one. A strong Nonconformist might prefer an expensive School Board, maintaining a Board school to a voluntary school with the Church catechism, but the Gallios would pay a small subscription rather than a heavy rate. Colliery owners were under a special inducement to support voluntary schools. They were usually the largest ratepayers in the parish, and a School Board in a colliery parish would nearly always have been dominated by the colliers. Hence the owners were inclined to pay a reasonable sum, and retain the school management either in their own hands or in the hands of some religious body, rather than pay a large sum, and abandon control to their own workmen.

The subscriptions to voluntary schools of England and Wales amounted to a high total, and this fact used to be quoted as showing that the voluntary school system was popular. Sometimes the friends of the system would go on to say that the total of the contributions was an index of the demand for denominational religious teaching. The first contention was in one sense accurate, though it would have been more correct to say that the Board schools were unpopular over wide

areas. The second contention would have been correct if the advocates of denominational teaching had been quoting statistics as to School Board areas. The denominational schools of London, for instance, were subscribed to almost entirely by London ratepayers, and each London subscriber may fairly be supposed to have subscribed because he wanted to maintain either Church of England, or Roman Catholic, or Jewish religious teaching. He could have had no other motive. Though the closing of all voluntary schools would have seriously raised the education rate, no appreciable change in the rate would have resulted if the supporters of any particular school had closed their purses and allowed the school to collapse.

On the other hand, nobody could be sure how many of the subscriptions raised in non-School Board areas came from mere economists, and how many from denominationalists. The two classes shaded off into each other, and there must have been subscribers who subscribed partly for one reason and partly for another. All that can be safely said is that a very large number of the subscriptions would have been forthcoming had all the voluntary schools been undenominational, as some actually were.

Very little as to the wishes of parents can be gathered from the fact that most voluntary schools were aided by voluntary subscriptions. The children's parents as a body belonged to one class, and the subscribers as a body to another. The former were, as a rule, working-class people, whilst the latter were well-to-do people who did not send their own children to elementary schools. In fairness it must, however, be said that in the north, at all events, many Roman Catholic schools were aided either by the weekly contributions of parents, or by funds to which the parents

contributed largely. The Church of England schools, which greatly out-numbered the Roman Catholic, received very few subscriptions from working-class parents.

Neither can parents' wishes as to denominational education be gathered from the fact that some denominational schools were crowded and others half empty. When the denominational school was the only school available, its crowded state was no proof of its popularity. When, on the other hand, as was not uncommon, a new and superior Board school attracted children from surrounding voluntary schools, the transfers may have been due to a wish for good teaching and sanitary conditions, rather than to any dislike to denominational teaching.

It is hard to say exactly what religious teaching the average parent of 1880-1902 really wanted, but my own observations led to the following conclusions. Most parents wished for some religious teaching. Whilst very few demanded definite Church of England teaching, large numbers did not seriously resent it. But for clerical pressure steadily applied many children would have left the Roman Catholic schools for schools of an undenominational kind. In the main, the parental attitude was one of indifference. I believe that these conclusions hold good at the present day.

CHAPTER IV

School Hygiene—School Premises in Various Parts of the Country
—School Furniture—School Cleaning—The Medical Inspection and Feeding of Children

IT is profitable to turn from dead subjects, such as voluntary school finance and payment by results, to those which are alive. Amongst these, school hygiene is as prominent as any. In a sense it is a new subject, for it is mainly within the period about which I am writing that it has been taken seriously. Nobody, perhaps, ever denied in so many words that a school should be a healthy place, but in 1880 and much later there were many persons who disregarded the healthiness of the schools they controlled. The Education Department was not free from blame. It would not be right to say that the Department ignored matters of health, for the regulations always required that the school buildings should be properly lighted, cleaned, warmed, and ventilated. Moreover, the plans of all new Board schools had to be passed by the Department's architect, and for a great many years before 1902 the plans of new voluntary schools had to be similarly passed. The misfortune was that the official architect to whom the earlier Board school plans were submitted knew very little about school work, and that the Department never defined the standard up to which existing buildings should be brought. The inspector was instructed to report on every school every year, but he was never told what to expect and what to tolerate. Everything depended on his individual tastes. He might be zealous about warming, lighting, ventilation,

or drainage, or about all these things, or about none of them. In the last case, his progress through his district was comparatively smooth. If he was zealous, he came into collision with school managers and School Boards, and with varying results. Sometimes he was supported by the Department, and sometimes he was not. Sometimes he obtained real improvements. Sometimes when he was energetic, but not well informed, he obtained changes that were not improvements. At other times local opposition was too strong for him, and he obtained nothing at all. The general situation may be summed up by saying that while inspection produced a good deal of piece-meal improvement, the Department had no definite policy with regard to unsatisfactory school premises. Under the leadership of Mr. Acland some attempts were made to institute a policy, but they came to little.

Healthy school conditions depend on other things besides school buildings, and the Department neglected these other things more than the buildings. For a long time, for instance, inspectors and school managers had no guidance on the subject of school furniture. As the regulations ran, the desks of a new school had to be graduated according to the size of the children, but this was vague, and, as to existing schools, there was no rule at all. Again, no advice was offered as to the print of school books. There was, at one time, no rule requiring recreation in either the morning or afternoon attendance. There was not, and there is not even now, any maximum length laid down for either the morning or the afternoon session. In one instance which I recollect, the manager of a Roman Catholic school kept the institution regularly open for six and a half hours per day, in order that he might give an extensive amount of religious instruction. This arrangement, though

foolish, even from his own denominational point of view, was not illegal at the time, and is probably not illegal now.

The Department did not stand alone in neglecting what we may call the medical side of school life. The Royal Commission of 1886, which was appointed to inquire into the whole subject of elementary education, was equally indifferent. It collected voluminous evidence from officials, school managers, and teachers, but it took no medical opinions on relations between school life and health. The director of a gymnasium was its nearest approach to a medical witness.

Later still, in 1897, a Department committee was appointed to consider the education of defective and epileptic children. When this committee, amongst its other recommendations, proposed that the Department should appoint a medical officer of its own, the proposal was vetoed, either by the heads of the Department or by the Treasury, on the grounds that there would not be sufficient work for such a person.

It must not be supposed, however, that a reactionary Department hindered the activities of sanitary reformers. It was, so far as my experience goes, more enlightened than most School Boards, and much more enlightened than most voluntary school managers. Nor was it, I should say, less enlightened than the teachers. The attitude of teachers towards school hygiene, of course, varied, as did the attitude of managers. I can think of many managers and teachers, especially in London, who did their best to make their schools cleanly and sanitary. I can think of others again, especially in the north, who were indifferent, to say the least of it, about the whole matter.

The low position of school hygiene in 1880-1900 is not easy to explain. Possibly it was due to a con-

viction that the school conditions of children were better than their home and industrial conditions, and that it was useless to remedy the lesser evils whilst the greater remained untouched. The doctrine was expressed pretty freely, and I am inclined to think it was honestly held. School managers, for instance, used to say that, though the ventilation of their school might not be ideal, it was better than that of the surrounding cottages. Similar contentions as to warming and other sanitary conditions were continually making themselves heard.

Another possible explanation is the simple one that most of the individuals who governed England, and its local areas, in 1880-1900 knew very little of hygienic science. They were educated in a pre-scientific period. They were, of course, aware that epidemics such as cholera could be warded off by sanitary precautions, that smallpox had been confined within very narrow limits, and so forth. But, unless I am mistaken, illness, other than infectious or contagious illness, appeared to them as inevitable, and not as an evil which man has brought upon himself in the past and which he may almost abolish in the future. To persons who regard illness as a necessary part of life, hygiene will always be of little account.

Though the explanation may be in doubt, the fact that school conditions were often bad is beyond all question. I will try to describe the conditions which I witnessed myself. Most of the school premises which I saw in 1880-93 were of one of three following types. First of all there was what we may call the British type, as it was characteristic of the British and Foreign Society's schools, though far from being confined to them. A representative school of this kind consisted of a broad oblong main school-room, with two or three

class-rooms at one end. At one end of the main room there was often a platform, on which stood the headmaster's desk. Up the middle of the room, and parallel to its longer walls, ran a broad gangway. On each side of the gangway were four, five, or six rows of desks, all arranged parallel to the longer walls, and so that the children faced the gangway. The gangway was the only space available for the class teachers; here they stood or sat back to back, and here they arranged their blackboards as best they could. A school of this sort generally had windows along both its longer sides, consequently, it could obtain cross ventilation. It was probably cheap to build, for, inasmuch as its ground plan approached a square, the floor space was large in proportion to the total length of the walls. It had, however, no other advantages. From the disciplinary and educational points of view the objections to it were most grave; the teachers had to choose between allowing noise, which hampered all teaching, and maintaining an absurdly strict discipline. Some buildings of this kind may still exist, but most of them have been improved out of all recognition.

The Church of England and Roman Catholic schools were often in the Victorian Gothic style. This style was chosen sometimes that the school might match an adjacent church, but sometimes merely for the sake of fashion. It was, and is, a peculiarly bad style for school purposes. The curves and the high-pitched roofs are the cause of needless expense, the mullions obscure light, and a genuine Gothic building is not easy to clean. It has queer angles, into which dusters and brushes do not penetrate, and it has endless dust-traps in its roof. The Gothic building was seldom double-banked; the main room was usually about twenty-two feet wide, and of a length depending on the

size of the school. This room was usually a narrow oblong, but sometimes it was L-shaped. As in the case of the British type, the class-room accommodation was small in proportion to the size of the school, and most of the classes worked in the main room. When the school was small and both gable-ends were free, this room was easily lighted. When, however, the room was long, the central parts could receive little light from the gable-ends, and windows were inserted in the side walls below the eaves. Numberless windows of this kind still remain, and they are generally unsatisfactory, as they admit light either full in the children's eyes or else from directly behind them. In the latter case the children are hampered by their own shadows. Sometimes the architect blocked up one of the gable-ends with the teacher's dwelling house, or the side wall of another department; when this happened a large part of a comparatively small school had to depend on light falling from the wrong directions. Gothic schools, more or less improved, are still common all over England.

The third type, for want of a better name, may be called the Early School Board. Speaking generally, it was obtained from the second type by increasing the length of the main room and the size and number of the class-rooms, and omitting the Gothic features. In one way the result was superior to the Gothic production, for there fewer angles and dust-traps, and, consequently, there was a less accumulation of dirt. In another way the result was often worse, for the Board school rooms were generally longer than the Gothic rooms, consequently greater difficulties as to lighting were experienced. In the earlier London Board schools, for instance, main windows, more often than not, were behind the children,

In the case of all three types the details were often bad. Windows were centre hung or made to open casementwise, and consequently unavailable for ventilation on cold or very windy days. Warming often depended on open grates which only heated small portions of the rooms. Cloak-rooms were often too small. All these defects are still to be met with in some of the older schools, although they have been rectified in a large number of cases.

I am, however, inclined to think that children suffered more from being crowded together in school, than from faults in school planning. According to the Department's Code, as it stood for many years, the number of children in average attendance in any school might not exceed the recognised accommodation. The accommodation was reckoned by allowing eight square feet of floor space per child in all infant schools, and in all other schools except those built by School Boards. In the case of schools provided by School Boards out of loans, other than infant schools, ten square feet of floor space was usually required per child. But there was nothing in the Code to prevent particular rooms being overcrowded, so long as the school, taken as a whole, was not overcrowded. Moreover, in the case of infant schools, and to a lesser extent in the case of other schools, the number of children in attendance varied with the season of the year. Hence at one time it was neither impossible, nor unusual, nor illegal for eighty or ninety children to be crammed into a room planned for only fifty or sixty. Overcrowding of this kind sometimes lasted for months. Proceedings such as this, though previously discouraged in official letters sent to particular schools, were not, so far as I can ascertain, expressly forbidden by any regulations earlier than the Code of 1894, which provided that no

room might be habitually used by a larger number of children than that for which it was passed by the Department. This excellent regulation is still in force, and is not likely to be rescinded. At its introduction it certainly was not welcomed by some of the managers and teachers I met in the north. In one case in particular I remember a protest from the head-master of a large boys' school, a prominent member in an association of Church of England managers and teachers, called forth by the Department's action in checking some particularly wicked overcrowding which had occurred in a neighbouring school. I use the word wicked advisedly, but "brutal" could be justified. It was not, however, only the denominational school managers who were to blame. With some of the School Board members and officials, also, the question seemed to be not whether the school conditions were bad for the children, but whether they were forbidden by the letter of the Department's regulations.

In 1893 my northern district had either one or else two schools built on the central hall system, but I did not see any large number of schools of this kind until I began work in London in 1894. At that date many buildings of the Early School Board kind existed in London, but the London School Board had for some time been building only central hall schools. These schools had no main school rooms in the old sense. In particular cases the hall was literally central, *i.e.*, it was surrounded by class-rooms, but this arrangement, being only possible when there was light from above, was necessarily restricted to schools built with one floor. The common plan was to leave one side of the hall as a window wall, and to build round the other three. When the school was large some of the class-rooms opened into a corridor, which opened into the hall.

The typical London Board School was, and is, a three-decker, with three halls one above another; infants, naturally, occupied the ground floor, one of the other floors was occupied by girls, and the third by boys. Towards the end of the century, however, at all events in some outer parts of S.-E. London, where land was comparatively cheap, large sites were bought, the infants were given a building to themselves, and the main building became a two-decker.

The central hall schools which have become so common in London exhibit obvious merits and defects. Speaking generally, each class has a room to itself, there is nearly always abundance of light: this light is on the children's left,¹ as it ought to be, and it is not usual that a class-room is a passage room to some other room. On the other hand, considerable difficulties arise in the matter of ventilation. Those rooms that occupy corners of the building can have subsidiary windows at a distance from the main window wall, and thus obtain cross ventilation. But other rooms have only one wall towards the outer air, and the only cross ventilation they can obtain is between the window wall and the hall or corridor. The corridor may be fairly fresh, but the hall, if used for physical exercises, as is intended, itself needs ventilation quite as much as the class-rooms. Again, if the hall is used for physical exercises or singing, the class-rooms adjoining it are anything but quiet places. If, as is not uncommon, it is very little used, its advantages are small in proportion to its cost. If, as is also not uncommon, it is desked and used as for class teaching, it becomes merely an extravagant and inconvenient class-room.

It may be doubted whether the London central halls are worth the price paid for them. Their cost

¹ Rooms with skylights only may be found, but they are rare.

has been very heavy, especially in the cases where they have been added to schools of the Early School Board period; some of these schools have practically been built twice over, though the oldest of them can be but forty-five years' old. Architects elsewhere have planned schools which are both cheaper and better than the London central hall schools. In the provinces one may find comparatively inexpensive schools with equally good facilities for physical exercises, much better cross ventilation, and quieter class-rooms. The London architect has difficulties of his own, for some of his sites are of limited extent and surrounded by tall buildings, and he has to allow for the London scale of labour. But both these difficulties may be exaggerated. It is only in the central areas that the sites are really cramped. In the outer zones, especially on the southern side, there are large sites which would have carried buildings of any reasonable outline, and in these cases the architect was not obliged to adopt a broad oblong ground plan. As a matter of fact, he seldom adopted anything else, and it is not easy to find a London school in the planning of which the slightest ingenuity has been shown. When the site is large the three-storied building has often, as I have already stated, been replaced by two buildings, one two-storied and the other one-storied, but, otherwise, the same planning has been followed all over the London area. I cannot think of a case, though such cases probably exist, in which the School Board ever provided a hall that was not a central hall, and I can only think of one, or perhaps two cases in which one hall was provided for the joint use of two departments of moderate size.

Economy in building, it may be pointed out, depends on other things than the rate of wages customary in the building trades. The price of build-

ing materials varies very little from place to place, consequently an extra ten per cent. in wages does not add ten per cent. to the cost of a school. The question of specifications stands for much. The cost of London buildings under the School Board seems to have been swollen by the School Board's determination, or, perhaps, the determination of its officials, to buy always the most expensive article that happened to be in the market. From the very first this policy was followed. The earliest schools showed good material, good workmanship, and bad planning—in the matter of lighting stupidly bad planning. Most of these schools have now been reconstructed, *i.e.*, practically scrapped.

Whilst the jerry-building of schools is inadvisable, it is equally inadvisable to run into the other extreme and build schools for the benefit of the twenty-second century. It needs a very wise man to say where schools will be wanted in that period, and a still more wise man to say what kind of schools will be wanted. In school building it is a mistake to be too permanent, but this principle the London School Board never appreciated. The same principle, I may remark in passing, holds in another educational matter. I can think of school books that are so strongly bound that they refuse to fall to pieces long after their pages have become soiled and their contents obsolete. Stacks of these works have escaped condemnation because their backs are unbroken, and still collect dust, and occupy space in school cupboards. A school book should have good print, and respectable paper, but not the binding one expects in a reference library.

Though it may be well argued that the London central hall schools might be better than they are, nobody who knows the facts can doubt that they are healthier than the schools which preceded them. Even

in the respect of ventilation, which is their weak point, they are superior to the older schools, inasmuch as, except in one or two cases where there is mechanical ventilation, they have sash windows which will open, and this is more than could be said of some of their forerunners.

At various times, but especially during the period 1906-18, I have had to visit very many rural schools scattered over a number of counties, but mainly in the east and south-east of England. The hygienic condition of these institutions varies widely, but one or two generalisations about them are possible. The general planning of the village school has seldom been as bad as the planning of the worst town schools. It is not that the rural school managers employed architects of special merit, but it is easier to plan a small school than a large one, and most rural schools are not cramped for want of space. The planning of quite a small school, say a school for forty infants and eighty older children, is so simple that it should hardly admit of mistake. Even in such cases as this mistakes have happened, but only one of a radical kind has been common. It consisted in the building of a teacher's house so as to block up one gable-end, instead of placing the house either apart from the school, as is best, or else against one of the longer sides. It is in details rather than in their general plan that rural schools have been unsatisfactory, and still are unsatisfactory, though to a diminishing extent. The contrivers of these schools have erred in endless ways, sometimes from aesthetic motives, more often from mere ignorance, and sometimes, one is inclined to think, out of pure perverseness. Many of the worst eccentricities of the past have disappeared, but one may still see plenty of windows that will not open,

windows with sills six or eight feet above the ground level, windows glazed with diamond panes, windows obscured by mullions, or even by coloured glass, fire grates that consume much coal and give little heat, closed stoves that give much heat but vitiate the atmosphere, cloak-rooms of insufficient size, and galleries on which young children are packed together. Investigations conducted in various parts of the country during the severe winter of 1916-17 brought to light many terribly cold schools, and a good deal of neglect and callousness on the part of managers. Bad sanitary accommodation, *i.e.*, unhealthy closets and so forth, which used to be very common, is now rare, and is becoming rarer. On the whole, though a great deal has been done to improve school premises, we cannot yet say that every school is a place to which a reasonably careful parent would care to send a delicate child. Fortunately many minor, yet important, improvements can be carried out at a very moderate cost. To lower a window sill, for instance, is often an inexpensive operation which may turn a bad room into a good one; again, a new stove or fire grate may save fuel, and consequently pay for itself in a year or two. A systematic overhaul and renovation of premises, such as was undertaken before the war in the rural parts of Essex, would not really be an undue burden on any other rural area. To collect information to make the overhaul complete and effective would need some little time, but any county could do, in two or three years, all that Essex has already done. A strict survey of any large area, which has not been strictly surveyed before, will doubtless bring to light faults which cannot be remedied, and, consequently, schools which ought to be replaced altogether, but cases of this kind are not very common. The percentage of radically bad schools is

probably lower in the country than in certain manufacturing and urban districts.

As has been already remarked, it is rash to say much about the schools of the future. If, however, we may prophesy about them at all, we may say that they will be places into which the fresh air will enter freely, and that to secure fresh air the architects of the future, as some architects of the present have already done, will depart a long way from the quadrilateral ground plans which have obtained in London. The best ventilated schools, whether in town or country, are those that have class-rooms opening into comparatively low corridors, and small windows opening into the outer air above the corridor roof. In the most boisterous weather the teacher can open either these small windows in the door wall, or else the large windows in the window wall. In ordinary weather he can open both sets, and thus secure a thorough draught beneath the ceiling. The arrangement might not answer in American or continental conditions, where outside temperatures are lower, and inside temperature higher than our own, but in our mild climate nothing else is wanted in the case of a room of ordinary height. Ventilators, tobin tubes, air gratings, and all similar dust-traps are avoided altogether. Why such a simple system of ventilation, which is obvious when once pointed out, has not been more generally adopted, it is difficult to say.

Something, too, is to be said for reverting to the monastic plan of building round a cloister. A school planned in this way is to be seen at Cambridge; on one side of the central space there is a large hall, which is shared by two departments; the cloister runs round the other three sides, and the class-rooms, with one or two exceptions, open into the cloister. One or

two class-rooms only are above the ground floor level. Such planning allows for ample ventilation, and admits of picturesque treatment of the collegiate kind. A critic might say that the building is somewhat wanting in compactness, but compactness and fresh air do not go well together. It may be remarked that this Cambridge building was not devised by a professional architect.

School furniture as I saw it in the north was very bad indeed. Dual desks, *i.e.*, desks for two children each, were rare, and single desks unknown. The common plan was to provide long desks, each for six or more scholars. The seat very rarely had a back rest, and it was nearly always fixed at such a distance from the desk that a scholar could conveniently stand between the two. The horizontal "distance," as it is technically called, between desk and seat was usually four inches or more, and proper positions for writing were out of the question. This was not all. It was quite common to supply a school with desks of one size only, and the size chosen was generally one suited to children of twelve or thirteen. Even new Board schools were sometimes furnished in this way. Consequently, unfortunate children had to sit for long periods with their feet dangling in the air, and their chins three or four inches above their slates or copy-books. The mischief that may result from positions of this kind is now pretty well recognised, and it had been pointed out as early as 1876, but it was ignored by nearly every school manager whom I met before 1894, and by the great majority of teachers.

In London a different state of things prevailed. The Board schools in 1894 were all furnished with dual desks of one kind or another, and it was comparatively rare that small children were made to occupy

furniture of a large size. Bad, *i.e.*, stooping positions for writing were common enough, as they are still in every area with which I am acquainted, but they were much less common than in the north, and they were due, not to necessity, but to the children's tendency to stoop, and the indifference of many teachers and most school managers about the whole matter. The London voluntary schools, also, were on the whole better furnished than voluntary schools in the north.

Furniture of the worst kind is now much less common than it was, but survivals of it are to be met with from time to time, and not always in rural districts. According to the Board's regulations all desks in new schools must be either dual or single. Partly because of this regulation, and partly because of its own merits, the dual desk is getting more and more common, and the single desk is to be found here and there. The latter has the great advantage that it cannot be overcrowded. Three children may be compressed into the metre space which the dual desk provides for two, but it is impossible to put two children into the space provided for one. Hence it is that two single desks placed side by side are preferable to one dual desk, though they are of course more costly. From a hygienic point of view, it would be wise to give each scholar a single desk with a free space between it and every other desk, but this arrangement would necessitate a greater floor area per scholar than the elementary school can afford, and the placing of some members of every large class at an inconvenient distance from the teacher.

School galleries are, fortunately, becoming rare. The term is a misleading one, and may possibly puzzle the antiquaries of the future; the "gallery" is not a gallery

in the ordinary sense, but a broad set of steps, like those in a theatre gallery, on which desks or seats may be arranged. The contrivance was introduced into nineteenth-century elementary schools to facilitate the giving of oral lessons to large numbers of children. The arguments in its favour are doubtless to be found in the writings of Lancaster's followers, or of Lancaster himself, and they would not be without force, supposing schools had to be conducted on the Lancastrian plan by one master and a squad of monitors. Whilst desks for 100 or 150 children necessarily cover a large area, it is possible to arrange 100 or 150 children on a gallery so that each child is in full view of a teacher in front of it. Consequently, if oral lessons had to be given to masses of children, the gallery arrangement would be useful in school, as it actually is in lecture theatres or ordinary theatres. In modern schools, however, it is never necessary to group 100 or 150 children for a lesson, and, according to modern opinion, lectures should have no prominent place in school work. The educational advantages of the gallery have therefore vanished, whilst its hygienic disadvantages remain. We now condemn it for the very reason that commended it to the Lancastrians, simply because it enables the teacher to crowd a large number of children into a very small space. Some galleries were steeper, and therefore worse than others. In the extreme, but not uncommon, case the children sat on the steps and not on benches placed on the steps, consequently, the tread of each step was the seat for one row of children, and the footboard for another, and children could be packed rather closer than the unfortunates in the hold of a slaver.

The gallery was probably never common in schools for children other than infants, but bad specimens were to be found in some British and Wesleyan schools. In

infant schools it was almost universal, and for some obscure reason it was considered a peculiarly appropriate place for the very youngest children, *i.e.*, the children who, beyond all others, need plenty of movement and freedom from all undue restraint. So much was this the case that the lowest class of an infant school was not uncommonly spoken of as "the gallery."

Some ancient galleries did not fit closely to the floor. Hence, whenever the school was swept, dust was driven in between floor and gallery, and, as the gallery was usually a fixture, dirt underneath it accumulated extensively.

Infant schools are now furnished either with small dual desks, or else partly with these desks and partly with chairs and tables. The tables have flat tops, and consequently encourage bad positions for writing, but the amount of writing to be done in an infant school is not great, and chairs and tables are rather coming into favour.

About the cleaning of schools I have not much to say. Before the Education Act of 1902, the large Board schools that I saw were usually kept clean, whilst the cleaning of other schools was much less satisfactory. Since the Act came into force, school cleaners everywhere have, speaking generally, been adequately paid and supervised, and, as a rule, there is little ground for complaint. The worst results which have come in my way of late have been in schools encumbered with articles that cannot be cleaned. In certain schools, especially in the country, there is a wonderful amount of rubbish which no caretaker can dust. On the tops of school cupboards one may find empty boxes, disused drawing models, debris from manual instruction lessons, and so forth. On the walls there are too many hideous unglazed pictures, useless diagrams, and advertisements

of various kinds. Various ledges, also, which are not confined to the Gothic buildings, provide secure resting-places for dirt. On the whole, however, our schools are not badly tended, and as regards cleaning, as well as regards premises and furniture, we have gone a long way towards securing healthy conditions for every scholar.

School hygiene really denotes the study of healthy school conditions, but the term is often stretched to cover much more, and the medical branch of the Board of Education concerns itself with the medical examination of children, their medical treatment, and even their feeding. It follows that a chapter on school hygiene would be incomplete without some reference to these subjects, but, for two reasons, I will say little about them.

In the first place, school dinners are rare in the counties which I have seen of recent years, and the medical examinations hardly come within the observation of the inspector; consequently, there is little first-hand evidence I could give. In the second place, the feeding, examinations, and treatment do not form a genuine part of school work. It may be convenient to utilise the school machinery for feeding a hungry child, but presumably he is to be fed because he is hungry, and not because he is attending school. He has no right, except a legal right, to a meal which is not shared by the child who is too young to attend. The feeding of children has certainly been advocated, *i.e.*, by the late Sir John Gorst, on the grounds that it is cruel to impose study on the hungry, and that the hungry child can make little progress; but the persons who make this contention seem to mistake the position. Hunger is bad at all times, and the good we may do in quickening a child's progress at school is small in proportion

to the good we can do in building up for him a healthy constitution. The quickening progress, though genuine, produces a by-product of no very great extent. This opinion will not be challenged by persons who realise that no child can carry from an elementary school a great amount of knowledge, and that what the out-going child knows matters less than what he is.

Somewhat similar considerations seem to hold good with regard to medical examinations. The information obtained at the examination may, of course, enable the teacher to adapt the work of particular children to their needs; the doctor, for instance, may advise withdrawal from physical exercises in one case, and temporary withdrawal from all school work in another. Hence to a certain extent the examination furthers what we may fairly call school hygiene. Its main purpose, however, is presumably to prepare the way for medical treatment, and the main purpose of the treatment is to promote the general welfare of the child. Incidentally, the treatment may lead to progress in school, but this is not necessarily the case, on the contrary, in various circumstances, though most desirable in the child's interests, it may interfere with school routine and actually retard progress.

Again, it is hard to see why the child who happens to be of school age should be examined by a public officer, and treated at a school clinic at the public expense, whilst the child under age is left to any treatment its parents may provide. In each case there is the same argument for public intervention, the argument that the parent may overlook grave physical defects, or disregard them, or be unable to pay for their treatment. In each there is the same possible danger from intervention, the danger that the action of the public body may lessen parents' sense of responsi-

bility, encourage extra large families, and interfere with the livelihood and legitimate activities of the private practitioner. According to most opinions, the advantages of public intervention outweigh its dangers, but, however this may be, there is a strong case for putting children of all ages on the same footing.

Whilst in the areas with which I am acquainted there are very few school dinners provided by public authorities, there is plenty of dining in school, as numberless rural children bring their mid-day meal with them and eat it in the interval between the morning and afternoon sessions. The arrangements for accommodating these children differ to an extraordinary degree. In some cases there are no arrangements at all, and the children are allowed to gobble up their food where they please and as they please. More commonly a class-room is assigned to the diners; they are made tolerably comfortable, and some supervision is exercised over them. In certain schools still more is done; cocoa, for instance, may be made in the winter months, or a table cloth may be provided, and the meal eaten under decent conditions. These schools, however, are rather exceptional, and there is still too much of what one can only call pigging, especially, I think, in the case of schools under old head teachers.

The nature of the meal, of course, depends upon the parent's finances and domestic arrangements. I can only say that, as a rule, it is too starchy; there is too much crumb of new bread and too little of anything else. Many children bring nothing to drink, and many do not even drink water except in hot weather. Tea and milk are sometimes brought, and either warmed up on school stoves or else drunk cold. Soup, so far as my own observation goes, is never brought.

CHAPTER V

Infant Schools under the Mundella Code—Their Relation to the Kindergarten — Neo-Frobelianism — More Modern Infants' Schools—The School Attendance of Young Children

FOR a great many years after 1880 an infant school, like any other school, was subjected to a yearly examination conducted by the Education Department's inspector. Up to 1883, as has been already mentioned, the grant to the school was not much affected by the examination results, but the Department's regulations, and the report which followed upon each examination, went far to settle the character of the instruction. Primarily, according to the regulations, an infant school was a place where young children might learn the elements of reading, writing, and arithmetic, but needlework was required from girls and allowed in the case of boys, and there were always singing and physical exercises of one kind or another. "Object lessons," as they were called, were universal, and often there were lessons on "form and colour." The Mundella Code, as has been explained, introduced a variable grant, depending upon the examination results, and, consequently, for the first time it brought infants into serious contact with the system of payment by results. It modified the curriculum in two ways: it omitted reference to lessons on "form and colour," but it required what were called "appropriate and varied occupations." These occupations were often, but not always, the same thing as the "gifts" of the kindergarten.

Both before and after 1883 it was the examination in reading, writing, and arithmetic that mainly deter-

mined the character of the report. The reasons for this are obvious. In the first place, it was an educational axiom that the main business of a school was to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic. In the second place, it was easy to test children in these subjects, and difficult to form an opinion of the "object lesson," or on the mysterious lessons on form and colour, or in the way in which the "gifts" were used. Zealous inspectors sometimes examined all the infants in the school, but the common practice was to examine only those who were over five at the time of examination. The standard to which infants should attain was not fixed by the Department, but it was more or less determined by the regulations which fixed the work for Standard I. The infants who were over six at the time of examination would, generally speaking, enter upon preparation for Standard I. as soon as the examination was over. Hence it followed that the mass of the children over five but under six at the time of the examination were two years short of Standard I. This was not a rigid rule. It was not necessary that every child over seven at examination time should be examined in Standard I., or that every child over six should be brought up to some specified lower level. In practice, however, there were schools in which little but age went to determine the classification, and, unless I am much mistaken, there were inspectors who regarded a strict classification according to age as being a merit in a school. It was quite common to find the highest classes of an infant school, the classes equivalent to London "Grade III." of a later date, spoken of as "the sixes"; the next group of classes as "the fives"; and the lower classes as "the fours." One educational newspaper regularly published specimen sets of "sums for the sixes." The children in the Grade III. classes, and Grade III. is perhaps the most convenient

term to use, always, so far back as my experience goes, attained much the same proficiency as children in Grade III. attain now. Either they worked addition and subtraction sums in tens and units, or they were taught to give "mental" answers to questions on small numbers, or, as was commonly the case, they did both. Such questions as, "How many pence are left if we take sixpence from ninepence?" and "What do we get if we add six to nine?" may be taken as typical. In reading, the standard varied considerably, inasmuch as some of the primers in use were much harder and longer than others, but, in general, it may be said that the Grade III. children could read all regularly spelt words of one syllable, and a good many of the irregularly formed short words which are so unfortunately common. In writing, the ordinary standard varied comparatively little; everywhere the Grade III. children could copy words and sentences from the blackboard. All this, however, applies only to the average infant school; there were always advanced, or rather over-ambitious, infant schools, that brought large numbers of children very close up to the Standard I. level. These schools were regarded with admiration by some inspectors, and with considerable suspicion by others.

In forming his estimate upon an infant school the inspector had to consider the results and not the methods by which they were maintained. This was the case for two reasons. In the first place, he was obliged to hold an examination, and he had no time both to examine and to inquire into methods. In the second place, an adverse report upon methods would probably have been challenged successfully, supposing the results were in any way tolerable. It is, for instance, quite certain that, if children spell through a primer, they will in time learn to read. Their memories are

retentive, and they are lamentably indifferent to the anomalies in spelling that vex the souls of spelling reformers, and a chant of "d-o-g dog, r-a-n ran, a-f-t-e-r after, t-h-e the, f-o-x fox," will in time enable the child who has learnt to recognise the individual letters to recognise quite confidently the words "dog," "ran," and the rest. This method has obvious defects which have been pointed out over and over again, but in the years of which I am thinking, an inspector who seriously attacked it would probably have met with a repulse. School managers and teachers could have said quite reasonably that, so long as an annual examination was demanded, the inspector had no business to go behind its results, and it could have been argued that the teacher who could attain success by one method should not be coerced into adopting another which might be less successful. The first contention would have been fair, and the second would not have been without force at a time when large numbers of young children were entrusted to pupil teachers, or to assistant teachers of poor education. Even now zeal for modern methods is apt to lead astray teachers who do not understand them, and, especially in the country, one may sometimes hear strange attempts to break up sounds which cannot be broken up, or to deal with quite irregular words on phonetic principles.

About the lessons on form and colour I can give very little information. Form cards and colour cards used to hang up in many infant schools, and faded specimens of the same are probably still in existence. The form card bore a likeness to the illustrations which accompany Euclid's definitions; the colour card did not differ greatly from certain advertisements of Aspinall's enamel paints. Some historian of the English infant school may be able to say how these

cards originated, and how their inventors intended that they should be used. My impression is that they were almost obsolete at the earliest time which I can recollect, and that the best teachers never took them very seriously.

The object lesson has a literature of its own to which I may refer those who are curious as to its origin and history. Its aim was, I apprehend, that children should exercise their faculties by observing and handling various things, and obtain practice in the use of language by putting into words the results of their examinations. The aim doubtless is excellent, for many young children take a real interest in looking at animals and things, and talking about them, and it cannot be denied that the exercise in observation and talking may be valuable if properly directed. To make the object lesson valuable is, however, a difficult feat. It is one thing to direct the observations of an individual child who observes what interests him just when he is in the right humour, and quite another thing to get fifty or sixty children to observe what the teacher has put before them at the time of her own choosing. So much that can be done voluntarily cannot be done under coercion. So many of the objects which are interesting cannot be observed or handled by a number of children at once, and so many of the objects which are easy to observe are not particularly interesting from the child's point of view. It is easy to put a glass of water before a class, and to let children see that the water is transparent, that it can be poured out, and that it can dissolve salt and sugar. Unless, however, the lesson on water is given by one of those teachers who can make anything interesting, a very moderate interest will be aroused by the procedure. On the other hand, children are likely to be interested enough in the way in which a rabbit

takes its food, but the animal may refuse to eat in public at the appointed time, and, even if he eats, he is difficult to observe from the other side of a classroom. Unless it interests, the object lesson necessarily fails, and the teacher is heavily burdened who is expected to give two or more object lessons per week, and to make them interesting. Assuming that each lesson is given twice during the year, she has to plan forty lessons, and she is too often driven into the position of the person who speaks because he has to say something, and not because he has something to say. This view of mine is not now at all unusual. Suspicions of formal object lessons seem to be growing, and I expect that many competent persons would like to see them removed from our schools' courses. As it is, they are not required by the regulations of the Board of Education, and their persistence in infant schools is due simply to the force of habit and traditions. Speaking for myself, I am sure that a large proportion of the object lessons which have come in my way were given merely because they were required by the school timetables, and that they were required by the time-tables because they were supposed, rightly at one time and wrongly at another, to be demanded by the Code. This perfunctory teaching, if it did no particular harm, at all events did little good.

On the annual examination day it was, I think, usual for the inspector to choose one or more of the object lessons given during the year, to ask the teacher to repeat it, and to take this lesson or lessons as an example of the rest. This plan was defective inasmuch as it assumed that on a particular day the teacher was able to repeat any lesson of a whole series, and that she had at her command on that day all the material for observation. It was, however, pre-

ferable to the alterative plan of catechising the children about their recent lessons, or asking the teachers to catechise. These methods merely encouraged the learning by heart of the answers to a number of probable questions. No plan better than the usual plan is easily suggested. The truth seems to be that no procedure possible on an examination day would serve as a satisfactory test of a year's object lessons.

Of late years lessons known as "conversation lessons" have appeared in infant school time-tables. Every object lesson is really a conversation lesson, but the conversation lesson is not necessarily an object lesson. The object lesson, I apprehend, is primarily an observation lesson, though it is, also, besides a training in the use of language. The conversation lesson, on the other hand, is primarily a language lesson, and it may deal with any subject, real or imaginary, in which interest can be aroused. A conversation lesson on the adventures of an imaginary child, or on the fairies, would be quite permissible. There are teachers who can make dull things interesting and conversation lessons profitable, but the task is hard. Small children, certain precocious and objectionable individuals excepted, will not talk to order. Conversation that deserves the name must be spontaneous and not forced, and there is a certain unreality about a conversation which begins at a specified time on a given day of the week, which ends at another specified time, and which is conducted between an adult on one side and forty or fifty infants on the other.

"Varied occupations" were, I have always understood, introduced into the Mundella Code in partial satisfaction of a demand that infant schools should be conducted on what was called the kindergarten system. The "occupations" were, as has already been

stated, not very different from the kindergarten "gifts," but the schools did not become kindergartens in the sense in which the Froebelians of 1883 would have used the term, and in this sense they are not kindergartens now. Perhaps I may point out two or three differences between the infant schools I have seen, and the earlier kindergartens about which I have read. In the first place, I am tolerably clear that the mysticism of the Froebelians conveys little meaning to most English people. Froebel's own autobiography contains much which is not easy to follow. It is strange to read that rocks and crystals served him as a mirror wherein he could descry mankind, and man's development and history. Or that in his eyes the vowels resembled, so to speak, force, spirit, the (inner) subject, whilst the consonants symbolised matter, body, the (outer) object.¹

Some of Froebel's followers have been equally obscure. We may find it stated that the cube seems to stand as the symbol of the inorganic, the mineral kingdom with its wonderful crystals; the cylinder as the type of vegetable life, suggesting the roots, stems, and branches, with their rounded sides, and forming a beautiful connection between the cube, that emblem of "things in the earth beneath," and the sphere which completes the trinity and speaks to us of a never-ending and perfect whole having "Unity for its centre, diversity for its circumference."²

Another writer explains that the wooden sphere of the second gift has no strings like the balls of the first

¹ "Autobiography of Frederick Froebel." Translation by Michaelis and Moore. Swan, Sonnenschein, Lowry, & Co., 1888. Pp. 97 and 99.

² "Froebel's Gifts" Wiggin and Smith. Gay and Bird 1895. P. 49.

gift, because the child no longer needs outward connection, but now realises the spiritual connection between himself and the outer world.¹ Passages like these and other similar passages which could be quoted are not, of course, to be studied apart from their contexts, and, doubtless, they are capable of interpretation at the hands of skilled commentators. Rightly or wrongly however, it is not my business to argue which, they appeal very little to most teachers. I can think of one teacher, and of one only, who would have been likely to have appreciated their symbolism, and I am by no means sure that even she would have fully grasped the inner significance of the string attached to the first gift.

In the second place, under elementary school conditions, the kindergarten gifts cannot be well employed in the way for which they were planned. The "gift" was intended to be a gift; it was for use at home rather than at school, and it was from play with it, whether spontaneous or directed, that the child was to learn. Nothing, however, can be much less like a gift than a box of bricks which is stored in a cupboard with fifty other boxes, brought out at a specified time, used exactly as a teacher directs, and, finally, put away again at the end of twenty-five minutes. This method of using bricks, whether it be good or bad, is hardly the Froebelian method. A method which Froebel would have approved does not seem to be possible where we have fifty children entrusted to one teacher and confined to a room which provides 450 square feet of floor space.

In the third place, some of the gifts have not commended themselves to the generality of teachers. One reason why they have fallen out of favour, or never obtained it, is because they do not lend themselves to

¹ Quoted by the authors of the last-named book.

constructive work. Nothing whatever can be constructed out of certain gifts, *e.g.*, the first and second, and nothing permanent out of the remainder. There have been, and there are, teachers who can make any gift, or indeed anything else, appear interesting. But, other things being equal, work that results in something to show will always be more interesting than work which results in nothing; just as gardening in earnest is more interesting than playing at gardening on the sea-shore. The second gift, the ball, cube, and cylinder, is rarely ever seen in elementary schools, and it is a long time since I have come across any of the dissected cubes, except the comparatively simple two-inch cube known as the third gift. Again, one never hears a good word said for the checkered slate which used to be a common piece of kindergarten apparatus; teachers of drawing are of opinion that it is intrinsically bad.

The Froebelians have moved a long way since 1883, and, as a body, they would probably maintain that both the symbolism and the "gifts" are not of the essence of their system. Froebel's principles, they would say, are sound and permanent, whilst his particular methods were provisional and experimental. That that is the opinion of modern Froebelians is shown by the National Froebel Union's more recent examination questions, which may be taken as a kind of standard of current Froebelianism. The Union's examination papers ask little about the "gifts" and ignore the symbolism, but they are planned so as to test the examinees' knowledge of child nature, school hygiene, educational hand-work, natural history, black-board drawing, and the methods of teaching various subjects. There is a paper on the history of education, and questions are asked as to opinions of Froebel, but he is not regarded as being above criticism. According to the Neo-

Froebelian doctrine, as I understand it, he was a Columbus who discovered a new continent, but his caravel has been quite superseded by more modern craft. Our infant schools may be Neo-Froebelian, and to a great extent they actually are so, though they are unlike the older kindergartens.

It does not seem unlikely that the Froebelians may lay aside what remains to them of Froebel's terminology, and eventually drop the term kindergarten. It is certainly true that, if the mind of a child is to be compared to some concrete thing, it may as well be compared to a plant as to anything else. There are undoubted analogies between the education of a child and the tending of the plant. In each case there are limits to our work. We cannot turn the dull child into a clever child, any more than we can make the hyssop on the wall grow into a cedar of Lebanon. In each case it is our business to establish proper conditions, and let the organism grow as it will. Paul plants, Apollos waters, and God gives the increase. We give the child, be he dull or clever, the chance of making the best of himself, just as we may give a horse chestnut the chance of growing into a healthy horse chestnut tree. After all, however, a child is not a plant, and there is the danger that an ever-recurring metaphor may in time come to be regarded as more than a metaphor, and its use result in some confusion of thought. It may be remembered how Tom Tulliver's tutor was led astray by his comparisons of Latin Grammar and Euclid to the ploughing and harrowing which make land bear crops. As the author of "The Mill on the Floss" points out, Mr Stelling would have come to quite different conclusions, had he compared the mind to a mirror as some philosophers have done, or to a lump of clay as we do when we talk about moulding a character, or to a stomach as

we do when we speak of "cramming" or of knowledge being indigestible. Moreover, whether the plant metaphor is misleading or not, it has certainly become wearisome.

Our infant schools, whether on account of Froebelian influence or not, have moved forward since 1883. I should say that it is in the management of the children that the greatest improvement has taken place. Presumably, it is the business of a teacher to hold the balance between the doctrine that a child should exercise his own activities in his own way, and the opposite doctrine that he should be coerced into being diligent and virtuous. The latter doctrine has high authorities in its favour, but it is now seldom proclaimed in its extreme form. There are few persons left who would say with Wesley, "Break their wills betimes, begin this work before they can run alone, before they can speak plain, perhaps before they can speak at all. Whatever pain it costs, break the will if you would not damn the child. Let a child from a year old be taught to fear the rod and cry softly; from that age make him do as you bid, if you whip him ten times running to effect it. If you spare the rod you spoil the child. If you do not conquer, you ruin him. Break his will now, and his soul shall live, and he will probably bless you to all eternity." The former doctrine is at present more fashionable. In lectures one may hear it maintained that the child who used to be called naughty is not really naughty, but merely a "motor" child whom we are to take care not to crush. There are sentimental arguments against all kinds of coercion and catch phrases about force being no remedy. Again, there is the Spencerian principle that we must appeal to the child's reason, when we either enjoin or forbid any action on his part.

No infant school, it is probable, was ever conducted either on Wesley's methods or on Spencer's, but principles somewhat like Wesley's, and principles somewhat like Spencer's have had their influence on the schools. Many teachers used to set too much store on discipline, and too little on freedom; the pendulum has now swung away from the extreme position of the disciplinarians, but not, in general, too heavily. According to my own observations, which have been fairly extensive, a very large number of teachers have, so far as school conditions permit, hit off the happy mean between too much strictness and too little. There have certainly been schools in which what is quaintly called self-expression has been made an excuse for idleness and disorder, but these have not been common. Some enthusiasts may wish for still more freedom than the infant gets at present; they dream of Montessorian schools, of children selecting their own tasks, and working at them uncoerced. The dream is undoubtedly seductive, but it has to be remembered that if several hundred children are collected in one building, a good many rules are really necessary. Speaking broadly, the larger the institution the more rules there must be, and only in very small schools can we grant the freedom which is to be found in a well ordered home.

One innovation which tends to freedom is, however, almost everywhere possible. There is no reason why the great majority of infant schools should not do as a few have done, and allow recreation twice in the morning, say at 10 A.M. and 11 A.M., instead of once only, as is usual, about 10.30 A.M. The doubling of the recreation period, where it has been carried out, has given very satisfactory results.

The time which infant schools devote to reading, writing, and arithmetic is certainly shorter than it was

thirty years ago, and the children's progress in these subjects, though slower than of old, is not excessively slower. It would seem to follow that the methods of teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic have improved, but conclusions on this point should be very cautiously drawn. It is difficult to trace the results between the results obtained and the methods employed in obtaining them. Probably the personality of the teacher is so much more important than her methods, that the results due to personality obscure those depending on methods. Probably, too, the children learn equally well in a number of different ways. Certain methods, of course, have warm adherents. Thus the methods of teaching reading, associated with the names of Sonnenschein and Nelly Dale, have been widely advocated. Again, great things have been claimed for Tillick's bricks. It is rash, however, to put any one of these methods, or any other elaborated methods, on a higher plane than its rivals. The utmost it seems possible to say is that all sound methods have a good deal in common. Any teacher, for instance, who knows her business, would teach at the same time words containing a common element such as "at" or "et." The plan of presenting together allied words such as "bet," "net," "get," "pet," "wet," has been generally adopted for many years by writers of reading primers. It is, at least, as old as "Reading Without Tears,"¹ which was published in 1861.

The advantages and disadvantages of rival methods of teaching reading are set out in books on school method, and it is not for me to give an opinion where the experts differ. Perhaps, however, the following suggestion may be offered. Every possible method of

¹ "Reading Without Tears," by the author of "Peep of Day." Longmans, Green & Co.

teaching reading must be open to criticism, so long as our spelling remains as irregular as it is, for it is always doubtful how and when the irregular words are to be dealt with. Some of the worst of these words, *e.g.*, "eye" and "one," are so common that they have to be treated quite early in the course. Phonetic spelling, however, seems to be far off. We cannot expect it until the experts have made up their mind how English is to be spelt, and the public and Parliament are prepared to swallow the experts' conclusion, either as a whole or piecemeal. It will be long, it is to be feared, before there will be a consensus of opinion about the representation of various quite common sounds, *e.g.*, the vowel sound in "girl." It will be long, also, before the public reconciles itself to a phonetic script with fourteen or fifteen different characters for our fourteen or fifteen vowels and diphthongs.

While the child's progress in reading, writing, and arithmetic seems to depend more on the teacher's personality than on her methods, it certainly depends largely on the size of her class. Evidence for the last assertion is forthcoming, for infants in rural schools, who do not enjoy the best teaching, often make quite good progress. The point must not be pressed too far, for there are people in the world who are quite unfit to manage or teach a single child, and there are certainly small classes in which reading is bad ; but, given ordinary good sense and good will, the conclusion seems just. A wise infant might well prefer one twenty-fifth share of a second- or third-rate teacher, to a fiftieth share of a first-rate teacher. With the smaller class he would have more attention, both in body and mind, and might expect both to be happier and to make better progress.

As has been already remarked, infants make rather a slower progress than formerly in reading, writing, and

arithmetic. The work of what we may conveniently call Grade III. remains much as it was, but the age of children in the grade has risen. In the days of annual examinations, the normal child who was over six on the examination day was supposed to have completed the Grade III. work, and to be ready to begin the Standard I. work. This was never a rigid rule, but the exceptions to it seldom amounted to more than from ten to twenty per cent. of the whole number of children to whom it could have applied. In some schools at the present time the exception has become the rule, and there are large numbers of children who do not start their Standard I. work until they are more than seven or close upon seven. It is by no means certain that the change is for the worse, for rapid promotion into the school for older children is of no use if it leads to marking time therein, and it may be mischievous if it leads to quick promotion through the standards, or, as it has done in the past, to early exemption from school attendance. Furthermore, it is very doubtful if we want children to learn to read at an early age. Support may be found for the doctrine that a child of six should spend his time in looking at things around him, moulding clay, and playing with bricks, rather than in viewing and interpreting black symbols on a white sheet placed a foot from his eyes. Indeed, a possible argument against introducing phonetic spelling and decreasing the size of classes is that these changes may lead children of tender years to read too soon and to read too much. The argument would probably be sound were it not that we can always raise the age at which learning to read begins, and so prevent the child from reading freely too early in its career.

Our infant school system has three peculiarities which must appear strange to anyone who is not habituated

to them. Many schools still admit children at the age of three, and all schools did so formerly. There is no particular day for admission, and children keep dropping in all through the year. The morning session is as long, and the afternoon session nearly as long, as the corresponding session for older children. Each of these points is curious and worth some little discussion.

The law with regard to the school attendance of children under five is as follows. For many years up to 1918 all children over five years of age, not being educated in some other way, were bound to attend elementary schools. In the past children over three but under five were allowed to attend, but never compelled. The old School Boards were obliged to provide school places for them. The first Education Act required the School Board to provide the school accommodation that the Education Department thought necessary, and the Department took the view that accommodation was necessary for all the three-year old and four-year old children that wanted to attend. The Education Act of 1902 put the Education Committees in the same position as the School Boards so far as this particular point was concerned, consequently, for a time, the Education Committees continued to provide places for children under five. Very soon, however, the Board changed its policy, and left the Committees free either to provide or not to provide these places. Moreover, the Code of 1905, like all later Codes, allows a Committee to exclude children under five from school, even when there is room for them. The Education Act of 1918 gives the Committees still further liberty, as it allows the age at which compulsion begins to be raised in certain circumstances from five to six.

Some of the Committees have adopted one policy and some another, but on the whole the number of

school children under five is far less proportionately than it was in the past. Whilst the number of children at school is more than three times the number attending in 1870, the year of the first Education Act, the number under five has risen by very little; it is actually lower than it was in 1874.

Optional attendance from three upwards is justified quite as easily as compulsory attendance from five upwards. It is often said that children of three and four can receive no benefit from school attendance. This would be quite true supposing a school were a place in which children of three and four are packed on galleries, kept under strict discipline, and dosed with reading and writing lessons, or with stupid "object lessons" on "the pig" or "the cat." In such circumstances attendance may be actually mischievous. The crowding, the bad teaching, and the undue restraint were undoubtedly to be found in some infant schools of the past, and it would be rash to say that nothing of the kind exists at present. Nothing of the kind, however, is either necessary or usual in our infant schools. The average infant school of to-day demands very little reading, writing, and arithmetic from children under five; sometimes these children have no formal lessons at all. They are allowed a considerable amount of free movement, though, as I have said already, not as much as in a well ordered home. Forty children cannot be managed quite on the same lines as four.

Goodness is often relative, and the question we have to ask ourselves is not whether a school is a good place for a child of three or four, but whether it is the best place available for him. In general, the choice lies between the class-room and the school playground on one hand, and on the other the domestic kitchen, with a back yard or a public road as a play

place. Some kitchens and back yards are better than others, just as some class-rooms and playgrounds are better than others; sometimes the home is preferable and sometimes the school. It is easy to find cases where a child of three is better at school, or where a child of five or even six is best at home. In winter time a child of three needs, besides a little companionship and attention, a clean floor, a box of bricks, and two or three other toys, perhaps, too, a large tray of moist sand in which he can dig and mess. In summer time he needs a bit of clean turf or gravel instead of the floor. A child of five wants much the same things, though his box of bricks ought, of course, to be larger, and his toys rather more elaborate; whether he makes a start in reading or not is quite a small matter.

Some of us would think that the parents of any child under six, if not of any child under seven, might decide whether he should be at home or at school, but until quite lately our regulations and legislation limited the parents' choice in an arbitrary way. However good his home conditions, the working-class child over five was practically bound to attend school. However poor the conditions, the child under five, who lived in certain areas, was unable to attend.

What has been said about the compulsory attendance of children over five must be understood with one qualification. All by-laws allow reasonable excuses for non-attendance at an elementary school, and that a child is being properly educated elsewhere is always held to be a reasonable excuse. The burden of showing that the non-attending child is being properly educated elsewhere is laid upon the parent. Any parent who provides the child of five with the clean floor and the other essentials suggested above might plausibly maintain that his child is being properly educated, and an

Education Committee might accept his view. Even if the Education Committee disagreed with him, the magistrates, with whom the ultimate decision must rest, might be on his side. As a matter of fact, it is not the common practice of Education Committees to inquire into the education of well-to-do children. It is generally considered that their elementary education, which is all that the law requires of them, can take care of itself. It is perhaps hardly necessary to explain that neither in the case of a child of five, or of any other child, can attendance be enforced in face of a trustworthy medical certificate that it is undesirable.

At various times it has been suggested that the child of three, four, or five would be better off in a creche or public nursery than either in his home or at school, and it is, of course, easy to imagine an ideal public nursery, which would be preferable to the schools of to-day. Similarly we can all imagine ideal civilisations superior to the society we see around us. A system of schools, however, exists, and there is no system of public nurseries. To found the ideal public nursery would be very expensive, and to mould the infant school on the lines of the creche may be more practical, than to found an entirely new set of institutions. Floor space and cubic space cost much the same whether in school or elsewhere. Also, if we are to have small groups of children, each under the care of a highly qualified adult, the cost will be much the same whether the adult is styled a teacher, or a nurse, or an attendant. The real argument in favour of the public nurseries depends on the facts that the physical care of children of three and four is infinitely more important than anything that can fairly be called instruction, and that our teachers are primarily trained to give instruction. Hygiene is included in all teachers' syllabuses of study,

but it is a subject in which a really satisfactory examination is difficult, and it only holds a subordinate place in the teacher's course. It may well be maintained that the teacher of quite young children needs a kind of training different from anything that our training colleges at present provide. Probably a training with a distinct medical bias is to be desired. There is, however, no reason why this kind of training should not be given in the colleges, or in connection with them. The regulations by which they are governed, though complicated, are elastic, and capable of being easily altered to cover any kind of training that the college authorities and the Board of Education think desirable.

It is not strictly true that public nurseries are non-existent, there are such institutions, and of late the Board has established a system of grants to what are called nursery schools. The nursery school, however, is planned primarily for children under three; consequently, it is a supplement, or rather a preface, to the ordinary infant school more than an alternative. At present the nursery schools are few. In 1916-17 they numbered but little over a hundred, and accommodated only about four thousand children. It is conceivable that they may increase and draw off a certain number of children from the lower classes of the infant schools.

The Education Act of 1918 contemplates the provision of large numbers of nursery schools for children aged from two to five or six, but it is quite uncertain whether these institutions will come into being on a large scale. Whatever may happen in the future, one point is clear. Considerations of expense will make it difficult to put every small group of children under an adult who has the status of either a certificated teacher or of a trained nurse. Consequently, if we are to break up large classes into small groups, say of twelve or

fifteen or even twenty children each, and we are to have any regard for economy, we must employ a number of teachers of lower qualifications, possibly girls of fourteen to eighteen, who would work under the eye of experienced teachers, much in the way in which pupil teachers used to work.

The second peculiarity of our infant schools is easily described, though it is not easily accounted for or defended. It need not, however, be discussed at any length, as the action of the Act of 1918 will probably cause it to disappear. According to the by-laws and the Acts of Parliament on which they were founded, a child's liability to attend school begins, not at the beginning of the school term, but on its birthday. The child of five, consequently, is supposed to present itself on the Monday following its birthday, and the child of three or four, if it is admitted at all, can present itself on any day that may be convenient to its parents. It follows that the stream of admissions runs pretty regularly throughout the year, except in the case where the school is full, and applicants have to wait until a batch of promotions is made to the school for older children. Formerly no school had more than one promotion day, viz., the day following its annual examination. Some schools still keep to the plan of one promotion per annum. Others, like the London schools, have two promotion days, and there are schools that have three or more. As an excellent regulation, which has already been mentioned, prevents the attendance in any room from rising above the accommodation of the room, it follows that a school with one promotion day is likely to have a large number of vacant places in the early part of its educational year, whilst a school with two promotion days is likely to have vacant places, though to a smaller extent, twice in the year.

The only schools that will have no vacant places will be those that have a number of children always awaiting admission, *i.e.*, schools situated in areas where the demand for school places exceeds the supply. All this, however, will soon be a matter of the past. Under the Act of 1918, an Education Committee will be able to make a more reasonable by-law, which will enforce attendance not from a birthday, but from the first admission day after the fifth or sixth birthday. The change will tend to economy of school space and teaching proper, and also to educational efficacy. Most schools are likely to have three admission days per annum, *viz.*, after the Christmas, Easter, and mid-summer holidays.

The third peculiarity may be defended in some circumstances if not in all. Infants usually attend school for three hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon; older children for three hours in the morning and two and a half hours in the afternoon. At first sight it would seem that, if five and a half hours of school suffice for a child of twelve, five hours must be too much for a child of six. It would be hard to escape from this conclusion, supposing both children spent their time at school in the same way. Formerly this was the case, for the child of six and the child of twelve used to be taught on parallel lines. Both attended mainly that they might learn reading, writing, and arithmetic. The one received very elementary lessons in these subjects, the other more advanced lessons. It is likely that the younger child often had the more strenuous time, and that it not unfrequently felt the strain of attendance at school. Speaking broadly, however, these circumstances no longer obtain. Infant school time-tables of the present day provide for a great many lessons which are not really lessons at

all. Many hours are devoted to games of various kinds, to listening to stories, and to various kinds of easy manual work. When allowance is made for the time spent in this way, it will be found that the more formal lessons are not of excessive length. They are not even as long as they look on the time-table, for the teacher of reading and arithmetic must inevitably let the mass of her class take things very easily whilst she pays attention to particular individuals. If she could achieve the impossible, and keep her whole class always at work, these lessons could doubtless be made shorter than they are, and the smaller the class the shorter they might be. Were the class small enough, they would almost vanish, for there is reason to think that many individual children would, if they received a little guidance, learn to read without any formal lessons whatever. Persons who have learnt to read without any formal instruction in reading are certainly in existence.

If the infant schools of the past were open for an undue time, the blame must not be laid upon the Education Department. The Department's regulations, like the existing regulations of the Board of Education, merely required three hours' secular instruction per day, one hour and a half in the morning and the same in the afternoon. Everything over and above this was due to custom. It is not hard to see how the custom arose, as it is obviously convenient that all the children in a family, irrespective of age, should start for school at the same hour, and return together at noon. It would have been convenient, also, for all the children to have returned together at the end of the afternoon session, but even the early Victorian school managers discovered that an afternoon session of two and a half hours was too long for quite young children.

CHAPTER VI

Difficulty of Comparing Schools of the Present with Schools of the Past—The Value of our School Output—School Discipline as it Is and Was—Reading, Composition, and Writing at the Present Time and under the Mundella Code.

DIFFICULTIES attend any estimate of our system of elementary schools. Schools are judged by their output, and this depends largely on circumstances for which they are not responsible. A child, as has often been remarked, is awake for about 5,500 hours per annum, and he does not attend school for more than 1200 hours during each of nine years. Consequently, his school attendance, though it takes a prominent part in his life, occupies but a fraction of his waking hours, and he is subjected to powerful influences, notably those of his own home, over which his teacher has no control. All this is commonplace, but it is so important that it may well be re-stated.

Furthermore, we cannot be quite certain what the school output is really worth. We can find out what a boy knows and can do on a particular day, but we can only guess what he will become. He is immature, the man he is to be is still in the future, and our estimate of his education is necessarily incomplete. Were society in England to have settled down into a permanent state, and could we assume that the next generation would be just like the present, our estimate would be easier than it is, for we should be able to say that such and such an education produced such and such results. As it is, however, our schools are changing rapidly, and society

is also changing. Hence a study of present day adults throws more light on schools of the past than on those of the present. The schools of the present are turning out the adults of the future, whom we have not yet seen, and we can only make forecasts as to what they will be like.

These difficulties have to be recognised, but they need not be exaggerated, and after making allowance for them we can come to some conclusions as to what our schools are doing. These conclusions are, on the whole, of a comforting kind.

One may travel far before coming to a school in which the externals of discipline are not maintained, *i.e.*, in which the children are openly unruly, or in conflict with authority. Schools of this kind have never been common, and they are getting very rare. Those I have seen have nearly all been in remote places, where a weak teacher has had to deal with a particularly troublesome set of rural children. It is quite a mistake to suppose that all country children are naturally docile; on the contrary, in very remote places I have found children who went out of their way to be hostile or offensive, and I have had no similar experience in the poorest parts of London or Liverpool.

Unless what I have heard and read is incorrect, an inspector whose experience ended when mine began would have had a different tale to tell as to discipline. The disorderly schools may never have been very common, but there must have been a great deal more disorder than now. Sometimes it was disorder actively supported by parents. I knew of two London teachers, both some years dead, who, in the early days of the School Board, had to strike both hard and swiftly in defence of their personal safety.

Good discipline includes much more than the absence

of disorder, and in the great majority of schools much more than this is obtained. Reasonable cleanliness, punctuality, and industry are certainly the rule rather than the exception; the exceptions, especially in the matter of cleanliness, are much rarer than they were, and they are likely to become rarer still.

Official reports generally say little as to the influence of elementary schools on morals taken in the narrow sense, and this silence is wise. Most persons who have seen much of schools are inclined to sympathise with the old Puritan divine who was accused of caring too much about his ordination candidates' learning and too little about their spiritual state. "They may deceive me as to their Grace," he said, "but they can never deceive me as to their Greek." Many of us, like him, feel that we can test what corresponds to the Greek, but can only guess at what corresponds to the Grace. At the same time we are well aware, as he doubtless was, that it is the Grace which matters most. I for one can give no evidence on the morals of school children, except in so far as industry, punctuality, cleanliness, and goodwill towards teachers are moral virtues. I cannot say whether the children who leave school now are more honest, more truthful, and less inclined to go astray in other ways than the children who left thirty years ago. I will, however, mention one matter which possibly throws light on morals. At one time I well remember foolish or obscene inscriptions and drawings were far from uncommon in the out-offices of schools and elsewhere; they are now seldom to be met with, and of late years I have seen nothing of the kind except on rare occasions in small schools and usually in remote villages. I note this point for what it is worth. Too much must not be made of it; for, though the presence of

the things to which I refer shows the existence of foolish or corrupt minds, their absence is no proof of virtue.

Goodwill between teachers and scholars is, I firmly believe, both common and on the increase. No doubt there have been elementary schools, the discipline of which rested mainly on fear. Possibly, though I hope not, such schools may still linger on. But before blaming the elementary school teachers of the past for laying undue stress on punishments, we must remember that a very bad example was set them by the school masters who were trusted by the prosperous classes. English elementary education, as we now know it, began to develop at a time when most persons in authority held a firm belief in corporal punishment for soldiers, sailors, and children. The excessive floggings of soldiers and sailors were of comparatively modern origin, and as repugnant to many people of the nineteenth century as they would be to everyone in the twentieth. But the systematic beating of children was a practice which had come down from the middle ages, and it was firmly established. The position must not be overstated. Just as Collingwood and other officers maintained naval and military discipline without the punishments which were sanctioned by law, so, doubtless, there were school masters who were both just and humane. But making all possible allowance for the existence of these men, there were plenty of bad precedents for the elementary schools to follow. It is worth noting that Lancaster from the very beginning protested against the prevailing practices; it was in his endeavour to dispense with the cane that he invented the fantastic punishments that he describes in his own book.¹

¹ "Improvements in Education." Third edition, 1805.

The Board of Education issues one regulation only as to punishment. It requires the teacher of an elementary school to keep a punishment book and enter therein all cases of corporal punishment. This regulation, except for one short intermission, has been in force for many years. Probably it is the only regulation that the central authority ought to issue, for in discipline more than anything else local opinion is to be trusted. Anyhow, the regulation goes some way to protect the scholar against an arbitrary teacher, and the teacher against the fanciful or malicious parent, who is by no means an imaginary person. Some Education Committees issue rules of their own, *e.g.*, limiting the teacher's discretion as to corporal punishment, or preventing junior teachers from resorting to it, but, as far I know, no Education Committee has ever forbidden it altogether.

There is plenty of evidence that elementary schools have broken away from the somewhat brutal traditions of the past. Children who seemed cowed, or afraid of their teachers are rare, and in existing circumstances, even supposing the punishment book is not properly kept, any undue amount of punishment is pretty sure to come to light; nothing of the kind would, of course, ever occur were all school managers to do their duty, and make themselves acquainted with the state of their schools. Within the last twelve years I have met with one punishment case only that called for a formal report, and in this there was almost certainly mental derangement on the part of the teacher. I remember earlier cases that were quite inexcusable, and, in particular, the case of a large London school, where from one-third to one-fourth of the boys were caned every week. This procedure was condemned by the London School Board. Anything like it would now be sternly

repressed by any Education Committee, and banned also by professional opinion. Competent teachers, I imagine, concur pretty well in thinking that a school is no place either for the teacher who is continually using his cane, or for the teacher who refuses to use it on proper occasion.

In some parts of the instruction a notable improvement is to be recorded. Reading is certainly taught more profitably than of old. It is not that the children read better, *i.e.*, better from an elocutionary point of view, than their fathers, for at all periods children who attended regularly learnt to read. The advance is in the character of the books that are read. At the period of the Mundella Code the books studied in elementary schools were nearly always books specially prepared for elementary school use. They were technically known as "readers." There were historical, geographical, and science readers; all of these were by way of being original productions. There were "literary" readers, which, in the case of the upper standards, were mainly compilations of extracts from well-known writers in prose and poetry. At an earlier period, I believe, some schools had no readers except the "literary" readers. Readers still exist, and some of them are far from being satisfactory, but taken in the mass they are superior to their predecessors, and children now read from various other books about which something will be said below.

The "literary" readers provided for the lower standards were usually harmless and unpretentious works. They were made up of short stories and poems, often quite well chosen, and they were generally suitable for the reading of beginners. The corresponding books for the upper standards also contained some short stories and poems, but they were in great part made

up of extracts from novels, books of travel, histories, and other works. These more advanced "literary" readers were open to criticism on more than one ground. From their very nature they were unfit to satisfy the literary appetite which the healthy mind ought to possess. Collections of extracts have a legitimate place amongst school books, but the reading of extracts seems only a means to an end, the end is the training of children to read complete books, and it cannot be attained unless the books are forthcoming. It does not, of course, follow that the complete book read in school should be read from cover to cover. On the contrary, a good deal of skipping may often be wise. I imagine, for instance, that most of the teachers who use "Ivanhoe" as a reading book would let the children pass rapidly over the Grandmaster's oratory. It seems, however, fair to say that a school fails, unless it accustoms its scholars to the reading of good books and the mastery of their substance. During the Mundella period a boy might pass through an elementary school without reading from any complete book of a secular kind, the historical and geographical readers only excepted. Indeed, apart from the books contained in the Bible, he might never see any other complete book.

In the second place, many of the extracts and shorter pieces, though taken from good books, were not suited for study by children. Compilers of school books have sometimes forgotten that certain authors, whatever be their merits, can never be adapted to school use. A work may be excellent as literature, and yet a bad lesson book. Milton's writings are in point. Children who can interpret his Latinised constructions and classical allusions, so as to follow his meaning, must be very rare, but extracts from "Paradise Lost," *e.g.*, Satan's address to the sun, and so forth, used

to appear in school books. The Education Department also, I am sorry to say, in one of its Codes, suggested that passages from Milton should be chosen for recitation by children. It would be easy to mention other eminent though unsuitable writers who have been drawn upon by the editors of the readers.

Some extracts, which were not in themselves particularly difficult, were rendered obscure by their separation from their context. Some extracts from histories and novels suffered greatly in this way, for they described events which detached from preceding, and consequent events were rather meaningless. One very common reader contained Macaulay's story of the relief of Londonderry. The passage, even when standing by itself, doubtless gives a fine picture of misery and heroism, but Macaulay wrote for persons who had already read his account of besiegers and besieged, and of the motives that actuated each. If these circumstances are unknown, interest in his narrative in great measure disappears, and there remains a mere description of a military operation which was of third-rate importance, even from a seventeenth century standpoint.

Lastly, some, though perhaps not many, of the extracts and shorter pieces were intrinsically bad. In certain old readers one may find examples of stilted, or over ornate, or rhetorical prose, which no ordinary child can like, and which the sensible child or adult ought to hate. Whether these productions really commended themselves to the compiler, or whether he selected them because he considered it his duty to provide children with the longest possible words and with the most difficult possible English, is more than I can say. About the absurd difficulty of particular portions of particular readers, however, there could be no question.

The historical and geographical readers differed, as

their successors have differed, very much in character. Some were, as some still are, very poor productions. Their weakness lay, and lies, not so much in their errors on matters of fact as in other directions, and could not be fully explained without long quotations for which there is no space in this book. It may, however, be remarked that the worse historical readers are at fault in the following ways.

Some of the writers wish to be vivid and fail lamentably; the tame authors whom certain educational publishers employ try in vain to imitate J. R. Green or Macaulay.

A great deal of space is devoted to military history of an unimportant kind, and this military history is often quite unintelligently told. One instance in point may be given. Every history reader, without exception, describes Wolfe's ascent of the heights of Abraham, the battle thereon, and his death, but only one book that I can recollect explains why the surprise of the heights brought on the battle that decided the surrender of Quebec, or points out that Wolfe's expedition was but a branch of Chatham's triple attack, and that, even if Wolfe had failed in 1759, Amherst would probably have succeeded in 1760; or explains how it was that the small population of Canada had a chance of holding its own against the resources of Britain and her colonies.

A great deal of space, also, is devoted to constitutional and semi-legal questions, which it seems impossible to explain to children; the ship money episodes, for instance, and the points at issue between the Stuarts and their parliaments are usually introduced much too early into the school course.

There are omissions on the social side. I cannot think of any reader in which it is pointed out that medical science has reduced our death-rate, and that the reduced death-rate has resulted in the enormous

increase of population which lies at the root of so many modern difficulties. It is only of late that school books have begun to lay stress on the industrial history of the last two centuries, on the decay of small industries, and the creation of large ones; on the concentration of capital in large masses under a single direction; and on all the other changes covered by the term industrial revolution. Yet all this is capable of being explained to children. Nor is it controversial, for the actual facts are not denied by either socialist or individualist. The readers to which I refer do not ignore altogether social matters of a smaller kind, particulars about food, dress, architecture, and customs, but these points are often inadequately treated, though they are just the points which children can appreciate, though they are easy to remember, and though they help to form the proper background for a serious study of history in later life.

Some of the readers, and especially those written on the so called "concentric" plan, were, and are, scrappy to an extraordinary degree. The writer of a concentric set of readers has undoubtedly a difficult task, inasmuch as he has to give a sketch of English history in each one of three or four readers. The first sketch may appear in a book intended for Standard IV., and deal with history from the Stone Age down to the death of Edward VII. The second sketch, intended for Standard V., may fill in episodes and details omitted in the previous book. Further episodes and details may be provided in a third and fourth book. As each volume is usually limited to about two hundred small pages, and as, moreover, no book reproduces very much of the contents of its predecessors, the author presents to his readers a series of detached episodes, issuing from nothing and leading up to nothing. One Standard VI. book of which I can think allots two chapters to the reign

of Victoria; one of these is devoted to the Indian Mutiny, the other to the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee.

There are, of course, historical readers which no one would condemn. One series was produced by S. R. Gardiner, or under his immediate supervision. Another series has been read and approved by Cardinal Gasquet; this series is primarily intended for Roman Catholic schools, where it has replaced books for which no good word can be said.¹ No other series bears such distinguished names, but there are various books in the market which have met with much approval from competent teachers.

The readers, generally, would be better than they are, were the writers to leave off paraphrasing earlier text-books, and to read and digest the historical literature to be found in any good library. Writers of school books need not conduct researches, but they may be expected to study the works of those who have. There is a mass of research extant, and the man who writes for children should refer to this and make his selection. It is in selection that the difficulty lies, and his skill should be apparent.

The worse geographical readers, though dry and uninteresting, were, and are, less objectionable than the worse historical readers. Owing to the nature of his subject, it seems harder for the writer on geography to go astray. There were books that used to puzzle children with nonsense about the "Devonian Range," and the "Cambrian Group," and the "East Anglian Heights," but the main faults of the geographical readers have been negative rather than positive. In the case of the worse readers the descriptive passages were much like

¹ Works containing a strange mixture of Jacobitism and Jacobinism, and many incorrect statements on common matters of fact.

paraphrases of guide-books and gazetteers, and there was little besides description. These readers almost ignored the connection between man's life and the natural conditions which influence it. Yet some of these connections are so simple as to be well within the apprehension of children. The reasons, for instance, why Liverpool has become the chief port on our west coast are readily set out in an elementary way, and modern text-books deal largely with other instances of geographical cause and effect. The descriptions in the geographical readers were often dull and superficial. This is not surprising, for it is always difficult to write a good description of anything; it is impossible to do so without proper material, and the authors of school books, hard worked and badly paid persons for the most part, may not have easy access to large scale maps, sets of photographs, good books of travel, and official year books.

Of late years many books, other than readers, have found their way into the schools. We may find in common use both books primarily written for children and others primarily written for adults, but quite capable of being appreciated by children. The following list, which is far from being complete, contains some of each class:—"Alice in Wonderland," "Grimm's Tales," "Andersen's Tales," "Masterman Ready," "The Settlers in Canada," "The Children of the New Forest," "Treasure Island," "Westward Ho!", Southey's "Nelson," "Ivanhoe," "Marmion," Lamb's "Tales from Shakespeare," Shakespeare's "King John," his "Merchant of Venice," and "Julius Cæsar," and several collections of poetry.

It is always a matter of opinion how far the choice of a particular book is wise, and in this list there are two or three books which some persons might exclude. Nobody, however, is likely to doubt that, taken in the

mass, the books in the list are worth putting before children, or that the children who have read some of them compulsorily may proceed to read others of their own free will. If this happens, the school is successful in one of its aims. Probably it actually is successful. We cannot, as has already been remarked, ascertain how far the children who are now leaving school will follow studious habits in adult life, but it seems pretty certain that the sale of standard books worth reading, *e.g.*, in the Everyman Library, is heavy and increasing, and the schools may take credit for the fact.

The Board of Education, like the Education Department before it, neither issues nor approves school books. The choice rests legally with the Education Committee, but it is generally delegated to the head teacher, either absolutely or within certain limits. The commonest plan is to allow him to choose any of the books in a pretty long list. Inspectors occasionally report either that a book is altogether unsuitable for school use, or that it is unsuitable for a particular set of children, but cases of this kind are rare, and the teacher's choice is really very wide. Often it is wisely exercised; but it has sometimes to be made on insufficient information. The teacher who works in a large town can always see specimen school books at the bookseller's shop or at the offices of the Education Committee, and, if his school is large, he may obtain them direct from the publishers. The rural teacher is much worse off; he must take a journey if he wants to see the books, for, as his school is small, the publisher is unlikely to supply him with specimen copies. Neither in town or country is much help to be got from the educational newspapers. Books for elementary schools do not seem to be considered worth serious reviewing, and, when they are bad, they seldom receive the censure they deserve. The ordinary

notice of a new book for elementary schools is to the effect that the children of the twentieth century are lucky in being able to study the latest productions of Messrs So-and-So.

In one respect there really is very little to complain of, for nearly all the new books are in good print. The only exception is in the case of Bibles, in providing which, economy is more considered than eyesight.

In the current language of the Education Department, the term "writing" covered a great deal more than the learning to write. Writing included dictation and also composition, and one large part of the annual examination consisted in the application of dictation and composition tests. The procedure varied somewhat at different times, according to the Department's regulations, but, speaking generally, the inspector was bound to examine Standards II., III., and IV. in dictation, and Standards V., VI., and VII. in either dictation or composition at his discretion. Most inspectors exercised their option in favour of composition, as was doubtless intended by the Department, but there certainly were two, and possibly there were more, who insisted in examining always in dictation. Moreover, as the composition test for Standard V. consisted in the reproduction of a story read out or told by the inspector, it did not differ very essentially from a dictation test. The net result of the regulations was that dictation received much more attention than composition. All this is now altered. Composition exercises are written by children in the lower standards who, as experience shows, often express themselves freely and correctly, and the children in the upper standards, having already been practised in the lower, write decidedly better than their predecessors of a generation ago.

Composition has also improved for quite another

reason. We have pretty well got rid of such subjects as "Fidelity" and "Truthfulness," and of certain books of "model essays" which were anything but good models. Whether these works were planned to meet the needs of the annual examination, and whether, in the past, my colleagues asked for essays on "Fidelity" and "Truthfulness" is more than I can say. Probably the feeling was that the inspector might conceivably ask for an exercise on some such subject, and that, if he did so, the child who had not already written on that particular subject would collapse under examination. At all events, there can be no doubt that many children wasted their time in writing on unsuitable subjects, or in assimilating what others had written on the same. It is too much to say that pretentious and unsuitable composition subjects have disappeared from school syllabuses, but they are rarer than of old, and because they are rarer composition is becoming freer and more natural. The scholars in a good school will be able to describe in a natural way anything they have seen or done, or to frame a letter on any reasonable subject, or to prepare written answers to questions on their geographical or historical studies, or to make up imaginary conversations between various persons in various circumstances. The last exercise, in particular, is often surprisingly well done, and the results illustrate the well-known fact that some children find it very easy to put themselves in other people's places. As an example of what is not unusual, I may mention the case of a girls' school, which no one would call a show school, visited by me a few days before writing these sentences. The girls in the first class, whose average age would be from thirteen to fourteen, were asked by me to write a friendly dialogue between a Puritan and a Cavalier on the approaching restoration

of Charles II. Some of the dialogues produced were meagre, but very few, if any, were foolish, many embodied intelligently the opinions which, according to the text-books, prevailed as to the king's recall, and three or four quite reproduced a seventeenth century atmosphere. The restoration period had been studied by the children in question, but it is in the highest degree improbable that they had been prepared beforehand for this particular exercise ; my visit was unexpected, and, moreover, to the best of my recollection, the subject had never been propounded by me before.

A great deal might be written about the teaching of arithmetic. During the period of which I have knowledge, the most absurd parts of the old "commercial arithmetic" seldom found their way into elementary schools, inasmuch as they were not included in the Department's syllabus, which practically determined the teaching. "True discount" and "bills of exchange" were very rarely taught, and little stress, if any, was ever laid on cloth measure, troy weight, or apothecaries weight, all of which some advocates of the metric system assume to be a necessary part of the English system. All the same, parts of the old elementary schools' arithmetic were quite useless. To some extent these have disappeared. "Recurring decimals" have almost gone ; "compound interest" is rarer than it was, and so, too, are the more difficult applications of "simple interest." On the other hand, mensuration questions have become more prominent, and certain text-books which are widely used associate with arithmetic a good deal of elementary algebra and practical geometry. Some of the new syllabuses are much more difficult than the old syllabuses of the Department. It would be rash to say whether other new syllabuses are more difficult or not, for, in the case

of arithmetic, difficulty depends more upon the examples given than on the rules studied, and it is doubtful which way the balance inclines. The new syllabuses, whether easy or difficult, are certainly more practical than the old, *i.e.*, they have more bearing upon the practical affairs of life, but even now they contain a good deal which we might wish to put aside. The simplification of syllabuses is, however, attended with difficulties. The drawing up of the syllabus is usually delegated by the Education Committee to the head teacher, but he is not altogether a free agent, as he has to prepare children for the scholarships which are offered in most parts of the country. Consequently, he has to provide the arithmetic which the scholarship examiners demand, and in some cases this may be arithmetic of a rather useless kind. He has to make use of the books which the publishers provide. He is, also, more or less fettered by traditions, from which it is hard to break away, that such and such arithmetic should be taught to children. On the whole, it is not as easy as it would seem for him to simplify his arithmetic courses.

One difference between the old schemes and the new lies in the fact that the old syllabuses were divided into almost water-tight compartments. Three or four rules were assigned to each standard, and the children in the standard devoted nearly all their arithmetic lessons to these rules, though they also revised the work of previous years. The present practice is to deal less intensively with a large number of rules each year, and to spread the teaching of each rule over several years. Formerly, a child did not begin decimal fractions until he entered the sixth standard, and he completed them when in the seventh standard, supposing he ever reached it. Now he may first approach them when he enters the third standard, and he may continue to

study them until he leaves school, taking them each year in a rather more advanced form. The old plan was monotonous, and few teachers would care to revert to it. The new plan, on the other hand, has its dangers. Where it is adopted the children may pass from one process to another so quickly that they do not become proficient in any. Certain text-books in the market, unless used with great caution, and supplemented with plenty of examples, tend to scrappiness and superficial work. In the hands of a weak teacher these books may produce disastrous results. On the whole, however, the new plan seems superior to the old, though not quite so superior as some enthusiasts would maintain. Whatever may have been the faults of the old plan, some schools in which it was followed taught arithmetic with conspicuous success.

Another difference exists between old and new ideas as to the teaching of arithmetic. Nobody, it is probable, has ever suggested that arithmetical "rules" or processes are to be used, like penny-in-the-slot machines, by persons who do not understand their working. But it is possible either to practise the rule first and learn the justification of it afterwards, or to put off the practice until the justification is mastered. An example may explain the alternatives more clearly than any general statement. An old fashioned teacher who had to deal with the question, "Divide $\frac{3}{5}$ by $\frac{2}{7}$," would tell his scholars to invert the second fraction, and multiply together the two numerators and the two denominators. He would proceed to set other examples of the same character, and, ultimately, when the scholars had become familiar with the process he might explain how it was that it gave satisfactory results. A more modern teacher will point out that $\frac{3}{5}$ is the same thing as $\frac{3}{5} \times \frac{1}{1}$, and $\frac{2}{7}$ the same thing as $\frac{1}{\frac{7}{2}}$, that we can divide

$\frac{2}{3}$ by $\frac{1}{3}$ just as easily as we can divide 21 by 10, and that the answer in each case is $2\frac{1}{10}$. He will tell the children, or perhaps beguile them into telling him, that the rule about inverting and multiplying gives the same result as is obtained when $\frac{2}{3}$ and $\frac{1}{3}$ are expressed with a common denominator. All this he may probably illustrate with paper ruled in one-inch squares and cut into oblongs measuring seven inches by five. When all his explanation is grasped, but not before, he will set the children to work examples in the division of fractions. Arguments may be found for the old plan as well as for the new. It may, also, be argued that, provided both principle and practice be mastered in the end, it is immaterial which is mastered first.

From time to time complaints are heard that the children who now leave school spell, *i.e.*, write words, inaccurately, and shew an insufficient knowledge of arithmetic. It is also said that greater accuracy in spelling and arithmetic was attained a generation ago. These complaints are too persistent to be ignored altogether, but they are usually framed in an indefinite way, and it is not easy to ascertain the evidence on which they rest. They are sometimes made by teachers as well as by employers. My own belief is that the deficiencies of the school products are exaggerated, and that the statements as to deterioration are quite unfounded. It must be conceded that most elementary schools produce some unsatisfactory pupils, but this is true of all kinds of schools, and probably it will be true always. We need not go far to find instances in point; there are boys in plenty who have studied Latin for eight or nine years without having become Latinists; University students who are weak in spelling; and quite distinguished individuals who, in spite of a liberal education, are very ignorant of the world around them.

It must also be conceded that there are elementary schools which are really weak in arithmetic, or in composition, or in both. But making all possible allowances for these weak schools, which are in a minority, and for the weak scholars elsewhere, who are also in a minority, there remains a great mass of children whose attainments reach a reasonable level. In school after school, and in the country as well as in the towns, we may find the elder scholars able to write pretty accurately about everyday matters, and this is all that ought to be expected. It is absurd to ask that children of thirteen should have a large command of literary English, and we do not want them, even if they can, to master journalistic English. As they know neither Latin nor Greek they cannot be familiar with the less common words of Latin or Greek origin, and for the spelling of these they should refer to the dictionary. So far as my own experience goes, schools, and girls' schools especially, are more apt to be weak in arithmetic than in spelling, but still it is only in a rather exceptional school that the arithmetic of everyday life is beyond the children in the highest class. On the whole, the facts point to the conclusion that the employers who complain of their office boys' attainments set their standard too high, or set it wrongly. It would be curious to know how these persons test arithmetic and spelling.

We may be pretty confident that there is no real deterioration in accuracy. In one sense, the work of twenty-five and thirty years ago was very accurate. The children were drilled to satisfy a particular test on a particular day, and they often did this with wonderful precision. But whilst some of the apparent accuracy was genuine, much of it was superficial. The nature of the test was pretty well known beforehand, and any

unexpected variations in it would tell heavily against many of the schools. If long sums had been usual, and shorter sums were set, the results in arithmetic would often fall. They would often fall if an elementary question was introduced when an advanced question was expected, *e.g.*, if a sum in simple or compound long division was set to the sixth standard. Disaster might even arise from a change in the ruling of the paper used on the examination day; the insertion of an unexpected line might make a real difference. The results in spelling would sometimes vary in the same conspicuous way. An easy piece of dictation might be more fatal than a harder piece, just because the absence of long words in the former put children off their guard. The true position seems to be somewhat as follows. If the employer who complains of his office boys could enter twenty elementary schools and apply, off-hand, the tests which inspectors applied in 1890, he would certainly not obtain the inspectors' results of 1890. Any tests that he might apply, however, would give as good results as, or better results than, the same tests applied, off-hand, would have given in 1890. If this is the case, as I believe it to be, the employer has no cause to complain that there is less accuracy than of old.

Teachers' grumbles about the waning accuracy of school work are much like the grumbles that are uttered by the elderly members of every profession. There will always be persons who are confident that their juniors' work is inferior to their own, and we may discount sweeping statements that accuracy is disappearing, much as we do the old soldier's complaint that the service is going to the dogs. But, of course, the grumbling teacher, like the grumbling employer, though wrong in his generalisations, may be quite right in his animadversions on particular schools or sets of children.

CHAPTER VII

The Teaching of Geography, History, and Science in Elementary Schools

ATTEMPTS to acquaint children with the sources of history have been made, and are likely to be extended, but there is an obvious limit beyond which they cannot be pushed. Many of the original documents are difficult of interpretation, and others are not readily obtainable, and, the child being unable to weigh evidence, or distinguish essentials from non-essentials, cannot construct for himself a continuous narrative out of charters, treaties, death-warrants, chronicles, diaries, and the like. Speaking generally, he learns the main facts of history in one of two ways. Either he reads about them in a book, usually one of the historical readers which have been described, or he listens to the teacher's reproductions of his own reading. The reader tends to displace lessons of the lecture type, and the change is usually for the better. If the book is arid and imperfect, and if the teacher has wide reading and genuine powers of narration, the lesson may imprint information more successfully than the book. It is possible to imagine a lecture that would be better than the best book. A discourse on "Henry of Navarre" by Stanley Weyman, for instance, would be quite as improving as a chapter in a text-book, much more interesting, and much easier to remember. But cases of this kind must be rare, and in supplying historical information the average man cannot compete with the good book. The author of the book has, presumably,

a special knowledge of his subject. If he writes at leisure, as he should, he is able to choose his material and his words, and he is not burdened with the thought that he has to keep forty or fifty boys attentive and in order. The more the readers improve, the rarer the lecture-like history lesson is likely to become. This does not mean that the oral teaching of history will disappear; on the contrary, the teacher will always have to question on the subject-matter of the reader, to explain it, to supplement its information from other books, and sometimes to qualify or correct its mis-statements. The last duty is real, *e.g.*, one of the best known readers in common use tells us that the first Reform Bill gave the vote to the yeomen of England.

In the case of geography, lessons that resemble lectures have a still lower expectation of life. The reason why this is so is not far to seek; whilst historical and geographical information can be obtained from either book or lecture, the teacher of geography has at his command much in the way of map and photographic illustrations, and the teacher of history has comparatively little; hence the geographical lecture has more formidable competitors than the historical lecture, and the more school maps are improved the more severely they will compete.

Some vile maps are still to be found in schools; in particular, there are some which represent mountains by thick black lines, and make no distinction between table-lands and low-lying plains. There are others again which misrepresent grotesquely the relative heights of British hills and mountains. One map, which is not at all uncommon, makes the Lincolnshire Wolds and the chalk hills of West Norfolk look like formidable ranges of mountains. But maps of this kind need not be used, and I cannot imagine that they would be

knowingly supplied by any Education Committee. It is easy to buy coloured orographical or contour wall maps of all the continents, the British Isles, certain other countries, and many English counties. From these maps the build of nearly every country which children need study can be ascertained with sufficient accuracy, and far more satisfactorily than from any oral or written description. Moreover, there are cheap and tolerably satisfactory orographical school atlases, which are useful to supplement the wall maps, though they do not show a very great amount of detail. The ordnance maps of the school neighbourhood can always be obtained. Consequently, it has now become quite unnecessary for the teacher to stand in front of a class and point out that Holland is flat, and Switzerland is mountainous, or that the Rhine has such and such tributaries rising in such and such places. He can refer his scholars to their maps or atlases, and direct them to ascertain for themselves which parts of the Rhine basin are flat and which are not, and what tributaries join the main stream. This is not all; provided that the maps are reasonably good, and on a proper scale, the children can ascertain for themselves the length of the river and its tributaries, and calculate approximately the area of the basin. In short, as the teacher can put the children in the way of obtaining topographical information, he can refrain from supplying it.

Whilst lecture-like lessons on geography are becoming rare, the oral teaching of the subject is firmly established. It is likely to remain more important than the oral teaching of history. In the case of history the facts must be put before children by means of the lecture or the printed page, and we can rarely elicit, to use the old training college phrase, from them any information beyond what we have already supplied. No man, how-

ever well informed he may be, can foretell the future except in the vaguest and dimmest way. The statesman who may be supposed to have grasped the conditions of his own generation can only guess at the conditions which will obtain in the next. Gladstone certainly did not foresee the future of Bulgaria, or Salisbury that of Heligoland. Still less can children, from their scanty knowledge of one set of historical conditions, find out for themselves the nature of a consequent set of conditions. There are indeed exceptional cases where even children can guess what is coming; thus they may infer that the Black Death resulted in a rise of wages. Just because effect follows cause so obviously in this particular instance, it may be observed parenthetically, the Black Death is greatly beloved by examiners. But in the great majority of cases we must state the effect as well as the cause, and trace the connection backwards as well as we can. To do even this is sufficiently difficult; so much that has actually happened in one way might easily have happened in another, and so many great events have followed from small causes.

In teaching geography we can elicit a good deal of information that we have not already given. It is not only topography that children can master for themselves. From the study of the map all sorts of conclusions can be drawn, *e.g.*, that the current of the Ouse is slow and that of the Spey swift, that navigation is dangerous near some coasts and comparatively safe on others, that some coast towns and river towns may develop into seaports, and that others cannot. When the scholar has assimilated certain elementary facts in physics and astronomy, his range of possible conclusions becomes wider. He can then proceed to make inferences about climate and weather. When he has acquired some geological information, the range

becomes wider still, for inferences as to production, industry, and methods of living are brought within reach.

Inferences and conclusions of the kind that have been mentioned might conceivably be made without oral teaching. We might have books of geographical problems and key books to provide the answers; as a matter of fact, text-books containing the problems actually exist. Most teachers of children under fourteen, however, prefer to frame their own questions in their own way, to receive oral answers, and to discuss them conversationally.

The science that is subsidiary to geography lends itself to oral teaching. The facts that ice is lighter than water, that hot air is lighter than cold, and that water grows cold or hot more slowly than land, are capable of being demonstrated under elementary school conditions, whilst to read about them is of no particular use. The elementary facts about the sun's apparent motion, and the earth's real motion, must be explained orally if they are to be explained at all. Lastly, the very elementary geology that connects itself with geography, though described in books, cannot be learnt from them alone.

Two questions relative to geography and history naturally suggest themselves. What knowledge of these subjects should a boy of thirteen or fourteen bring away from school? What knowledge does the average boy actually bring away? The first is puzzling, but I will try to indicate the way in which many teachers would now answer it. We realise, they would say, that a boy cannot be turned into a walking text-book of history. We realise, also, that a British citizen should know something about his predecessors in Britain, and that he should know some of them pretty intimately. He cannot do this unless we treat some

particular historical episodes in very considerable detail. But an episode standing by itself is scarcely intelligible, and we have to provide a frame into which it can be fitted.

If these opinions are correct, the teacher should first of all settle on his frame work, and make sure that his scholars are acquainted with it. Quite possibly, he will let them record on time-charts, and commit to memory the list of the English sovereigns from William I. onwards. Next he must make up his mind what episodes he means to treat, and these he should treat fully and in detail. Lastly, he must make a firm resolve to pass over the numberless episodes with which he cannot deal in a satisfactory way.

Neither the lists of kings, nor the details of the selected episodes need over burden the children's memories. The kings and queens were really very picturesque people, and they are easy to remember if a little interesting information about each be provided. To learn their succession is far less laborious than many quite minor tasks accomplished by anyone who studies a foreign language, *e.g.*, the learning the genders of French or German nouns. The details of the episodes are often an actual help to the memory. If A, B, C, D, E, F, G are associated events, A + B + C + D + E + F + G may be easier to remember than A + D + G, for the removal of B, C, E, and F may leave A, D, and G isolated and meaningless. Or, if a very imperfect metaphor may be allowed, the more rungs we remove from the ladder, the harder it will be to climb.

If the foregoing principles are to be applied consistently, the teacher, or the writer of the text-book, must decide whether such a story as that of Henry II. and Becket is to left alone or told at length. He may

hold that the quarrel between the two has become so obsolete that children can spend their time better than in investigating it. In this case he will leave the story alone. Or he may think that, though the points of the dispute have long ago been settled, its circumstances throw valuable light on Middle Age habits, characters, and methods of thought. In this case he will set out the story at length, not, perhaps, in such detail as in Stanley's "Memorials of Canterbury," but in much greater detail than is given in most books written for children. Indeed, the more within reason the details are supplied, the more real the story becomes. The bare fact that Becket was done to death in the cathedral is not very informing; it is the why, and how, and circumstances that make the story worth telling to children in the twentieth century. Children who read the full story have, at all events, learnt a little about the Middle Ages. It is something for them to know that Becket's reputation for sanctity dates from the discovery of hair-cloth and vermin on his person; the knowledge leads to some insight into the mediæval mind.

If the same principles are applied to the conquest of Canada, the results will be somewhat as follows. The teacher, or the text-book, cannot, indeed, ignore the fact that Canada is now British, and that it was once French, but he, or it, may possibly be content with the statement that the country was conquered in the Seven Years' War. This will be the right plan supposing all history of the drum and trumpet kind is to be avoided, or supposing it is thought that the operations, which brought about the conquest, were too petty for record after a century and a half. Or it may be thought that the story is worth telling. In this case it will be told fully; not, certainly, with all the details

which Parkman has chronicled, but with many more than the historical readers give. It will be made clear why Canada was easy to defend and difficult to attack, and how it was that the resources of the attack eventually overcame the natural conditions that fortified the defence. The exploits of Wolfe will take their proper place, not as forming a complete historical episode by themselves, but as a glorious episode of an episode.

The story of the Tyler rebellion again, it may be maintained, should be told properly, or not told at all. Children learn about the poll tax, the incident at Dartford, the incident at Smithfield, and the executions that followed the rebellion, but they are seldom taught how great the social upheaval was. The murder of the rather exemplary archbishop, for instance, and the burning of the foreign merchants' houses are omitted from nearly all books used in elementary schools, and from more ambitious books also. Simon of Sudbury's death is not mentioned in J. F. Bright's "History of England." I can only think of one book intended for elementary schools that refers to it, yet, even allowing for the fact that Simon was put to death, rather as chancellor than as archbishop, his case seems to be as remarkable as Becket's.

Authorities will never agree how much geography should be learnt in an elementary school. Two points may, perhaps, be taken as fixed. One is positive. By the time a boy leaves school he should be able to read any ordinary map with ease and accuracy. The other is negative. He should not learn any statistics as to populations, exports, and the like, for all these may become obsolete before he reaches middle age; consequently, if remembered, they will be worse than useless to him.

The second question, also, is anything but easy.

The best answer may be that there is no such person as the average boy. In some schools a good deal of history and geography is learnt, and in others very little, and we cannot average up the results. My own belief is strong that the weak geography and history would rapidly improve, were all schools to provide themselves with good maps and atlases, with good readers or text-books for the scholars, and with good reference books for the teachers. So far as books and atlases are concerned, things are satisfactory in some schools, but unsatisfactory in most. Many of the school atlases are wretched, and, indeed, too cheap to be good; six-penny atlases are not uncommon. The books available for the teacher are generally either none or very few; he has often nothing but what he finds for himself, and his own books are likely to be the text-books he used as a training college student; they may, or may not, bear upon his school courses. So far as I can recollect, I have never seen in an elementary school, the "Cambridge Modern History," or the epitome of the "National History of Biography," or Corbett's "Drake and the Tudor Navy," or any one of dozens of standard books which a teacher might well consult.

The teaching of history suffers from the want of good maps quite as much as the teaching of geography. Ordinary "political" maps are of little use to the teacher of history, as the bright colouring which distinguishes the political divisions hides the things we want to make clear to a beginner. Physical maps that show the build of the country can be used to a certain extent, but so many complicated transactions have taken place on the earth's surface that the teacher is soon held up if he has not historical maps at his disposal. Historical atlases are practically unknown in elementary schools, and historical wall maps are rare

and seldom of value. Great progress would be made at once, were the elder scholars supplied with historical atlases, and taught to use them. The cost of the atlases need not frighten an economist. An atlas as good as Putzger's "Historical School Atlas," or Gardiner's "Atlas of English History," if sold on a large scale, could be put on the market for three or four shillings. Half a million copies, more or less, would suffice for the schools, and, with due care, a copy might last eight or ten years. On the whole, the cost per annum may be taken to be that of 50,000 four shilling books, or £10,000, a very small percentage of the £25,000,000 to £26,000,000 which the elementary schools cost. It would, I believe, be possible to contrive an atlas better than either Putzger's or Gardiner's, clearer than the former, and rather fuller than the latter. The ideal atlas would probably give more space to places outside Europe than either of these, and less space to plans of battles. Tactics seem to have no proper place in a school course, and, supposing they were to be taught, our battle plans would have to be on a very large scale indeed. The teaching of strategy is on a different footing. Given a reasonably good atlas, we can explain Hannibal's route into Italy, or Napoleon's to Moscow, or Sherman's through Georgia, or Napoleon's intended combinations for the invasion of England, and there is no reason why we should not do so.

In 1861 Huxley complained that the elementary school boy "entered the world as ignorant of the methods and facts of science as on the day he was born," and demanded that people should "make the elements of physical science an integral part of primary education."¹ Huxley was not infallible, and his state-

¹ Lecture on the Study of Zoology, reprinted in "Lay Sermons," etc. Macmillan and Co. 1871.

ment may have been too sweeping, but, had it been seriously contested, he would scarcely have allowed it to stand when his lectures came to be printed in book form.

During the latter part of the century the opinion that some kind of science might be taught to the elder scholars of a certain number of schools was advocated by many other eminent persons, and sanctioned by the Education Department. The Department paid grants for passes in certain subjects of science, just as it did for passes in mathematics and certain languages. These grants were determined by somewhat complicated regulations, which varied from time to time. As many years ago all grants for particular subjects other than semi-technical subjects such as cookery and handicrafts merged in one block grant, details about the regulations are superfluous. Speaking generally, the inspector had to examine each individual for whom the pass was claimed, and report whether he passed or failed in a syllabus contained in the Department's regulations. The syllabuses, being framed for children, were necessarily narrow, and, the number of scholars for examination being often large, the duty thrown on the inspector was heavy and difficult. Time would seldom permit of an oral examination, and he was driven to prepare sets of written questions on each of the different science subjects, to put these on the black-board, and to make what he could out of the written answers. How difficult it is to conduct an examination in this way, and to vary the questions on very elementary syllabuses, those only who have tried are able to say. The examination, without necessitating bad teaching, encouraged it, for the number of possible questions on narrow and elementary syllabuses was small, and

scholars who got by heart the answers to these might acquit themselves creditably. Success could not be assured in this way, but neither could it in any other way, for where children are the examinees the results of examination must always be speculative.

In the "New Machiavelli," H. G. Wells has described the teaching which was fostered by the more elementary of the old Science and Art Department's May examinations. Machiavelli's father prepared pupils for these examinations, and thus earned the payments which the South Kensington authorities offered for successful candidates. The pupils were rather above the elementary school age, and the examiners were distinguished persons who knew their science, though they might not know much about the way of teaching it to beginners. Hence, on the whole, the conditions were somewhat like, but much superior to, those of the Education Department's science examinations. What Wells has written about the science teaching for South Kensington would quite well apply to the science teaching given in various elementary schools, and some of the baser schools were on a much lower level than the establishment which Machiavelli's father conducted

The better schools, however, were not content with this kind of work. In spite of the faults of certain syllabuses, and the fact that good teaching did not necessarily pay on the examination day, many boys learnt something of a number of elementary facts in physics. They learnt, too, in an experimental way. Boys would answer readily upon the principle of the lever; the effects of heat on gases, liquids, and solids; the inclined plane, capstan, and pulley; the composition of velocities and forces; the methods of finding the centres of gravity of various bodies; the pressure of liquids; the hydro-

meter; the barometer; Boyle's law; and specific gravities. In certain schools, questions about specific heat would be successfully tackled, and also elementary questions about magnets and iron filings; the behaviour of the compass needle in different circumstances; the behaviour of electrified pith balls in various circumstances; the arrangement of the galvanic cell; electromagnets; and the galvanometer. All the subjects in this list, which is anything but exhaustive, were often quite soundly taught, though necessarily in an elementary way. But the teaching of science worth mention was confined to a certain number of large schools. A large proportion of boys, and an enormous proportion of girls, entered the world, as Huxley put it, as ignorant of science as on the day they were born. Most schools made no attempt at science teaching.

Physiology, so called, was one of the commonest of the science subjects, and, as far as I have seen, it was decidedly the worst taught. It is, of course, hardly a school subject, and most of the unfortunate children who were supposed to study it acquired little beyond the Latin names for various portions of their persons, and certain crude information about the functions of their internal organs, perhaps enough to enable them to understand and accept the advertisements of a quack medicine or a quack doctor. Sometimes hygiene of practical value was associated with the physiology; this hygiene, however, was decidedly outside the physiology syllabus, and it could have been taught equally well had the physiology been dropped. At its worst, the teaching of "physiology" was lamentable; I have a lively recollection of hearing the boys in a London Voluntary School repeat, in chorus, after a pupil teacher the Latin names of the different bones in the hand.

For a good many years there has been no mention

of the word "science" in the Board's regulations for elementary schools. These regulations, however, suggest that the ordinary school course should include nature study and observation lessons which should have "special reference to the surroundings of the scholars, the natural and historical features, and plant life of the localities, and the industries of the inhabitants, with the view of forming the habit of intelligent and accurate observation." This teaching, however, is not absolutely required, and, on the other hand, science of a more formal and technical kind may be one of certain other subjects which are allowed under certain specified conditions.

The regulations being what they are, it rests, theoretically, with the Education Committee, but, in practice, usually with the teacher, to say what science is to be taught and how it is to be taught. All kinds of diverse opinions about elementary science teaching are current. In scientific quarters we sometimes meet with the doctrine that all science teaching of value must be given in a laboratory, or, in other words, that a boy can learn nothing about natural objects except by handling them. If this were the case, we ought to provide as many schools as possible with laboratories, or science rooms, which need not, however, be expensively fitted up, and abandon all attempts at the teaching of experimental science elsewhere. But the commoner doctrine seems to be that a good many experiments are worth performing by a teacher before a class, whether they are, or are not, afterwards repeated by the scholars. These experiments are mainly those, I apprehend, in which the manipulation is either too simple to be particularly instructive, or too difficult to be undertaken by children. If a small boy tries to fill a barometer tube, he will probably spill the mercury, and possibly

break the glass, yet he is quite capable of understanding how the operation is carried out. Here we have an example of over-difficult manipulation. On the other hand, the remarkable facts that the barometer stands higher some days than others, and that the more we slant it the nearer the mercury gets to the top of the tube, may be observed by the same boy equally well, whether the slanting is done by his own hand or by his teacher's. Here we have an example of manipulation which is too easy to be instructive. The simple pendulum again lends itself readily to what we may call class-room experiments. It does not matter much who fastens one end of a thread to a beam or gas pipe, and the other end to a weight. The important thing is that the learner should watch and record the motion of the weight, and ascertain what relations exist between the length of swing and time of swing, and between length of thread and time of swing. It would be easy to give similar instances. On the other hand, it would be equally easy to give instances of experiments which learners must carry out for themselves if they are to profit by them, and nobody who knows the facts would say that much systematic science teaching is possible without a laboratory. But we may contend that the time for systematic teaching does not begin until the age of thirteen or fourteen, and that, consequently, science rooms are hardly needed except in the case of those schools, "higher elementary," or "central," that retain scholars until rather over the usual learning age. Also, we may admit the usefulness of the science room without admitting the uselessness of all science teaching outside it.

At present, science rooms are very unusual in small schools, but not at all uncommon in large schools of modern date. In London some existed over twenty years ago. They were always expensively fitted up;

and especially elaborate arrangements were made for analysis in chemistry, which the wise persons who controlled the School Board appeared to regard as a suitable occupation for children. The newer science rooms I have seen are fitted up with more regard to economy and good sense.

Since I left London in 1906 but little teaching of elementary physics or chemistry has come in my way, and I can supply no useful generalisations about what little there is in the eastern and south-eastern counties. On the other hand, since 1906, I have seen a great deal of what is now called "nature study," and of this there was very little in London in 1906. The term nature study is not used as the equivalent of science; nor is it the equivalent of botany and zoology, though the nature student is concerned almost entirely with plants and animals, mainly with plants. It is rather hard to give an accurate definition. The promoters of nature study, however, seem desirous that children should be encouraged to observe plants and animals for themselves, to record their observations in non-technical language, and to reason on these. It would, for instance, be a legitimate piece of nature study to take a winter bough of horse chestnut, to ascertain how much of it was new wood, how much one year old, and how much two years old, and to find proofs of the fact that shoots originate in the angles between leaf stalks and stem. It would be a triumph to establish some relation between the growth of each year and the weather during the early summer of the year in question. Nature study admits of experiment; to investigate whether a potato sprouts most in the dark or in the light is to conduct an experimental, though very elementary, bit of nature study. Endless objects are, of course, open to observation, and no one will deny that to direct children's observations into a proper

channel is a worthy aim, or that there are teachers who can do this successfully. Nevertheless, we may doubt the utility of a great deal which goes under the head of nature study. To begin with, it is a question whether observation should not be spontaneous rather than organised. A good deal is to be said for the view that we should abandon formal lessons on nature study, but provide school reference books in which children may look up facts about which they are curious, and find verifications of their own observations. Granted that observation should be organised and directed, it may be questioned whether this can be done by any person who has not strong innate interests in plants, or animals, or both. When the subject which our forefathers called natural history is distasteful to the teacher, as it often is, it seems unwise to make him deal with it. We cannot implant in him the instincts of the naturalist. If the primrose on the river's brim a yellow primrose is to him, and nothing more, we may deplore the fact, but we cannot alter it, any more than we can turn the primrose into a tulip. We had better ask him to leave the primroses alone, and console ourselves with hoping that he will do good work in other directions.

The regulations of the Board, as has been explained, do not actually impose nature study on any school. But custom is sometimes a harder master than law, and nature study lessons are often given, just as were the old object lessons, not because the teacher wants to give them, but because he thinks he should, and because other teachers give them. There results a great deal of teaching which has no real value; its chief fault consists in its indefiniteness and absence of aim. At the end of a lesson we may sometimes ask what it has all been about.

Two criticisms not uncommonly apply to nature

study, even when it is generally satisfactory. The children spend part of their time, not in observing, but in learning the results of other persons' observations. The fertilisation of flowers, for instance, is generally treated in this second-hand way. In syllabus after syllabus we may find "insects and flowers," or something equivalent, but we may go far before we meet with an honest attempt to prove that flowers which insects visit get fertilised, whilst similarly situated flowers from which they are excluded remain barren. Yet, in certain cases, *e.g.*, that of the vegetable marrow, the experiment of excluding insects would be easy enough. The boy is told by his teacher, or by the author of a science reader, that there are wind-fertilised flowers, and insect-fertilised flowers; he sees the insects busy about the latter, but he has to take somebody's word for the results that would follow if they were kept away. So far as his own observations go, the insects may be doing harm rather than good.

In the second place, certain teachers, and probably certain books, are too confident as to the causes of natural arrangements. Thus children are sometimes told, or inveigled into guessing, that some plants flower early because they are wind fertilised, and others in the summer because they are insect fertilised. A botanist, I imagine, would say that wind fertilisation is no more the cause of spring flowering, than spring flowering is of wind fertilisation, and that the problem is, why do some plants flower early and get wind fertilised, whilst others flower late and get insect fertilised? He would probably add that no solution is forthcoming, that we cannot say why an elm is an elm, and not something else, or why a lime is a lime, that speculation on the matter is rather useless, and that the student had better be content with the knowledge of the ascertained facts, until botanists have, if they ever do, worked out their

plant genealogies. On the whole, whilst I would not for one moment suggest that all nature study should be banished from elementary schools, I do maintain that no one would suffer if a great deal of it were to disappear. I believe that many teachers hold this view.

The science syllabuses that head teachers now draw up contain other things besides nature study. Sometimes there are experiments in physics or chemistry, sometimes we find "physiology," so called, sometimes formal botany of an elementary kind, sometimes a little geology, and sometimes a little astronomy. The physiology remains, as it always has been, the least satisfactory of the series, and it always must be so for the obvious reason that most of the information has to be taken on trust; even the anatomy that accompanies it has to be learnt from diagrams which are often crude, usually puzzling to children, and sometimes rather offensive. Yet it is on these that the teacher must rely, for, under elementary school conditions, he can scarcely pull a rabbit to pieces.

It is unfortunate that experimental science is not given a more prominent place than it is; it is pushed back by the nature study, and, on the whole, it seems to be losing ground rather than gaining. Yet it admits quite well of being taught to children.

A chapter which deals with the teaching of history and science may seem incomplete without reference to the Herbartian methods, as it is to history and science that they are held to be most appropriate. There is, however, little to be said, for they are hard to trace in the schools. In the training colleges things are different; students' notes of lessons not unfrequently show the "five steps," or something like them, but, outside a training college, I have never come across a teacher who moulded his teaching on the orthodox form as outlined by Professor Rein, or into anything like it.

CHAPTER VIII

Manual Instruction in Schools—Needlework—Cookery—Laundry Work—Gardening—Woodwork—Clay Modelling and other Forms of Manual Work—Drawing with and without Instruments

VARIOUS kinds of manual work have found their way into the elementary school course, and any survey of elementary school work which made no reference to them would be incomplete.

Needlework is much the oldest of the manual subjects. Its early history as a school subject lies outside the scope of this book, but it was firmly established in early Victorian times, and it has been fully recognised by every successive set of regulations. Whether it would ever have gained its present position had sewing machines been in use when the Education Department framed its earlier regulations may be doubted. But at that period every woman, except the very richest and very poorest, looked forward to spending a very fair proportion of her life in sewing, and early Victorian school managers would have claimed that sewing was quite as useful to the average girl as reading. Indeed, there were managers, both men and women, of a later date, who believed that the advantages of being able to read were much less certain than those of being able to sew.

The girls' schools which I saw before 1894 spent much time in needlework. The Department issued no rules as to the length of the needlework lessons, which varied considerably in practice. Some schools

gave six or eight hours per week to the subject, others, like the schools of the present day, not more than three or four. Five or six hours per week would probably have been about the average. Not only was the time for needlework often too long, but girls began needlework far too early in life. The subject penetrated into infant schools, and even into their lower classes, and, for some reason which I have never understood, it was often taught to infant boys. Children of five, and sometimes children under five, were at one time systematically taught to hem, and what was termed needle-drill was devised for the benefit of still younger children. I believe this drill was invented, as it was certainly approved, by a directress of needlework, on whom the Education Department relied for expert guidance. To describe the drill is beyond my powers; I can only say that in one form of it, if not in every form, all the needles in the class were threaded simultaneously at the teacher's word of command.

The hemming and the needle-drill of infants were open to one strong objection, which at one time was generally overlooked, the needle was always held far too close to the child's eye, and usually considerably within the least distance of distinct vision. Books on school hygiene explain, though not always very lucidly, why a young child holds all fine work near its eyes, and why it should not do so. The facts are now pretty well recognised, and it is needless for me to expound them, but I may point out that all needlework, whether fine or not, must be kept close to the child's eye, and for a very simple reason. The infant worker's arm is short, she cannot keep it outstretched, and while she is learning to sew she must look at her work. If a child of six sits with her elbows fairly near her sides, and her head bent, as it must be if she is to

see what she is doing, the distance from her work to her eyes cannot be much over eight inches; the work, it must be remembered, has to be held above her left hand. If the work be fine, the distance may be less, but, however coarse the work, it cannot be more; consequently, if, as all medical authority maintains, a child should not focus its eyes on things close to them, there should be no needlework for children under seven or eight; large needles and stitches are less mischievous than small ones, but all needles and stitches are bad. The objections to needlework for infants are now becoming established, but for a long time they were ignored by the Education Department, and by many persons outside it. It was considered right that every girl old enough to hold a needle, as the stupid phrase ran, should be taught to sew, and, actuated by the best intentions, a number of excellent people did what lay in their power to damage the eyesight of the rising generation.

It may be remarked that the provision of desks in infant schools, though a good thing in a general way, has tended to make positions for needlework worse than they were in the days when infants sat on galleries and benches. The desk is planned for writing, and sometimes for kindergarten occupations; even for writing, the distance between the eye and the desk is usually too small rather than too great; in the case of needlework, the material must be held above the hand, and the hands and forearms must be above the desk; it follows that the distance from the eye to the needle must be considerably less than the distance from the eye to the slate or paper.

So long as annual examinations were held needlework was an examination subject. The inspector's judgement of it had to be founded on a consideration

partly of garments which the girls had completed during the previous year, and partly of various fragments or specimens which they worked during the course of the examination. The garments, naturally, did not go for much. Supposing the inspector was competent to judge of them, as some inspectors certainly were, he was unable to say how far they represented the work of the children. When garments are prepared by children, a good deal of help is absolutely necessary, and it was impossible for him to say whether the help actually given was too great or only what was sufficient. In practice, his verdict depended on the fragments worked on the examination day. Sometimes he examined these himself, sometimes he took the advice of some experienced person in his own household, and sometimes he referred them to the Department's directress of needlework.

As the report on needlework and the grant for the subject depended on this examination sewing, the schools spent a great deal of time in practising the exact exercises for which the inspector would ask. It was generally known beforehand what these would be; under the Mundella Code, they were prescribed in detail by the Department. It used to be said that proficiency in the exercises did not imply proficiency in needlework of a useful kind. I believe this complaint was partly right and partly wrong. From the examination results it could be determined whether a girl could, or could not, make certain stitches, but she might be able to make the stitches and yet be quite unable to contrive new garments or devise plans for repairing old ones.

Since the annual examination has been abolished, needlework, like every other subject, is liable to investigation at any visit which the inspector may make to the school. It, naturally, falls mainly within the

province of the women inspectors of the Board. These officers believe the teaching to be more practical than of old, and to have more bearing than formerly on the needs of after life. Personally, I hold that this is the case, but definite evidence is not easy to obtain. Two or three points, however, are clear. Needlework, though not absolutely driven out of infant schools, is of very small importance in the infants' courses; it seldom in these days occupies undue space in the time-tables of a girls' school; attempts to teach the management of sewing machines are by no means unknown; and the needlework lessons contain information about the choice and prices of materials which was very rarely given in former days.

Cookery and laundry work are much younger school subjects than needlework, but for many years courses in both have been recognised and subsidised by the central authority. Unlike needlework, however, cookery and laundry work have not been compulsory subjects, though the Education Act of 1918 will render them compulsory in the future. At present, it rests with the Education Committee to say whether they shall be taught in any particular school. The instruction in both subjects is inspected by a special body of women inspectors; it hardly comes within the view of a man inspector, or, indeed, of the average woman inspector, and I can furnish no first-hand information about it.

Gardening, also, has been an optional, but subsidised, subject. It is taught in a great many rural and suburban schools.

Needlework, cookery, laundry work, and gardening are all, presumably, taught to scholars who will practise them in after life, and the teaching of these four subjects is consequently technical instruction. How far an elementary school should give technical instruction may be

argued indefinitely. Opinion in favour of all four subjects is, however, much stronger than that against them, and all four are likely to hold their present places in the schools. It is maintained, with a good deal of force, that, quite apart from its practical utility, each one of these subjects can be made as profitable to the scholar as any other subject in a school course. Such a homely task as the planting of potatoes, for instance, it is said, may provide a real training in accurate measurement and work ; the boy who can hollow out his furrows at proper distances, and to a proper depth, set the seed potatoes at proper distances from each other, cover them up, earth up the rows in due course, and at a later period compare the weight of the crop with the weight of the seed potatoes, and estimate the yield of an acre of potato ground, is better educated than the boy who has not carried out these operations. Similar claims are made on behalf of a great many other processes which enter into a course in gardening, or in the domestic subjects.

A great deal of manual work, which cannot be called technical, is included in school syllabuses. The boys in the upper classes of many schools receive systematic instruction in woodwork. The woodwork consists mainly in the making of joints. The total time devoted to a woodwork course usually amounts to about 160 hours, *i.e.*, two hours per week for a period of two years. Alternatives to the joint making, and, in particular, courses of Sloyd woodwork, have been introduced at various times by various people. On the whole, however, these have not met with much favour, and the joint making holds its own. The fact seems to be that joint making lends itself to accuracy more than any other kind of woodwork which is possible under school conditions. Whether a wooden ladle be properly scraped out with a knife, may be a matter of opinion,

and it can always be argued that a deviation from the model ladle is a merit rather than a defect. On the other hand, the two pieces of wood, united in a joint, either match one another satisfactorily or they do not; there can be no room for discussion about the matter.

It cannot be made too clear that the aim of the woodwork courses is different from that of the courses in gardening, cookery, and laundry work. Instruction in gardening is to a considerable extent technical, inasmuch as many of the boys are likely to garden in after life. Instruction in needlework, cookery, and laundry work are also technical, inasmuch as most of the girls are likely to sew, cook, and wash. But the woodwork course is not intended to turn out young carpenters; and, had it any such result, the carpentry trades would have causes of complaint. The theory is that the course is worth following because it gives the boy a general training in handiness and accuracy, and that he will be the better for this, whether he is to earn his bread by skilled or unskilled labour, or whether his labour is to be confined to odd jobs about his own house.

Woodwork, gardening, cookery, and laundry work used to receive special grants, because the Board was anxious to encourage them, and because they were expensive to teach.¹ Each of these subjects has to be taught to batches of scholars which are considerably smaller than the ordinary class, and each, gardening excepted, needs a specially equipped room. A teacher cannot conduct a woodwork class of forty or fifty boys, even supposing a workshop to accommodate them be forthcoming; as a matter of fact, the woodwork class is limited, by the regulations, to twenty; nor can he divide a class into a woodwork section and a section

¹ They are grant-aided still, though there is no special grant for them.

for some other subject, and keep both sections at work at once. In the case of large schools the woodwork teacher is usually a specialist, standing outside the ordinary staff, and his time may be fully taken up by the boys of one school only. He cannot deal properly with more than ten batches per week, or with more than twenty boys in a batch, consequently, he cannot give instruction to more than two hundred in all. In the case of woodwork teaching, according to the general laws of elementary school finance, the running expenses are more serious than the capital expenditure on premises, but the latter is not to be ignored. The woodwork room must be over and above the ordinary classrooms, and there must be a considerable initial expense on benches and tools. On the whole, the Education Committee which provided the woodwork instruction has been worse off financially than one which did not; the woodwork grant from the State scarcely amounted to half the cost of the woodwork classes. The expense of teaching cookery and laundry work is equally obvious. These subjects, like woodwork, are usually taught by expert teachers, who stand outside the ordinary staff.

But there is a good deal of manual instruction which, like needlework, can be taught in an ordinary classroom, by the ordinary teacher, and without any great expenditure on material. All this instruction has never received a special grant. Some schools provide work in cardboard, which is usually taken by boys from nine to eleven, and planned so as to lead up to the woodwork of the older boys. In other cases there is clay modelling, which connects itself with the drawing. About the usefulness of all this opinions differ. It has earnest advocates, and, at the same time, there are plenty of teachers to whom it appeals but little. It is argued, and with very great force, that the learning of manual

work must strengthen the mysterious thing we call "will," and increase its control over muscular actions ; the more the "mind" is master of the body the better will it be for both. Such, stated very briefly and crudely, is what may be termed the physiological argument for manual work in school ; a complete discussion of the argument would be outside the scope of this book.

It is argued, also, that in making three cardboard pyramids and fitting them together to form a prism, a boy spends his time more profitably than in working a long division sum, or in reading some trivial story from a school reading book. If the pyramids fit, as they should, he has acquired the power of doing accurate hand-work. Moreover, in the course of his operations, he has gained some genuine geometrical knowledge, and mastered data on which interesting numerical calculations may be based. Again, a boy who can mould a lump of clay into a satisfactory imitation of a given turnip or carrot, though he may not be much wiser from the gardener's point of view, will have acquired a habit of looking at things pretty accurately, and this habit may stand him in good stead in after life. Many teachers would, I imagine, accept these conclusions ; they would, of course, allow that the cardboard work and clay modelling may be useless, if carried out in a slovenly way ; but this may be said of any other subject ; history or science, like manual work, may be taught so as to be quite useless, but if so it is not the subject that is to blame. With manual work, as with history and science, the principle to follow is obvious ; the subject should be properly taught, or left alone. In the first case the school will benefit, in the second it will not suffer.

Further claims are made for manual work. It is maintained that it can be used to illustrate and aid

instruction in geography, history, and nature study ; clay modelling, in particular, it is said, may be applied in this way. Unless I am mistaken, this opinion is seldom accepted without extensive reservations. The possibilities of clay, plasticine, etc., when they are examined are found to be limited. A child's plasticine model of a country is open to the fatal objection that it must be of small size ; consequently, if mountains are to be visible at all, the vertical scale of the model must be enormously greater than the horizontal. It might be pedantic to insist that a model is useless unless both scales are the same, and that a model of Great Britain must be fifty feet long if it is to give Ben Nevis a height of three-quarters of an inch. But it is reasonable to object to a two-foot model of Surrey which gives the North Downs a height of two or three inches. Such a model may not mislead an adult who has studied ordnance maps, or walked and cycled over the country, but it is not planned for such a person. It will mislead a child to whom all Surrey, one or two parishes excepted if he inhabits the county, is but a place on a map. He may be told by his teacher that the scale of heights is not the same as the scale of distances, but the explanation will probably be forgotten, whilst the features of the model are remembered. The impressions gained by touch and eyesight are likely to obliterate those received through the ear. If this is the case, the clay modelling will have shown its efficacy in producing results, but, unfortunately, the results will be bad. Surrey will be thought of by the child as a place full of steep cliffs and deep furrows, whereas it is nothing of the kind.

Clay modelling, injudiciously used, may do harm in the same way as the Mercator maps, which are common in school-rooms, and sufficiently mischievous. The

objections to these maps are not always sufficiently realised. Scholars may be told that the polar parts of the maps do not show countries in their proper dimensions, but the teacher's caution, even if it is given, is unlikely to efface the impressions due to the continual gazing on a brightly coloured chart, and it is probable that many children leave school in the belief that Greenland is of about the same size as Africa. In the case of the Mercator map, sight alone misleads the learner; in the case of the clay models, touch combines with sight to do the same. The truth seems to be that a child who has not seen hills and mountains, can best obtain his ideas about them from photographs and pictures. He may be helped by a model of a small mountainous district, a model of Helvellyn, for instance, on the scale of six inches to a mile. But a model of a large area, unless of unwieldy dimensions, will do him more harm than good. It seems wisest to be either consistently conventional, or consistently realistic in our teaching; the herring-bone shading that represents mountains on many maps is harmless, for a child soon learns that it is but the conventional symbol for the mountains shown in photographs; the pictorial mountains on Elizabethan charts are harmless, inasmuch as they are obviously inaccurate. On the other hand, the mountains on a clay model make a pretence of being accurate, and if they impose on the scholar they will lead him far astray.

Children are sometimes encouraged to represent in clay or plasticine all sorts of objects which are, and have been, used in different parts of the world, and it is said that this clay modelling illustrates the teaching of history. Up to a certain point, I believe, many teachers accept this claim, but only up to a certain point. Children can make tolerably accurate models

of Indian canoes, Viking ships, Roman armour, Druidical temples, and various weapons and utensils, and there is, of course, no reason why they should not do so. The work may amuse and interest, and, so far, it is to the good, but at the best it will be rough and imperfect, and when completed it will convey less detailed information than a third-rate sketch.

When we come to historical objects more complicated than the Viking ship and battle-axe, the illustrations which a scholar can contrive will be found to be very limited. A boy can hardly make a tolerable model of a castle or a monastery; for one thing, he cannot be provided with sufficient material; for another, with the material he has he cannot reproduce the intricacies of Middle-Age architecture. A teacher, doubtless, may construct a satisfactory castle for the benefit of a class, but the trouble involved in this is considerable, and usually out of proportion to the result obtained. Two or three good picture postcards will give a better notion of a castle than any ordinary model of clay or cardboard.

In the case of nature study, also, the manual work that is possible is restricted by the properties of clay and plasticine. Fairly coarse structures can be imitated, very respectable oak leaves and acorns, for instance, can be moulded. But a great deal which can be seen by the naked eye cannot be reproduced in plastic material. Flowers in plasticine are sometimes wonderfully good, but, as a rule, they are unlike the flowers of nature, and their incorrect modelling tends to bad botany, just as the incorrect modelling of mountains tends to bad geography. Generally speaking, it is more profitable to draw the flower either diagrammatically or realistically than to model it.

On the whole, most people familiar with schools

will concur in thinking that manual instruction has come to stay, but they will not accept all the claims that enthusiasts have made on its behalf.

It is, perhaps, needless to say that the teaching of trades in elementary schools has no serious advocates. From time to time correspondents of the newspapers complain that schools turn out boys and girls prepared to be junior clerks, and prepared for nothing else. The complaint is partly well-grounded, but, in so far as it is well-grounded, it relates to what seems to be necessary results of any sort of education. Our civilisation demands an enormous amount of unskilled or very slightly skilled clerical work, which a boy or girl can execute as well as a man or woman. As long as employers pay pretty good wages to boys and girls who can write and calculate, and as long as schools teach writing and arithmetic, many boys and girls will seek junior clerkships on leaving school. For reasons which, whether right or wrong, are not sentimental, the clerking work must be popular. In the first place, the commencing wages of the junior clerk are comparatively high, just because for some purposes the boy is as effective as a man. In the second place, business has its prizes. They may not be many in proportion to the number of competitors, but some are valuable, and a few are very valuable; the chance of one of these appeals to an ambitious lad, much as the chance of a marshal's staff is said to have appealed to the Napoleonic soldier. Thirdly, office work is believed to involve less exertion than manual work, and to be safer and cleaner. Moreover, a sentimental feeling about its superior dignity may influence particular boys.

The schoolmaster must not be blamed because all these reasons exist. He may do something to counter-

act the last, which is purely fanciful and sentimental, but the rest are solid. It is not his fault if the supply of clerks exceeds the demand, and if many adult clerks are badly paid. He must not limit the supply of clerks by teaching arithmetic and writing badly, and he cannot mend matters by teaching trades to children under fourteen. Under elementary school conditions trade teaching is really impossible, and were it possible it would almost certainly be protested against on trade-union grounds. Protests against gardening and domestic subjects, it may be remarked, are wanting, partly because domestic servants and gardeners are not organised in trade societies, but mainly because gardening, needlework, cookery, and laundry work are taught in schools, on lines which people will follow for their own direct benefit, rather than as wage earners.

Drawing is not usually reckoned to be manual work, but it has connections with manual work, and its position in the school course may be described in the present chapter. Until nearly the end of the last century it was a purely optional subject, and instruction in it was not regulated by the Education Department. At one time it was not recognised at all by the State, but for many years before it appeared in the Education Department's regulations, it was subsidised and controlled by the Science and Art Department of South Kensington. This department employed inspectors of its own, who visited all schools claiming grants for drawing, and conducted annual examinations in the subject somewhat as the Education Department's inspectors examined in other subjects. There was, however, some important difference between the two examinations. The Education Department's inspector was responsible for his examination results. The drawing inspector was little more than an examination superintendent; the mass of

the drawings executed in his presence were packed up by him, and forwarded to South Kensington, where they were viewed by experts, and the award of grant was decided. The work of examination was, therefore, centralised to an extraordinary degree.

About the time that the two Departments were amalgamated to form the Board of Education, the annual examinations in drawing and the drawing inspectors were abolished, and drawing took its place in the elementary school regulations as a compulsory subject for boys, and an optional subject for girls. At present it is not actually compulsory for either boys or girls, but the regulations imply that it should be taught unless there is some real reason to the contrary. Like other subjects, it is tested by the inspector at his ordinary visits to the school, and for many years it has received no special grant.

During the period of South Kensington control the teaching of drawing was necessarily determined by the nature of the Kensington examination. There was some drawing to scale, and some geometrical drawing, a good deal of freehand drawing, and some drawing of objects or model drawing. The drawing to scale did not, so far as I know, ever include the measuring of actual objects, and the drawing of their different elevations; the scholar was given a card which contained a diagram on one scale, and he was told to reproduce it on another. The geometrical drawing was not experimental geometry, and was not intended to lead up to the study of geometry. The scholars were not asked to give experimental proofs, or verifications—whichever be the right word—of Euclid's propositions; they were simply taught to make such constructions as were necessary in the case of each problem likely to be set. If, for instance, a boy was

asked to construct a square equal to a given rectangle, ABCD, he would draw a line PQ, equal to AB, produce it to R, making QR equal to BC, describe a semicircle on PR as diameter, and set up at Q a perpendicular to meet this circle; he would do all this without knowing the general proposition as to the equality of the rectangles contained by the segments of the two intersecting chords of a circle. Incidentally, the scholar may have gained some geometrical ideas from the teaching, but its ultimate aim, I apprehend, was the construction of geometrical ornament.

The term "freehand" was used in a restricted sense. Freehand drawing was drawing from the flat; the copies generally used represented conventional fruit and foliage, such as may be seen in fretwork patterns; they were often very elaborate. I have seen them wonderfully well produced by boys. Freehand occupied a large proportion of the time available for drawing.

The models in model drawing were commonly the geometrical solids, the prism, cylinder, and the rest; these were arranged in endless simple and rather uninteresting combinations. Vases and bottles were also in use.

I can only speculate as to the principles on which this course of drawing was drawn up. Probably the advisors of the Science and Art Department had in view the needs of industrial art. Their thoughts may have been somewhat as follows. It is the business of the elementary school to prepare boys for the art classes, and the business of art classes to turn out artists, and persons capable of applying art to industry. The elementary school course may not be particularly attractive, but it covers the necessary grammar of art;

this grammar, whether dull or not, has to be mastered by anyone who wants to draw, and the beginner must face its drudgery, just as the student of a foreign language faces the task of learning its irregular verbs. The sooner the grammar is mastered the better will it be for the young artist. In other words, the elementary school should begin the technical education of designers of chintz pattern and wall papers.

It must always have been obvious that the mass of the children would never become either artists or designers. But it may have been held that the nature of the course provided for the non-artistic herd was immaterial, and that they would profit as much from the course planned for the artistic minority as from any other; or that, whilst some other course would be preferable for them, their interests must be sacrificed to those of the designers and artists. Something might have been argued for either of these opinions, once it were assumed that the school's first duty was to look after the small artistic minority.

Whatever may have been the doctrines of the old Science and Art Department, most authorities now maintain that the specialised education of designers need not be begun in the elementary school, that the teacher has only to consider what kind of drawing is desirable for the average child, and, accordingly, that no question can arise of sacrificing the interests of the artistic minority to the non-artistic majority, or vice versa. Everybody, it is said, can be taught to draw, just as everybody can be taught to write, or to swim, or to dig. Everybody ought to be taught to draw, and for three distinct reasons. In many circumstances of life we meet with arrangements which it is difficult or impossible to describe in language, but easy to explain by a sketch or diagram; consequently, drawing serves to

supply the defects of language. Such a comparatively simple matter as the distribution of furniture in a small room, for instance, is set out more readily by a few pencil strokes than in a great many sentences. When we come to more complicated matters, the words of everyday life fail us altogether, and we must either invent technical terminologies, or resort to diagrams and sketches. In ordinary language it is impossible to describe accurately the complications of an irregular bit of coast-line. It might be described in words, supposing we were to employ a geographical terminology, similar to that the botanists use, supposing we were to trouble to invent terms for different bays and capes, just as the botanist has done for different shapes of leaves. But our labour would be wasted ; when we had formed our technical language, and taught others to understand it, our description would remain far less lucid and more cumbersome than the map. The botanist himself, it may be remarked, cannot help using his botanical language. Perhaps if he flourished on a planet with very scanty vegetation he would rely on diagrams, just as geographers do upon maps. But, as it is, he has so many structures to describe that all the books of the world would not contain his sketches of them. The curious may calculate how many drawings it would need to represent the organs which Hooker's "British Flora" describes in words, and Britain is not a large country.

Through long practice the botanist uses his language with facility and accuracy, but this fact does not upset the conclusion that diagrams are easier to follow than descriptions. The botanical language is not learnt in a day. Though easy to the botanist, it is hard for the outsider, and the beginner notoriously prefers an illustrated flora.

It is useless to enumerate the circumstances in

which the power of making sketches, or interpreting sketches, may be of practical advantage. It is not too much to say that the power of interpreting them is useful to everybody. Many persons, it is true, may spend their lives without being called on to sketch anything, but the man who cannot use a pencil with tolerable readiness is heavily handicapped in science and in many branches of industry.

The other reasons for teaching drawing are much the same as the main reasons for teaching clay modelling and other forms of manual work. In learning to draw accurately the scholar learns to observe accurately, and to be able to observe accurately is an advantage to everyone. Also in learning to draw accurately he increases his power over his hands and fingers, or, as the physiologists would put it, he develops the activities of certain centres in his brain; and the more he can do this the more efficient he will become for the ordinary purposes of life.

The Board's regulation as to the drawing necessary in an elementary school is clumsy but harmless, and for many years the teacher has been practically free to plan such course of drawing as he considers best for his own school. Nearly all teachers have abandoned the South Kensington syllabus which is described above. The drawing cards with the fretwork patterns have become very rare. The models of the geometrical solids are to be found in schools, but they are not much used. Scale drawing and geometrical drawing of the South Kensington kind are becoming uncommon. The queer distinction that South Kensington made between freehand drawing and model drawing is quite at an end. The present practice is to select some object suitable in difficulty for the class, and to direct the children to represent it either with the pencil or the

brush. The objects selected are sometimes flat, especially in the case of the lower classes; thus a spray of oak or laurel may be pinned upon a sheet of cardboard or some other suitable background. The general custom, however, is to choose objects which are not flat; it is common to set up in front of a class a black bottle with a white background, or a white vase or jar with a black background, or a straw hat, or a bat and ball, or a vegetable-marrow, or a football, or a flat candlestick. Most teachers insist that each scholar shall draw the object as it appears from his particular point of view; they expect drawing from observation, and not drawing from memory. If memory drawing is taught, it is avowedly memory drawing, and no object at all is put before the class.

It is for the expert to decide how far the modern methods of teaching drawing are sound, or open to improvement. I can only say that they commend themselves to a great many teachers, and that everyday articles are more interesting to draw than fretwork patterns, or wooden cubes, or pyramids. If other things are equal, the work that arouses interest is surely to be preferred.

At first sight it would seem that the Board's regulations for elementary schools ignore what we may call either mechanical drawing or scale drawing, *i.e.*, drawing with set squares, graduated rulers, protractors, and compasses, and that this kind of drawing may be neglected. Such an omission would be unfortunate, as, from an utilitarian point of view, the making of plans is quite as important as the making of sketches. But mechanical drawing, though not as general as it ought to be, is not at all uncommon, as boys who receive instruction in woodwork necessarily receive instruction also in plan making; working drawings of each wood-

work exercise have to be prepared by all these boys. The misfortune is that the woodwork course is not universal in the case of boys, that it is very rare in the case of girls; and that, consequently, a child may pass through an elementary school without having learnt how to draw a plan. Scale drawing, however, is sometimes taught apart from woodwork.

There is another kind of drawing with instruments which has never been demanded by the Board of Education, and which does not receive the attention it deserves. It may be termed, with equal propriety, either geometrical drawing or experimental geometry. All the ordinary propositions of plain geometry can be verified experimentally by boys of the elementary school age. Whether the verifications amount to "proofs" may be argued indefinitely, but they will certainly suffice to convince any ordinary person that the propositions are true. If a boy draws six pairs of similar triangles of six different shapes, and finds that the corresponding sides of each pair are in proportion, he may be justified in believing that the corresponding sides of any two similar triangles are in proportion. His belief will be strengthened if his class mates arrive at results similar to his own. Again, if he draws six right angle triangles, of different shapes, and finds that in each case the square of the hypotenuse equals the sums of the squares of the two other sides, he may safely conclude that the square of the hypotenuse of every right-angled triangle equals the sum of the squares of the sides. The boy who, by accurate drawing, verifies these two propositions, and a number of other elementary propositions, may not be a mathematician. He will, however, have attained some mathematical knowledge, which may be of practical use to him. Somehow or other, also, even if unable to prove

his results in a way which would satisfy a sophist, he seems to be on a higher intellectual plane than the person who is quite ignorant of them.

If it is objected that Euclid, or one of his modern substitutes, is more profitable than experimental geometry, an answer at once suggests itself. The average elementary school scholar will never become a mathematician, any more than he will become an artist. His first steps in geometry are usually very slow. If he reasons out his geometrical propositions from a few axioms and definitions, he will not reach any interesting results before he leaves school; we waste his time if we make him lay a mathematical foundation on which there can never be a superstructure. Three choices are before him, or rather before the teachers who have to settle his course of work. Either he may learn a good many geometrical results experimentally, or he may reason out a very few, or he may leave geometry altogether alone. In most cases, I would argue, the first plan will be preferable to the second or third.

The rather exceptional boy who goes on to a secondary school need not be considered. The proper age of transfer from an elementary to a secondary school is under twelve rather than over twelve, consequently he cannot need formal geometrical instruction whilst in the elementary school stage.

There are other boys who will not enter a secondary school, but follow a trade—engineering, for instance, in which mathematical knowledge is desirable. These may wish to study mathematics in continuation schools or technical institutes. They will, however, be none the worse for an extended course of experimental geometry. Nor will they be the worse for putting off formal geometry until they have left the elementary

school ; there is a good deal of reason to think that many young people, who as children showed no aptitude for mathematics, begin to develop it at the age of sixteen or so.

Experimental geometry is taught in a certain number of elementary schools. It is generally treated as a branch of either science or mathematics, rather than of drawing. It has obvious affinities with science and mathematics, and it is quite unimportant to what subject it is assigned ; but, as a matter of fact, most of the work consists in drawing with the aid of a ruler, set square, and compasses, though the cutting out of paper figures and other operations have a place in the course. Useful results are often established ; thus, the proof that the area of the circle is equivalent to the rectangle contained by the length of a semicircle and the radius is commonly met with ; so, also, is a demonstration of the approximate ratio between radius and the circumference of the circle ; so, again, is a demonstration of the relationship that exists between the sides of a right-angled triangle. The first of these results is established either by counting the squares and parts of squares contained in a circle drawn on squared paper, or by cutting up the circle into a number of small sectors, and pasting them together ; the former plan is the more accurate, and the latter the more instructive of the two. The second result follows readily from measurements of any large cylinder or wheel. The third is generally made to depend on a well-known paper cutting device, but it can be arrived at, without any cutting, by using squared paper. Other useful pieces of work are more rarely attempted. I cannot remember any course including a proof that similar triangles have proportional sides, though I have no doubt that this obvious proposition is sometimes

treated on experimental methods. Neither, again, have I ever seen experimental proofs of Paschal's theorem about the hexagon inscribed in a circle, or of the theorem that the nine-point circle of a triangle touches the inscribed and escribed circles, or of the curious theorem about the arrangement of the six similitude centres of a group of three circles. Any one of these proofs would furnish an excellent exercise in drawing with instruments.

The experimental teaching of solid geometry is also possible, and not unknown; it has, however, more connection with manual instruction than with drawing. As has already been mentioned, pyramids may be constructed and fitted together so as to form a prism, and prove the relationship between the volumes of a pyramid and a prism having equal bases and equal altitudes. Or a further step may be taken, and the Archimedian relation between the volumes of the sphere, cone, and that of the circumscribed cylinder may be established, by comparing either the weights of the solids or their displacements in sand, water, or mustard seed.

CHAPTER IX

Physical Training—The Teaching of Foreign Languages— The Grading of Schools.

THIS chapter deals with miscellaneous subjects which cannot be passed over even in a small book. Amongst these falls physical training, the history of which is not without interest. Physical training in elementary schools consists mainly of drill and exercises which require no apparatus. The schools have had little to do with gymnastics, if by gymnastics we understand exercises on fixed apparatus. Horizontal bars or other pieces of apparatus may occasionally be seen in a school playground, but, to the best of my belief, their systematic use has seldom been encouraged by the school staff, and there is a tendency to remove them so as to increase the space for games and avoid the risk of accidents.

With regard to drill and exercises without fixed apparatus the case is different. In the time of the Education Department drill was not compulsory, and it was not a grant-earning subject, but it was usual in boys' schools and common in girls' schools. Once large schools and three-decker schools came into existence, some kind of drill became necessary for order and safety. Sometimes, I imagine, the drill only amounted to what was necessary to get the children in and out of school. In other cases it was treated as an aid to discipline and as affording a welcome change from the lessons. Speaking generally, it was not regarded from a physiological point of view; the

exercises were not intended to develop muscle, still less did the teacher trouble himself as to the influence of muscular exercise on the brain. Supposing drill to be taught, its nature was not prescribed by the Department; indeed, the Department practically left the whole matter alone, though particular inspectors gave considerable attention to it.

The official attitude is now completely different. The Board holds that physical exercises, which term has replaced the term drill, should be regularly practised with a view to benefit brain and muscle, mind and body. They are officially regarded as being a "powerful factor in the formation and development of character," as exercising an "important influence on the development and specialisation of the brain cells,"¹ and so forth. Moreover, acting on the advice of its medical officers, the Board publishes a very detailed handbook of physical exercises, and requires every elementary school to work on the lines laid down in this book. Each class should devote at least three twenty-minute periods per week to the practice of the exercises. Physical exercises are, therefore, on a different footing from all other subjects; in every other subject the teacher is practically free to frame his own syllabus, but in the case of physical exercises a minutely regulated syllabus is provided for him. The exercises in the book are of the kind generally known as Swedish, and they are very similar to those followed in the army; but description of them is needless, as they are to be seen on any fine day in the playground of any school. They have been selected and elaborated with great care. I am quite incompetent to judge of their real value, but some conflicting opinions about them are described in a following chapter.

¹ Preface to the Board's Syllabus of "Physical Exercises."

It is sometimes complained that physical training in elementary schools is confined to these exercises, that the children play no games beyond the infantile games of the infant school, and that the schools do not teach the way to play. No doubt, some schools might do more than they do, but the complaint is to a large extent due to a misapprehension of the facts, and to a large extent a complaint against unavoidable conditions. The teachers of many schools do teach children to play games. The games are sometimes played in school hours, as a regulation allows, and sometimes outside them; in the latter case the teacher's superintendence is a purely voluntary task. But games are impossible for many schools, and for a very simple reason. No game of an active kind can be played except where a considerable space is available, and the space within reach of most schools is scanty. The school playground is seldom a place for games. A school for a thousand children is well off if it has a site of an acre and a half, an oblong of about one hundred yards by seventy-five. The school building cannot usually be placed at the edge of the site; room has to be found for the necessary out-offices and a caretaker's cottage; the remaining area has to be divided into two playgrounds, one for boys and the other for girls and infants, or, perhaps, into three, for boys, girls, and infants respectively. It follows that no one of the playgrounds can be very large; moreover, a good deal of it may be dangerously near the school windows or the windows of neighbours, and the playground of a large school is necessarily asphalted. On the whole, such games as cricket and football are rarely possible in a town playground. The playground is useful enough, but not as a place in which children can play. It is a place into which they can be turned at recreation

time, so that they and their class-rooms can be aired. It can be used in fine weather for the physical exercises which are practised in all schools. Lastly, it preserves a free air space between the school and neighbouring buildings. If games are to be played by town children it is usually necessary to travel some distance afield, and most town schools can find no suitable playing-ground within a reasonable distance.

It is not only town schools that suffer in this way. Rural schools often have playgrounds that are small, or badly levelled, or badly drained, or unsuitable in some respect or other. Children are necessarily warned off cultivated land. Some counties are much better off than others, but many a rural child has no place for games except the public road, and this becomes more and more dangerous as motor traffic gets faster and more frequent.

It is certainly desirable that every child should have somewhere to play, but in a country such as England, which is crowded, and ought to be highly cultivated, the provision of football and hockey grounds for everybody scarcely comes within practical politics.

Swimming is in much the same position as games. According to the regulations, it may be taught during school hours, and it is taught to a good many children. In the case of many more it is impossible because there is no swimming bath or bathing place within reach.

Elementary schools are sometimes blamed because they do not teach foreign languages, and sometimes because they do. The two reproaches may be considered to balance each other, but both are generally uttered by persons who do not know the facts. At present, French is taught in a very small proportion of our urban schools; to the best of knowledge it is never taught in rural schools. It is extremely rare that a

school attempts any language other than French. In the last twenty years I have come across two schools, and two only, which attempted to teach German, and in one of these the language was given up after a few months' trial. In the School Board period French was commoner than now, and it was, unquestionably, taught in particular cases where it could not be justified. It was imposed on a certain number of London central schools by the School Board; some of these were badly chosen, and I remember an instance in which it was taught to children who were deplorably ignorant of their own language. But the worst offenders, as far as my experience goes, were certain northern schools which charged high fees, and tried to make the children's parents believe that something was given in return for the money. Sometimes the profession that French was taught was quite insincere, and the schools were really trying to obtain scholars and fees under false pretences. Quackery of this kind was not confined to the north; the last instance of it that I can remember occurred elsewhere.

In the days of annual examinations the inspector, it should be pointed out, had no power to veto the teaching of French, or any other subject, however badly it might be taught; the utmost he could do was to cut off a small portion of grant that would have been payable had it been successfully taught. Nor did the Department's regulations limit the curriculum, though grants for advanced subjects might be withdrawn when the circumstances of the school did not warrant instruction therein. The managers of a voluntary school or a School Board could teach what they liked. The inspector of the present time has rather more power over the curriculum, and, what is much more important, the Education Committees are not at all inclined to

encourage the over-ambitious teacher. The plan now generally followed is to confine French to schools where a lesson per day can be spared for it, the staff is competent to teach it, and the scholars remain in attendance rather beyond the usual age. These conditions remove French from various schools in which it was formerly taught. It may be that they are sometimes interpreted too strictly, and that the pendulum has now swung too far away from foreign language teaching.

This point may be argued indefinitely. With five lessons per week, for three or four years, a proportion of the children in some elementary schools could master a foreign language up to a certain point. By the age of fourteen or so, they could learn to read easy narrative without very much help from the dictionary, and to employ a fair number of simple phrases, more or less correctly; they could also acquire some knowledge of the grammar. The question to be settled is whether the time and labour needed to reach this stage had better be devoted to the language, or to some other study. There are arguments both ways. It is obviously better to know a language than not to know it. On the other hand, the chance that a particular language will be useful to a particular boy is rather remote. We should all leave to the continuation school instruction in the languages of distant countries. No one, for instance, has ever suggested that an English elementary school should teach Arabic, or any of the Indian vernaculars, or even Spanish, though persons knowing these tongues are needed for commercial employment. When we come to the language of a neighbouring country, especially when the neighbouring country has a great literature, the chance of usefulness is greater and the case for teaching the language is stronger. The problem, which I do not attempt to solve, really is how far should

we teach French on a large scale to benefit, either intellectually or commercially, a percentage of the scholars taught.

I will only point out that, in considering this problem from the elementary school point of view, we may, as in the case of geometry, pretty well ignore the scholars who are to proceed to secondary schools; the proper age of transfer to a secondary school is not much above eleven and the elementary scholar who studies French is not likely to begin it before ten or eleven. It may be that a foreign language, if taught at all, should be begun earlier, but to start earlier is hardly possible under elementary school conditions.

Something must be said about the grading of elementary schools. In a limited sense, all schools of any size are graded, as the infants, when they are many, always constitute a separate department under a head teacher of their own. In certain places, also, there are junior departments which receive children on leaving the infants' department, retain them for two or three years, and then pass them on to the departments for older children. But, putting aside the infant and junior departments, the great majority of elementary schools are not graded, *i.e.*, one school does not lead up to another, but each professes to give an education, which, though elementary, is in itself complete.

Various attempts have been made to grade elementary schools, and certain selected elementary schools have been called "higher grade," "central," or "higher elementary." Each of these titles is intended to imply that the school to which it refers is superior to ordinary elementary schools. It may be worth while to explain what each term signifies, and to point out how far the grading of elementary schools has been carried out, and how far it is possible or desirable.

The term "higher grade," which is probably the oldest of the three, is used loosely. It has never been an official term, except in so far as it formed part of the official name of particular schools; no reference to higher grade schools will be found in the regulations of either the Department or the Board. The higher grade school has usually claimed to give more advanced instruction than an ordinary elementary school, and tried to retain scholars rather above the usual age. In the days of school fees it generally charged a high fee, and, consequently, became the school for well-to-do children. Its claims to provide the more advanced instruction were sometimes justified and sometimes not. Some higher grade schools made an honest attempt to teach the elements of mathematics, some elementary science, and a little French. Others only pretended to teach these things; others again, of which I personally remember at least two, were merely feeders for day science and art classes. The South Kensington Department paid higher grants than the Education Department of Whitehall, and, from a financial point of view, and this was the point of view that certain northern school managers took up, it was better to prepare boys and girls of thirteen or fourteen for the examinations of South Kensington than to let them follow the ordinary elementary school course. On the whole, then, the schools that twenty-five years ago were called higher grade fell into two classes, if not into three. There were those that merely kept themselves select by charging a high fee, and those that charged a high fee and gave something in return for it. The term was, however, always applied in a haphazard way. It was not assumed by many schools that charged a high fee, or by many that both charged a high fee, and provided somewhat advanced instruction. The term

is now rather out of date, and out of favour ; but it is still applied to themselves by a small number of schools.

So far as the Board's regulations are concerned, central schools, like higher grade schools, are on the same footing as ordinary elementary schools. Central schools are, to a great extent, London institutions ; they are intended to attract the best scholars from the upper classes of neighbouring schools, and to provide a higher course than the ordinary school can offer. They are justified on the principle, that the brighter the boy the more it is worth while to spend money in educating him. Consequently the central school provides a more advanced syllabus and a larger staff than the ordinary school. So far as curriculum goes, the central schools are not unlike the better of the old higher grade schools, but, in one way, the two sets of schools are on a very different footing. The higher grade school was usually a money making concern. It was run, either by voluntary managers, or by a School Board, so as to extract the highest possible fees from the parents, and the highest possible grant from the State. As an elementary school it might not make any very great profit, but it was often a feeder to science and art classes, and the school and classes together could make a considerable profit, as has been already explained. The central school, on the other hand, costs the London authorities more than the ordinary school ; like the ordinary school it charges no fee ; its State grant is the same as that of any other school of the same size ; and, as its staff is comparatively large, its maintenance charges are comparatively high.

London has between thirty and forty central schools. It is impossible to say how many there may be in the rest of England. This is so for various reasons, and, in particular, because, except in

London, the term is not accurately defined ; a school is sometimes called central, merely on account of its position in the middle of a town.

Schools of the "select" kind are not unknown, and they may exist in places such as London, from which school fees totally disappeared many years ago. They are to be found in large suburbs, where the thirty-five pound or forty pound house predominates, and the very poor child is the exception. He cannot, of course, be formally excluded on grounds of poverty from any school at which he may present himself, but he may find difficulty in obtaining a school place where he is not wanted, and, when admitted, he may be made to understand that his presence is undesirable. His positive persecution is unlikely, but short of this there are ways in which he can be encouraged to betake himself elsewhere. The same sort of thing exists in certain small country towns, where various schools are practically schools for the well-to-do, either because of their situation in a prosperous quarter, or because they have charged fees, or because they have secured such a reputation that they can fill their places with well-to-do scholars, or partly for one of these reasons and partly for another.

The higher elementary school provided much the same instruction as the central school, but it was in a different position with regard to the Board. It received a higher grant than the ordinary school, and, on the other hand, it had to comply with some intricate and rather tiresome regulations. The number of higher elementary schools has never been large. Wales had relatively more than England, and England and Wales together had less than fifty. An Education Committee generally inclined to maintain a central school which it could conduct as it liked, rather than a school

which had to satisfy the Board's higher elementary regulations. These regulations and the special grants for the higher elementary schools are now disappearing.

The grading of elementary schools is justified in two ways. In favour of the London central schools it is maintained, as has been already mentioned, that it is worth while to provide specially good teaching for the brighter children. The matter is open to some discussion, inasmuch as the selection of the brighter children is not altogether an easy operation. The selection must depend upon examination results, and, unless we are very careful, the children who are best coached for the examination will come out at the top of the list, whether they be the best children or no. Furthermore, the precocious child has an extraordinary advantage in all competitions under an age limit, and there is no particular reason why mere precocity should be rewarded. All this, however, holds true of all competitions amongst children, *e.g.*, for the competitions for entrance scholarships at all sorts of secondary schools, and, though these competitions may be objectionable, they seem unavoidable. Experience also points to the conclusion that a properly conducted examination, and, in particular, an examination confined to composition and arithmetic, does enable us to select a very large proportion of the children who possess the best brains.

The other argument for grading schools tells in favour of central schools of a different kind. The head teacher of every school except the very largest, has to choose between two evils. Either he may divide his school up into classes of equal size, or he may fix an entrance standard for each class and restrict the class to scholars who satisfy it. In the

first case each member of the staff has, in appearance, the same share of work, and each scholar has the same share of a teacher's attention, but very great difficulties arise. Children progress at very different rates, and there are a fair number of children who can never cover a complete elementary school course. Some children, moreover, stay at school to a greater age than others, and generally it will be the best scholars who stay longest. Consequently, supposing a school of three hundred and fifty boys to be divided into seven classes of fifty boys each, the classification will probably be unsatisfactory. The first class will almost certainly contain boys of very unequal merit, and its teacher will have either to press some boys unduly fast and keep other boys unduly back, or else to conduct two classes at the same time; either way some boys are likely to suffer. In the second case a proper classification may be obtained, but the upper classes, or "standards," as they are conveniently called, will be a good deal smaller than the lower, and very often, one, or more, of them will be so small that it cannot claim a teacher of its own. As a matter of fact, the upper classes of an elementary school are generally smaller than the lower. In schools of quite fair size the two higher standards, the sixth and seventh, are combined to form one class. In smaller schools the fifth, sixth, and seventh standards are often combined. In small rural schools the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh are often taken together in this same way. It follows that many bright children spend two years in the first class of their school, many others three, and a good many even four. It is hardly necessary to point out that this situation is unsatisfactory. Some teachers show great skill in conducting two or more sub-classes at the same time, but

the extent to which this can be done is limited, and there is no doubt that many children in the upper standards waste their time in repeating work with which they are familiar, or in entering on new work which does not fully exercise their powers.

In certain cases the way out of the difficulty is tolerably plain. The school that cannot classify its elder scholars properly may turn them over to a neighbouring school that can. The children may be transferred either two, or three, or four years before the probable end of their school course. Few persons, I imagine, would defend a transfer for a shorter period than two years, but I know of a case where such an arrangement exists. The school which receives the transferred children is likely to be called a central school, but it is not the same thing as the central school, which is instituted to receive the brighter children only from a number of contributory schools. In short, it is not a London central school.

Schools planned to receive all the elder scholars from a group of schools have their advantages and disadvantages, and the latter often predominate. In the first place, very few school managers or teachers like to hand over their oldest and best scholars to other schools. The feeling against doing this is particularly strong in the case of schools, which, like all the Roman Catholic and many of the Church of England schools, are conducted in the interests of a religious denomination, but it exists almost everywhere. No teacher will like to have his school truncated at the top. The denominational objections have the law behind them. An Education Committee which maintains a denominational school of a particular kind, must continue to maintain it as it stands, unless it can be shown to be unnecessary, or the denominational managers will agree

to change its organisation. The Committee cannot, for instance, even on the strongest educational grounds, transfer the sixth and seventh standards of a Roman Catholic school to a Church of England school, or the sixth and seventh standards of a Church of England school to a Council school.

In the second place, there are structural and local questions to be considered. If each of three schools is pretty well full, the elder scholars of all three cannot be collected into one of them, unless the younger scholars of that one are distributed between the other two. The distribution may be possible in some cases, and undesirable in others; or it may be desirable, but so repugnant to local feeling that it cannot be carried out. The Act of 1918 gives a Committee powers to combine two or more schools of the same religious denomination, but not unfrequently the exercise of these powers would be difficult.

Then there are obvious geographical difficulties, inasmuch as the school must be within a reasonable distance of the scholar's home. These difficulties are especially serious in the case of thinly populated areas. Most villages have only one school, and, when there are two, they are generally rivals. It is very difficult to persuade the children of one village to attend school at another, and in a very large number of instances attendance at another village is undesirable. Children cannot be expected to attend any school much outside a two-mile radius from their home, and a study of the roads and a large scale map often discloses objections to amalgamations which at first sight appear promising. The real geographical objections to rural central schools are often reinforced by others of a sentimental kind. Local patriotism is an active force; villages are apt to be jealous of neighbouring villages; and the inhabitants

of each will generally insist on it being the only proper place for any central school that may be established in their neighbourhood. In one instance, of which I have personal knowledge, a quite reasonable scheme of centralisation, instituted by a committee, was wrecked by the absolute refusal of parents to send their children to a neighbouring place. Coercion was attempted, and it failed, though the people concerned were a small handful, and in the wrong.

Supposing no schools existed in rural England, and we had to start and provide them, there is no doubt we could devise a system more efficient and more economical than the one we have. In plenty of instances one school, wisely located, would serve the needs of two or more villages, especially if supplemented by junior or infant schools in suitable positions. I can think of one place where a school, situated at some convenient cross-roads, might have accommodated the whole school populations of four very small villages, each of which has a school of its own. It is not very profitable, however, to linger over the might have beens; complete schools have been established in practically every village, we must take this system as we find it, and be cautious in our attempts to improve it.

The establishment of central schools of the London kind does not provide much opposition, inasmuch as no scholar is obliged to attend them. They have, however, a certain drawback, which must increase if they increase in numbers. Whilst they advantage the bright or forward children who gain admission to them, they tend to aggravate classification difficulties elsewhere, as they can only be filled by diminishing the upper classes of the ordinary schools. A seventh standard, for instance, may be reduced from thirty boys, who would probably have a teacher of their own, to twenty boys, who probably

would be rolled up with some other standard. This drawback is not serious if the number of central schools is limited, but in a town of twenty thousand inhabitants a central school of the London type might easily do more harm than good.

Two rather obvious points remain to be noted. Scholars in very large school departments cannot gain much by transference to a central school. The greater the number of children, the less will be the difficulty of classifying them according to attainments. A department of five or six hundred children may have from ten to sixteen classes, and in such a case it should be possible to provide suitable teaching for everybody. Every very large school may be regarded as a central school. School departments of great size are not regarded with favour by the Board, but a fair number of them exist. Southampton, for instance, has three schools, or six departments, for a thousand children above the infant stage; Portsmouth has four or five of such institutions; Liverpool has sixteen or seventeen; London over fifty.

What matters about a school is not its title, but the character of its work, and this depends in great measure upon the leaving age of the scholars, and the nature of their future careers. If a central school, or a higher grade school, retains its scholars to the age of fifteen or more, it cannot differ very greatly from those secondary schools which fail to keep scholars over sixteen. Nor can it differ very greatly from the junior technical schools, recognised and subsidised by the Board, which provide a two-year or a three-year course for scholars entering at the age of thirteen or a little over. In each case the school course is influenced by the circumstances of the neighbourhood. If local industry makes demands for any particular kind of instruction, the school has to satisfy them or lose the scholars. The industrial bias

may be more or less, but it will certainly be considerable. In each case the school authorities will probably remember that man does not live by bread alone, and provide instruction which is something more than preparation for local industry. The general education of scholars who are to leave at fifteen or sixteen being much the same everywhere, and their industrial education depending on local circumstances, it is difficult to say that their school is either elementary, or secondary, or technical. It does not matter which of these terms we use, or under what set of regulations the Board of Education pays grant, but it is important to remember that the partition between elementary and secondary education is wearing¹ very thin.

It is pretty generally agreed that there ought to be more central schools of one kind or the other, but the extent to which they should be provided is quite doubtful. It may safely be said that central schools are impossible in some places, unnecessary in others, and both possible and desirable in many. The difficulty lies in applying this statement to local circumstances which vary to an extraordinary degree. It is also a very open question which kind of central school is to be preferred on the whole. Probably opinion inclines to the London type, and to work for it is certainly to move on the line of least resistance. But where a group of small or middle-sized schools lie within a small radius, the reasons for truncating all but one of them, and concentrating their elder scholars, are persuasive.

¹ The Act of 1918 makes it possible to retain scholars of sixteen, or more, in schools which technically are "elementary."

CHAPTER X

Attempts to Use Schools for the Purpose of Propagandism by Religious Bodies—By other People

THIS chapter is intended to describe various attempts that have been made to turn schools into places of propagandism. How far schools ought to be utilised in this way, it is not for me to say. It may, for all I shall argue to the contrary, be right for a schoolmaster abroad to preach that the end of man is to glorify a Kaiser, and sing his praises for ever, or for people at home to get their opinions taught to other people's children at the public expense. I will leave these high matters alone, and try to describe the facts that have fallen in my way.

The Church of England has tried on a larger scale than any other corporation or set of persons to capture the schools, and indoctrinate children with certain special opinions. It is true that the modern defenders of Church of England schools make much of the denominational parent's right to denominational teaching, and claim that the schools are supplying a public demand for teaching of this kind, but their predecessors took a bolder view. Unless I am greatly mistaken, most ecclesiastics of two or three generations ago would have maintained that it was the duty and privilege of the National Church to teach its principles to all children it could catch. The full title of the National Society, now seldom given at length, tells its own story; it is the National Society for the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church. Nobody can

doubt that the Church of England schools, though, doubtless, supported by many who cared more for education than churchmanship, were instituted to turn out young churchmen, and some of their managers, though far from all, still conduct them with this end in view.

In a Church of England school the arrangements for religious instruction are generally as follows: Religious instruction is taken the first thing in the morning, and the time allowed for it, the time for prayers included, is usually forty-five minutes, but sometimes five minutes more or less. Hence the scholar receives about 150 hours' religious instruction during the year, and 1,200 to 1,300 or more during his school career. Occasionally, the secular instruction begins at 9 A.M., and the religious instruction is taken at the end of the morning meeting. Short prayers at the end of the afternoon meeting are common; but religious instruction, in the strict sense, is nearly always confined to the morning, mainly, I think, for the valid reason that the two hours' secular work, which the Code requires at each meeting, is as much as most children can undertake under afternoon conditions. It may be explained that the Education Act of 1870 requires all religious instruction and observances to be taken either at the end, or at the beginning, or at both the end and the beginning of a school meeting. Any time-table which sandwiched religious instruction between two secular lessons would be out of order.

Most Church of England schools are visited once a year by a diocesan inspector who examines the children in religious knowledge, and reports thereon to the managers, and also to the ecclesiastical authorities. He is always a clergyman, and usually paid for the duty. The foundation deed of the school may constrain the

managers to admit him ; otherwise, they may admit him or not as they think fit, or they may admit him under any conditions they care to make. As a matter of fact, he is seldom excluded.

According to the Education Act of 1870 it was no part of the duty of the Education Department's inspector to test or report on any kind of religious instruction, but the Act apparently left it open to him to examine and report in a kind of unofficial way, if asked to do so by the managers of the school. This liberty was at once taken away by administrative rules, and from the passing of the Act onwards the inspectors of the Education Department, and afterwards those of the Board of Education, have made no inquiries into, or comments upon, the religious teaching given in elementary schools. The inspector, however, has never been debarred from being present when the religious instruction is in progress. On the contrary, it has always been understood that he should, from time to time, be present at the opening of school, consequently, a great deal of religious instruction must inevitably come under his notice.

In the Church of England schools, the Church catechism is usually, if not always, studied, but much time is occupied by lessons on the historical parts of the Bible. As to the catechism and the definitely dogmatic teaching I shall be silent, and it is with considerable diffidence that I make any remarks on the Bible teaching. In the case of a secular lesson, the inspector can, and should, before he forms any final opinion, give the teacher an opportunity of saying why the lesson took such and such a course, why this incident was omitted and that included, and so forth ; a discussion started in this way, often ends in producing enlightenment on both sides. In the case of

religious instruction, however, no such course is possible, as the inspector is precluded, not only from commenting on the teaching, but even from asking questions about it. Consequently, I am at a disadvantage, and I should not write what follows, were it not that my impressions, gained in many different places, are consistent on the particular points on which alone I shall touch. My remarks apply to council and undenominational schools as well as to Church of England schools.

The Bible lesson is apt to be the teacher's paraphrase of the Bible narrative. Doubtless, certain Old Testament stories, if told to children, need to be softened or paraphrased, but these, after all, are but few in number, and the paraphrasing habit obtains even when the original narrative needs little explanation or no explanation. Why the narrative itself is not read, with such comment or explanation as may be necessary, I am unable to say. Possibly there is some traditional notion that it is the teacher's business to "give a lesson," and that to read aloud, or to hear boys read aloud, is not giving a lesson. Possibly the bad print of school Bibles has something to do with the matter, but the print, though it may hamper the scholars in reading to the teacher, cannot hamper him in reading to them. Whatever be the cause of the paraphrasing, its result is unfortunate. A statement confused by repetitions, phrases that mean nothing, clumsy constructions, and long words may be paraphrased to advantage, but to paraphrase good and simple English is a very difficult operation. Paraphrasing, as a school exercise, has pretty nearly disappeared. In the Authorised Version, the teacher has before him language which has stood for three centuries; attempts to improve on it are pretty sure to fail, and alterations of the narrative

portions not seldom ends in disaster. It is startling to hear, as I have heard, Rebecca spoken of as the young lady who was unable to fill her pitcher, and a still more startling paraphrase once came in my way.

In the second place, I may observe that the syllabuses to be seen in schools, like the lessons I have heard, make no distinction between what is regarded as legendary by nearly all educated Christians and what is regarded as historical. For the present purpose it does not matter what is legend and what is history. The position simply is that, whilst to most Christians, some of the Bible narratives are as legendary as the story of King Arthur, and others as historical as the story of Arthur, Duke of Wellington, all alike are put before children as being equally authentic. I do not argue for or against the morality of this procedure; I merely state the facts as far as I know them, and record my own belief that, sooner or later, teachers will revolt against giving Bible lessons in the present fashion.

In the third place, unless I am mistaken, teachers will also revolt against the present custom of using the complete Bible as a class book. Our ordinary school books are expurgated to the last degree, yet school managers put in children's way, if not actually in the school syllabuses, certain most unpleasant stories set out in the crudest possible language. It is not my business to discuss the historical value of these stories; most, or all of them, would be generally regarded as legendary, but, assuming that they are true, and assuming even that they are edifying to the faithful, they seem strange food for immature minds.

How far Roman Catholic elementary schools are regarded by Roman Catholic ecclesiastics as places for turning non-Catholics into Catholics is more than I can

say. In public, these schools are usually defended on grounds similar to those taken by friends of the Church of England schools. It is claimed that the Roman Catholic parent has the right to Roman Catholic teaching in a Roman Catholic "atmosphere." On the other hand, Roman Catholic teaching of the most undisguised kind is regularly given to all children, on whose behalf parents make no formal demand for exemption from it.

So far as time-tables are concerned, the arrangements for religious instruction are not unlike those already described, but the time taken for it is longer, rather than shorter, than in the Church of England schools, and I think there is a greater tendency to divide it into two periods.

The nature of the instruction is, of course, quite different. There is a little Bible history in the syllabus, but no teaching from the Bible. On the other hand, a great deal of time is spent in learning a catechism of dogmatic theology, and the words of certain devotional formulæ. This learning by rote would probably seem to most non-Catholics, as it does to me, to be singularly barren and unattractive. It is, however, only part of the machinery which has been planned for Catholic education, and an ecclesiastic would maintain, and quite rightly, that we should consider not the results of the school teaching taken by themselves, but the results taken along with attendance at church and confession.

With the apparent view of guarding against proselytising at school, the regulations of the Board provide that no clergyman of any denomination may be recognised as a member of a school staff. But a clergyman may give religious instruction when requested to do so by the managers of a school, and, consequently,

the prohibition in the Act is of little practical effect. Moreover, were the clergyman kept out of school altogether, denominational inroads on children's minds could still be made, for proselytising by a teacher, working under the direction of denominational managers, is just as probable, or improbable, as proselytising by a clergyman. Again, though the Board forbids the recognition of a clergyman as teacher, there is nothing in the Acts of Parliament, or in the regulations of the Board, to prevent the recognition either of nuns, or of Christian Brothers, who are practically monks. Nuns are quite commonly employed in Roman Catholic schools, and the Christian Brothers are not unknown.

Where the wish to proselytise exists, the real safeguard against it lies in the fact that, under day school conditions, and without support from parents, it is difficult to indoctrinate masses of young people with opinions on abstruse subjects of theology. It is probably impossible to do so when parents are hostile. The conscience clause is not by itself any great protection, except where the parent knows his legal rights, and is prepared to insist on them, but, as a very shrewd parent once pointed out to me, five minutes at home will suffice for pulling down all the theology that can be built up in five days at school. Day school conditions, at all events elementary day school conditions, differ from those of residential institutions where proselytising is to be expected; the non-Catholic parent who enters his daughter in a convent does so at his peril. On the whole, I doubt if the Church of England and Roman Catholic schools do much to increase the adherents of either denomination, and I know many Church of England clergymen share this doubt. On the other hand, I believe, though I cannot prove it, that the Roman Catholic schools

do a great deal to prevent children, who are born Roman Catholics, from slipping away from their church.

Attempts to capture schools and indoctrinate the children with opinions are in no way peculiar to ecclesiastics. There are all kinds of excellent people, who think that their own special opinions ought to be propagated by the schoolmaster. In particular, there are the enthusiasts for moral instruction who are, I fancy, mainly anti-clericals of a mild kind. To them, or to some of them at all events, moral instruction signifies not merely instruction and discipline that tend to the formation of good character, as all honest teaching and rational discipline ought to do, but a series of formal lessons on the principles and practice of morality. About the year 1906 they succeeded in having a quaint and pompous regulation inserted in the Board of Education's Code. It provides that moral instruction should form an "important part of the curriculum of every elementary school." It gives a list of the virtues to be inculcated, a list which omits "honesty," but includes "appreciation of beauty in nature and art." It concludes by telling us that, "unless the natural moral responsiveness of the child is stirred, no moral instruction is likely to be fruitful." The effect of the regulation is not great, inasmuch as it allows the instruction to be either incidental or occasional, or else systematic and formal. The practical result is to leave everything optional, for no one is in a position to say what the teacher does, or does not, treat incidentally, and as the occasion arises.

From time to time I have seen a time-table which assigns a period to "moral training," and I imagine that lessons on the virtues and vices are given in particular schools, but I do not remember to have heard any such lessons, except stray lessons on tem-

perance. Exceptional people can make anything interesting and improving, and formal lessons on matters of morals may conceivably be useful in particular cases, but most teachers shrink from everything of the sort. The reasons why this should be so are plain. There is little to be said about the ordinary duties of everyday life, and to say this little over and over again merely wearies the listener, and weakens its force. Were a teacher condemned to talk for half an hour on cleanliness, he would, in a general way, drift into the goody talk which he dislikes. He finds it more effective to send the dirty boy to wash than to discourse upon washing. Similarly, to tell the late comer that he is a naughty boy, and make him put in double the lost time at the end of the session, is more satisfactory than to discourse upon punctuality.

When the teacher comes to duties of a larger kind he is in trouble at once. Either he must keep to general statements, which are safe but rather useless, or he must enter upon their applications, which are highly controversial. It is easy to say that a man should love and serve his country, but less easy to say how, where, and when it should be served. Whilst the cases in which the duty to the country is clear, there are very many in which it is doubtful. The teacher has either to pass over these last, or else take sides, or else enter into disquisitions which will not be very inspiring as moral instruction. We cannot "stir the moral responsiveness" of a boy by telling him that there is much to say on both sides of a question. Our own history supplies us with endless cases in point. Pitt was probably sincere in entering upon war with France, and Fox probably sincere in opposing him. In a sense both statesmen were patriotic, yet one of them was certainly injuring his country. A teacher in 1793 who

wanted to teach patriotism would have been in a difficulty. He must either have held his peace or said Mr Pitt is right, and Mr Fox is a friend of our enemies and of anarchy ; or Mr Fox is right, and Mr Pitt is a friend of tyranny, and is leading us to ruin ; or Mr Pitt and Mr Fox are both excellent men, we should read their speeches, and then make up our minds which to follow.

“ Fox, to be sure, was vehement and wrong :
But then Pitt’s words, you’ll own, were rather strong.
Both must be blamed, both pardoned : ’twas just so
With Fox and Pitt full forty years ago.”

The last plan would undoubtedly have commended itself to a candid lover of truth, but it would not have been effective in class-room practice.

Equal difficulties come up in connection with economic conditions. It is easy to say that a man should do his best to earn his living honestly, but less easy to say whether he should exert himself to increase the dividends of the limited company that employs him. On one hand, it may be to the public interest to increase the company’s output. On the other, it may be against the public interest that wealthy shareholders should have increased dividends to spend on grouse moors, at restaurants, or at Monte Carlo. It may be to the public interest, as the capitalists would maintain, that two men should exert themselves, so as to set a third man free for other work. It may be against the public interest, as the trade unionists would argue, that the over exertion of two men should deprive the third of the only work for which he is fit. These arguments for and against strenuous work provide much material for discussion, but little for school teaching, and they appeal to adults rather than to children.

It has occasionally been suggested that elementary schools should give formal instruction on matters of sexual morality, or sex-hygiene which, however, is not quite the same thing. Proposals to this effect have met with little favour, and it is hardly necessary to discuss them in detail. Few persons in the present day would shrink from telling children that an animal, like the higher plants, originates from the union of a male and female element, but merely to explain this is not to teach either hygiene or morality. Any elaborate teaching about sexual matters would be certain to produce controversy and opposition. It would be probably challenged not because of any unsoundness in its substance, but on the ground that it suggested to children various subjects on which they should not dwell. Its opponents would say that, whilst evil acts should be rebuked when necessary, and particular children may be cautioned against them beforehand, evil is best guarded against in indirect ways, *e.g.*, by giving young people plenty of occupations and interests in different directions. The fact that certain hermits and recluses, with little in the way of occupation or interest, have been subjected to peculiarly severe temptations would be brought forward in favour of this doctrine. It would be urged, also, as has been done by H. G. Wells in "Mankind in the Making," that all information, that boys and girls need upon sexual matters, is better conveyed by the printed page than by the teacher's voice. Good advice, such as is given quite shortly in the "Boy Scout's Handbook," where it has no undue prominence is, it would be said, to be preferred to any more ample teaching.

The advocates of temperance, *i.e.*, of total abstinence from alcohol, have been more successful in introducing their tenets into school syllabuses. A syllabus on

temperance, which was, however, quite moderate in substance and form, was put forward about 1907 by the Board of Education for the guidance of teachers. This is still in force, and various books which go beyond it have been prepared for school use. The temperance men, as I understand them, maintain that the consumption of alcohol, whether in large doses or small, is in all circumstances to be avoided, and this opinion they claim to hold on scientific grounds. Their doctrine has found its way into school books, and it has been expressed by various peripatetic lecturers, who were at one time not uncommonly admitted into schools. It is some time since I have fallen in with any of these lecturers, but, for all I know, they may be still employed in some parts of England.

I remember well one temperance lecture, which a peripatetic lecturer gave in a London school. His object was to prove that the action of alcohol coagulates albumen, and makes it indigestible. He produced two bottles, one containing alcohol and the other albumen in some soluble form. He poured into a test-tube a small portion of liquid from the second bottle. He poured in also liquid from the first. Then he shook up the test-tube and exhibited a precipitate which formed itself. This experiment was intended to give the impression that similar results will follow in the stomach, which is not a test-tube, which is not at the test-tube temperature, and which usually contains other things besides those in the lecturer's test-tube. Probably, if he had been pushed into a corner, he would have said that he was giving an illustration of what happens in the stomach, and not a proof that certain things happen there; in short, he would have offered the same defence as the detected medium in one of

Wells' novels. But at the time I felt certain that he intended to deceive the children; he wanted them to think they had proof that alcohol would act in their interiors, as it had acted in the test-tube. I should not refer to this lesson if it had stood by itself, but it is on par with a good deal that may be found in a certain class of temperance literature.

Temperance teaching has been over done in the army schools, more probably than anywhere else. According to a regulation which was in force some years ago, and may possibly be in force still, the army schoolmaster had to give a temperance lesson every week, or every fortnight, I am not quite sure which, to every class above a certain level in the school. This regulation, I understand, was introduced by Lord Roberts at the time he was Commander-in-Chief. How often the unfortunate master must have repeated himself it is difficult to calculate.

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has attempted a school propaganda, though, as far as I know, it has never sought official approval for an anti-cruelty syllabus. Kindness to animals is one of the virtues that, according to the regulations, the teacher is to inculcate, either systematically or incidentally, but its treatment is left entirely to him. He is, for instance, presumably free to take what position he pleases on the vivisection question. Every year the Society offers prizes for essays written by elementary school children on the proper treatment of animals. In this way it endeavours to spread a knowledge of humane principles and ideas. Nobody can say whether it has been successful or not. Except in warfare, we are certainly less cruel than our ancestors. We shrink more than they did from inflicting needless pain on man or beast. But though the fact is certain,

its explanation is doubtful. Perhaps the persons, who grew up before the days of anæsthetics, regarded severe pain as an unavoidable thing, and concluded a little more or less of it to be unimportant ; the man, who had to face the amputating knife, might be pardoned for not troubling over much about a hard driven horse. It seems useless to speculate how far school teaching is responsible for the improvement, but some of us may think that the Society has done more for animals in enforcing the criminal law, than in giving prizes to essayists. However this may be, one thing is evident ; essays written on subjects announced beforehand are no test of the writer's knowledge, as examiners cannot tell which essays are genuine and which are not. Some advice by the teacher may fairly be given to the young essay writer, but neither the teacher, nor anyone else, can draw the line between the advice which is allowable and that which is not ; the less scrupulous the teacher may be, the greater the scholar's chance of a prize.

The Charity Organisation Society, or persons inspired by it, has advocated the systematic teaching of thrift, and the training of school children in the habit of saving. A general official approval of this aim of the Society has been obtained from the Board, but no syllabus for teaching thrift has been introduced. So far as the teaching of the subject goes, the teacher is practically free to do as he likes, but the duty of conducting school savings banks is sometimes laid upon him. Personally, I have always thought these banks unnecessary ; the post office offers plenty of facilities for saving small sums, and there is a great deal to say for making children of school age familiar with the post office machinery for investments.

The Home Reading Union is yet another institu-

tion which has obtained the approval of the Board. It exists to further the reading of good books by young people. Its object is, of course, excellent, but it is merely one of the objects which every good teacher may be expected to keep in view. As to the value of the Union's machinery I can say very little; I can only think of one school that put itself in connection with the Union, and the connection lasted only for a single year. At the end of the year, the master came to the conclusion that the Union helped him to do nothing which he could not do equally well by himself.

A good many years ago, the Decimal Association procured the issue of a regulation to the effect that children should be taught the advantages of the metric system. This regulation has been of very little practical effect. Any intelligent teaching of decimals must include the teaching of the principles on which the metric system is founded; once it is realised that the first figure to the right of the decimal point stands for so many tenths of our unit, the second figure for so many hundredths, and so on, little remains to be taught. The practical work that accompanies the teaching of decimals, *e.g.*, the drawing of a square inch, the division of it into hundredths, and the shading off of so many hundredths, is really a teaching of the metric principles, inasmuch as it enables the scholar to visualise the value of each figure in such an expression as 2.48 square inches. It matters little educationally whether, in such illustrations, the metric or British measures of length are employed; hygienically, the advantage is with the British, for paper ruled in square millimetres is much more trying to the eyesight than paper ruled in hundredths of a square inch.

The good teacher, regulation or no regulation, will teach the principles of the metric system. He

is not, however, likely to dwell long upon its advantages; these he may mention, but he can only impress them upon the class by setting a large number of examples in the metric measures, and contrasting their working with that of similar examples in our current measures. He will not adopt such a plan, for he knows that his scholars are, for the most part, going to live in a world which does not regulate its affairs on the metric plan, and that a metric system studied in school, but neglected outside it, will soon be forgotten. Once Parliament makes the metric system the standard system of the country, the teacher's course will be easy; until that time comes he will not trouble his scholars with too many metric questions.

Propagandism has also been attempted, though ineffectively, by the advocates of a big navy. In many schools one may see maps of the world, encumbered by various statistics concerning the naval forces and commercial interests of the leading nations. These maps were, I believe, distributed gratis by their originators. It was seemingly forgotten that, whilst maps last many years, statistics are soon out of date, and that the progress of mechanical science makes naval statistics grow obsolete quicker than any others.

Lastly, we come to the attempts which are now very common in schools, to give children instruction in matters of hygiene. This instruction, of course, connects itself with the moral instruction, about which a good deal has been said. It must, for instance, necessarily deal with cleanliness, which is also dealt with under the head of morals. It deals also with temperance, and presumably provides the foundation on which the temperance men, whether extreme or moderate, must build. Some of the hygiene teaching which is now given is, I believe, of use, but some

fails because practical aims are not sufficiently kept in view. It is, I imagine, desirable to explain that the human eye throws images on a screen at its back, somewhat as a camera lens throws them on a plate at the back of a camera. But whether the eye is a simple lens, or whether it is compounded of two, or of three, or of a dozen lenses, does not concern a boy in the elementary school stage. He may be impressed by being told that his eyes are very complex, but detailed knowledge on their structure does not help him to take care of them, and that he should take care of them is the teacher's real object in talking about them. We want the boy to leave school, not with knowledge, which he will probably forget, about the lenses, but with a conviction that he should not work in a bad light, that he should not stoop over his book, and that, if his sight is not normal, he should seek medical advice about it.

The hygiene of the teeth seems to stand on the same footing. The structure of the tooth is, of course, a great deal simpler than that of the eye, but there is no need to dwell upon it. What matters is, that a boy should be trained to make his teeth carry out their proper task of cutting and grinding his food, to keep them clean, not to scratch them with needles or scissor points, or to break them in nut-cracking, and to take advice about them when they need it. We must not, however, tell him, as some people do, that teeth that are kept clean will never decay. We know facts to the contrary, and he will soon find us out if we try to conceal them.

When we come to the internal organs, the reasons for keeping to hygiene and avoiding physiology are at least equally strong. We may say that internal fluids make soluble the nourishing parts of our food,

as water will dissolve salt or sugar, or as an acid will attack a metal. This knowledge is easily retained, and it gives the reason why food is to be chewed and not bolted. But we need not ask our boy to remember that the gastric juice attacks one kind of food, and some other fluid another kind; and it does not concern him whether he has one stomach, or two, or three. What we want him to do is, to vary his food sufficiently, to bite it thoroughly, and not to take too much of it. If we attempt to explain too much, we soon find ourselves in deep water. We may tell him, of course, that a fair proportion of green vegetables and fruit helps to keep the digestive machinery working suitably and regularly, but we can hardly make it clear why. If we try, we shall really only be saying it does because it does. The important thing is that he should eat the vegetables, with a view to regulate his internal economy.

The fact that the term hygiene now covers a certain amount of information of a physiological kind is beyond question. Unless I am quite wrong, a good many teachers would hold that most of this might be put aside. Others, however, have some faith in it, partly, I think, because they are accustomed to it, but much more because it is set out in a number of little books which are to be found in schools, and because the printed page often obtains respect which it does not deserve. Some of these works are sensible as far as they go, others are silly and pretentious; but the best seem to begin at the wrong end; they start with the structure of the tooth rather than with the use of the tooth brush.

CHAPTER XI

The Education and Training of Teachers under the Kay-Shuttleworth Plan—and under Later Plans.

IN the earlier part of this book I have tried to describe the work of our elementary schools. It remains to explain how the teachers who conduct them are obtained and prepared. To make the matter clear, it is necessary to go back some way, and restate facts which are familiar to many persons. Also, it is necessary to supply a few statistics, without which no sound opinion can be formed on quite important points.

Speaking broadly, our older teachers have been brought up under one system, our younger teachers under another. The older are products of the machinery which Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth instituted in 1846, the younger of our existing machinery which gradually developed out of Kay-Shuttleworth's. But, as the development process lasted a good many years, many teachers now in early middle age were turned out by machinery of an intermediate kind.

Kay-Shuttleworth's system is often spoken of as the pupil-teacher system, and the term may fairly be used, though it must always be understood that he intended two or three years' training at a normal school to follow the pupil-teachership period. He designated as normal schools the institutions which are now called training colleges. The pupil-teacher system succeeded a monitorial system, with which this book has nothing to do. According to the original plan, a pupil teacher was apprenticed at the age of

thirteen for a five-year period. Later on, but many years ago, the age was raised to fourteen, and the period of apprenticeship reduced to four years. The apprentice served as a teacher in a school, and received instruction from the head teacher before or after school hours, or on Saturdays. His life was distinctly strenuous. At one time the hours of his service in school were unlimited, and up to a comparatively late date, he could be asked to teach for twenty-five hours per week. He might have to take charge of as many as forty scholars. Outside of his twenty-five hours, he had to pursue his own studies, prepare lessons for his class, and obtain what recreation he could. Legally, or illegally, he was sometimes expected to carry out various duties on Sundays. A girl pupil teacher might do all this and also have domestic duties to discharge. The net result was that the pupil teacher obtained much practice in class management, sometimes under good supervision, sometimes under bad supervision, and sometimes under none, but his energies for study were severely tried. In the training college, if he entered one, the conditions were reversed. He had then plenty of time for study, but comparatively little practice in teaching; for the institution, though called a training college, was far more a place for general education than for professional training.

It was, however, only the more fortunate pupil teacher who was able to enter a college. The colleges for which Kay-Shuttleworth had hoped were not established on a sufficient scale, and even as late as 1890 there was accommodation for less than 3,700 students. As the college course lasted for two years, there could only be about 1,850 admissions per annum, whilst far more than 1,850 young persons sought admission. Also the annual output of about 1,850 fell

far short of the needs of the country. All candidates for admission were examined by the Education Department, and placed in order of merit. Some did not pass high enough in the examination to qualify for admission. Others could not afford to enter. Others again, who were qualified and ready to enter, were rejected by the college authorities, who had the right to select such qualified persons as they might prefer. Some of the excluded pupil teachers dropped off into other walks of life. Many, however, continued to serve in school as assistant teachers, and eventually obtained the Department's certificate on an examination, in which the pass standard at one time was very low. The holder of this certificate was recognised as a qualified teacher.

The pupil-teacher system which I have outlined has often been discussed and condemned, but, in spite of its faults, which there is no need to extenuate, it had one real merit. It provided England with a supply of teachers. In 1846 teachers were wanting, and the machinery for producing them was insufficient. Fifty years later, when the system was coming near its end, if there were not as many teachers as the country ought to have wanted, there were enough to fill all the available posts. The reasons why pupil teachers were obtained by Kay-Shuttleworth are sufficiently plain. Looked at from the professional man's standpoint, teachers' salaries were very low, but they were high enough, as Kay-Shuttleworth anticipated, to attract working-class boys and girls in large numbers. The schoolmaster earned more than the average skilled workman, and far more than the average unskilled workman, whilst his duties as schoolmaster left him a fair amount of spare time. In the case of girls the attractions of the teaching profession were stronger still; the salaries of schoolmistresses were about two-

thirds those of schoolmasters, and the rival careers were far fewer and less lucrative than those open to boys. The pupil teacher was not self-supporting, but he received wages, and he was not a dead charge upon his family's resources, until he reached the training-college stage, when he had to be supplied with clothes, books, and pocket-money, and a college fee had to be paid. This fee, however, was low, and many working-class parents could, and did, support a son or daughter until his, or her, college course was completed at the age of twenty or twenty-one.

The system had another merit which should not be overlooked. Though the pupil teacher may not always have been properly supervised, he usually acquired the power of managing a class. Working as he did as an assistant teacher, sometimes in a room by himself, and sometimes in a crowded room in undue proximity to other teachers, unless he could maintain the externals of discipline, his life became intolerable, and his teaching career usually came to an end. Consequently, the apprenticeship system sifted out at an early age most of the intending teachers who were incapable of managing children. Persons with this failing are by no means uncommon, and they cannot be kept out of the teaching profession by examination tests. They, if they enter it, are usually sifted out in the end; but the later the sifting out the more they suffer from the process, and the more their scholars suffer from their presence.

The failings of the Kay-Shuttleworth system are now obvious enough to us all. We realise that from thirteen to eighteen a boy or girl should be learning and not teaching; that the conditions of apprenticeship made study difficult; that many head teachers were quite unfit to supervise the pupil teachers' studies;

and that the syllabuses and examinations of the Department directed these studies into narrow and unprofitable channels. But, however true all this may be, and however right it was to end the system, it does not follow that Kay-Shuttleworth was wrong in instituting it. I am not competent to discuss what was, and what was not, possible in 1846; but his critics, I may observe, should remember that there were two great obstacles in his way. He had to steer some kind of course between the denominational and the anti-denominational jealousies of his time, and this was serious enough. What was still more serious, he had to obtain money from statesmen,¹ of whom some were without sympathy for the education of the people, and most were obsessed against all taxation, whether for social reform or for national defence. According to the strange doctrine of the period, money spent by the State was generally money wasted, whilst there was always a fair chance that individuals would spend judiciously.

Kay-Shuttleworth seems to have looked forward to the permanence of small schools, each staffed by a head teacher and several pupil teachers. For a long time schools of this kind did predominate, and it was not until about 1875 that the number of adult masters, certificated and uncertificated, rose above the number of boy pupil teachers. It was not until about 1880 that the total of adult schoolmistresses exceeded the number of girl pupil teachers. Of course, in the years in question, a very large proportion of the adult teachers were head teachers; but, long before the pupil-teacher system was abolished, schools increased in size; large

¹ It would be interesting to summarise the opinions of Peel, Gladstone, Disraeli, and others on expenditure for naval and educational purposes.

schools, especially under the urban School Boards, came to be staffed principally with adult assistants, and adult assistants became common even in small schools. Consequently, the pupil teacher's importance as an assistant teacher dwindled fast. When my own London experience began in 1894, classes under pupil teachers were very rare in the schools of the London School Board, and not very common in the London voluntary schools. At that date, however, large numbers of pupil teachers were acting as assistant teachers in other parts of England.

It was sometimes stated, and sometimes denied, that pupil teachers were efficient teachers. Until the term efficiency is defined, it is hard to argue on the matter. As far as my own experience went, there were certain things which a pupil teacher could do well. Just as in some kinds of manual and clerical work, a boy or girl is as useful as an adult, so there were some kinds of teaching which a pupil teacher could undertake as well as anyone else. Many pupil teachers were efficient, if, as some Victorian educationists would have said, the business of a school consists in teaching a boy to read from school reading books, to write from dictation, to work sums, to find places in maps, and to remember the names of kings and the dates of battles. But if the school is to do much more, few pupil teachers were efficient. It is better, however, to do one thing properly, like the cat in the fable, than to do many badly, and a head teacher would often prefer a good pupil teacher to an inferior assistant. The former would carry out solid, if mechanical, work, the latter could not be trusted at all.

At all events, there can be no doubt that, if hard work goes for anything, many pupil teachers deserved well of their country. Whatever they did, or did not,

learn, the severe discipline they underwent cultivated marked powers of industry and application. The tree is known by its fruits, and the pupil-teacher system, however great its faults may have been, has provided the State with many excellent servants, men and women whom it would be impertinent for me to praise.

Kay-Shuttleworth's apprenticeship system no longer exists. It was not ended by any one Act at any definite time, but by a series of administrative changes which were carried out before and after the passing of the Education Act of 1902. To explain these in detail would be wearisome and needless. Their net result is that boys and girls, who intend to be teachers, are usually educated from the age of twelve upwards in secondary schools, and subsidised in various complicated ways by the Board, or by an education committee, or by both. There are still young people who are termed pupil teachers, but they are not in the same position as the pupil teachers of the past. They do not form part of a school staff, and they attend school intermittently, and not to teach but to learn to teach. The nearest approach to the old pupil teacher is the student teacher, who at the age of seventeen or eighteen attends school for a continuous year, and often takes charge of a class.

On the other hand, training colleges such as Kay-Shuttleworth desired, flourish in a form not essentially different from that which he would have advocated, though they have been supplemented by other training colleges, about which a good deal has to be said. The colleges to which the Kay-Shuttleworth pupil teacher proceeded provided a two-year course. They boarded and educated him, and prepared him for an examination conducted by the Department; on passing this examination he became a certificated teacher. The

colleges which did this still exist, and provide a two-year course ; but they are less places of education than of old, and more institutions for giving professional training. The pupil teachers and training college students of the Kay-Shuttleworth period undoubtedly followed dry and narrow courses of study. The blame for this rests mainly with the Department. It was held in official quarters, and quite rightly, that the teacher should master the subjects he had to teach. But it was also held, and quite wrongly, that his education should, in the main, consist in a detailed study of these subjects. Consequently, the pupil teacher's course was an elementary school course, extended, or rather magnified ; and the training college course was little more than the elementary school course magnified a second time. At each stage there was reading, writing from dictation, arithmetic, geography, and history, all of an old-fashioned kind.

The examination questions set to the students were much like those set to the pupil teachers, only harder, and the pupil teachers' questions were somewhat like the children's, only harder. The blame for this must not be laid upon the examiners, who were placed in a difficult position. They had to set questions on subjects on which the examinees had been examined over and over again. A boy in an elementary school, after the year 1862, underwent an annual examination in arithmetic ; the pupil teacher was examined annually in arithmetic, and the student was examined again at the end of each year of training. Consequently, the final examination for a certificate was the twelfth or thirteenth official examination in arithmetic which was inflicted on the would-be teacher. As a matter of fact, the arithmetic questions set to men and women students, and the questions on elementary mathematics

set to the men, were probably the most satisfactory part of the certificate examination. They were dull, and they involved much mechanical work, but they were seldom foolish.

The questions that were set in other subjects were often unfortunate. Sometimes they were childishly easy. Others, which were the commonest of all, made great demands on the student's memory, but little on his good sense or powers of reflection. Others again, which were intended to test his intelligence, were puzzling and obscure. Those on geography were the least satisfactory of all. They demanded an extensive knowledge of what may be called descriptive geography, but it was descriptive geography of the driest and most useless kind. The examinees had to draw maps from memory, to remember the names and positions of many unimportant places, and assimilate much information contained in gazetteers and year-books, and quite out of place anywhere else. On one occasion, students were asked to state the population of Hindustan, to name the towns in it with over 200,000 inhabitants, to describe the principal towns of Persia, to explain the religious notions of the Chinese, and to describe the whole coast of China, naming, in order, the gulfs, estuaries, promontories, and islands thereof. It might be too much to say that there was no rational geography, *i.e.*, no attempt at tracing relations between cause and effect; but at one period geography of this kind was certainly not encouraged by the Department's examination questions. The questions on history were, on the whole, easier than those on geography, and rather less uninteresting.

Geography and history are, at all events, suitable subjects for the study of adults, but it is very doubtful if as much can be said for English grammar. The

grammar, as the Department's examinations determined it, consisted in parsing and analysis, on both of which great store was set, and in various miscellaneous studies upon the history and structure of the English language. Analysis, *i.e.*, the breaking up of sentences into "subject," "predicate," "enlargement of subject," and so forth, was usually begun in the fifth standard of the elementary school by children who were often under twelve. Consequently, on his road to the certificate the teacher was examined eight or nine times in analysis, and in the parsing, which usually accompanied it. Conceivably, these exercises may have a certain value to the beginner, but it is hard to see how they can profit a grown man or woman who has practised them for eight years or more.

As the time went on, the syllabuses and the examination questions improved; the examinations were reduced in number, and the college course of study is now very different from that of forty or fifty years ago. The number of subjects in which instruction and examination are possible has been increased, but the number taken by each student has been reduced, and the choice of subjects is left, within wide limits, to the college staff. It follows that it is possible to adapt the student's curriculum to his needs and capabilities. Moreover, the syllabuses and the kinds of examination desirable are systematically discussed by the Board's officers and representatives of the colleges, and consequently the Board's examination is not altogether what is now termed "external." It may, I think, be said that the college courses are now well suited to the needs of persons who have spent four years in a grammar school or high school, and who, though unable or unwilling to undertake a university course, wish to supplement their school course with

study suited to an adult. The Board does not examine students in arithmetic. English grammar has pretty well disappeared, and has been replaced by English literature, and, generally, syllabuses and examination questions are calculated to encourage a liberal treatment of the different subjects. The student often confines himself to three subjects of general education, and he may confine himself to advanced work in two, and devote the rest of his time to studies of a professional nature.

Much information about the training colleges as they are now, and as they were in the past, is contained in the Board's Report for 1912-1913, and to this Report I must refer those who wish for a fairly complete account of our training-college system. But certain outstanding points, all of which, except of course the last, are treated pretty fully in the Report, cannot be passed over even in a small book like this.

Of late years there has been a great increase in the number of colleges, and a boy or girl who is qualified to enter a college has no difficulty in finding a place. It is still possible to obtain the Board's certificate without attending a college, but it can no longer be obtained without passing a searching examination. Certain teachers refrain from entering college, either on account of pecuniary or domestic difficulties, or from pure laziness; but they are a small minority, and are pretty sure to suffer, both intellectually and pecuniarily, in the end.

Of late years, also, non-residential colleges, usually mixed institutions, have arisen. They are nearly all conducted by education committees, and they are all situated in large towns. Some of these have attached residential institutions, which are technically called hostels. Others are attended mainly or entirely by

students whose homes are within a short distance of the college. Living in lodgings is, as a rule, disallowed in the case of women students, and discouraged in the case of men. Colleges of the strictly non-residential kind, *i.e.*, colleges without hostels, have their advantages and disadvantages, but the disadvantages are generally considered to preponderate. The difference between a non-residential college, attended by students living in hostels, and a residential college of the original type is rather technical than substantial.

The training colleges are more places for professional training than they were, and less places for general education. The reason for this change is plain. The average student who entered in the past had taught much as a pupil teacher, but had learnt little, and the college naturally strengthened him on what was his weakest side. The average student who enters at the present time has usually taught little, but learnt a good deal; consequently, the college's task has altered in character. The time for actual work in school, technically called school practice, has been extended; it not unfrequently amounts to ten or twelve weeks, *i.e.*, to nearly one-sixth of the usual two-year course. The student receives instruction in school hygiene, in the practice and teaching of physical exercises, in black-board drawing of the kind suited for teachers, and in singing. Women also have to take up needlework. Besides all this the student has to prepare for the Board's examination in the principles of teaching. This examination is much less ambitious than the university examinations described in the following chapter. The technical language of psychology and ethics does not appear in the examination questions, or in the syllabus on which they are based. It may, of course, be used by the examinees, but they

use it of their own free will. The greater part of the examination consists of questions on school premises, curricula, discipline, hygiene, and the methods of teaching particular subjects. Some persons may prefer such an examination, and some that leading to a university diploma. Something will be said as to the advantages of the latter later on. In the present place, I will only remark that one objection applies equally to all the syllabuses that can be devised for young students. It lies in the fact that the aims of education cannot be realised without a considerable knowledge of the world and human nature, and that its methods depend on the dispositions and capacities of children. A student of twenty or twenty-one cannot know much of the world, and any possible training course is too short to give him a very deep insight into children's natures. Consequently, he must take a great many facts on trust, and accept as authoritative conclusions which other persons have made for his benefit. This is only another way of saying that education, like many other things, cannot be taught in a college on the heuristic method. Education is doubtless an experimental science, but the experiments must be left to the expert. They are so lengthy, and the raw material is so precious, that they cannot be entrusted to the beginner. If the plant metaphor is allowable, education is more akin to forestry than to gardening; the student is quite unable to see the whole process through. As a German jingle puts it, he sees what he never sowed, and sows what he will never see.

Even now, however, professional training—even if the term be taken to include the courses in singing, drawing, physical exercises, and needlework—occupies less than half, rather than more than half of the two-year course. It follows that the common statement

on a teacher's part that he was trained for two years at such and such a college is not, in strictness, correct. The language may be justified by usage, but it conveys a wrong impression of the facts of the case.

It is natural to inquire whether it would be possible to increase the amount of professional training, and especially of the time given to school practice. The tendency of the colleges is to move in this direction, but there are obstacles in their way. As the Board's regulations are very elastic, the amount of general education can be cut down, and time provided for more professional work; but classes of children cannot be manufactured for the benefit of students. The college students have the right of entry into any State-aided elementary school; but the interests of the children and the school staff have to be considered, and the weaker a student is, and the more he needs practice, the more difficult it is to leave him long in charge of a class. Apart from this general difficulty, arrangements for school practice are hampered by the geographical positions of particular colleges. The older of these institutions were founded at a time when the necessity for practice was much less than it is now. Consequently, they were sometimes placed in small towns where no proper practice-ground was available, and in such situations some of them still remain; for to transplant a college is expensive and difficult. Furthermore, though the college has its right of entry, it has no claim upon the services of the school staff. It may send its own staff into the schools to supervise its students, or it may delegate supervisions to the school staff; but the members of the latter, whether paid or not paid by the college, are pure volunteers in their relations to the students. They may be unwilling to supervise, or unable to

do so to the satisfaction of the college. A college is naturally unwilling to delegate its own functions to any teacher who is not above the average, and, obviously, the more particular it may be as to the practice conditions, the greater are the geographical difficulties to be overcome. Most colleges would have to send their students far afield, were they to put each one under the care of a teacher in whom they had complete confidence. Supervision by a college staff is laborious, and involves a great deal of locomotion; and, on the whole, it is not easy to extend the students' practical training beyond a certain point.

As places of residence, the training colleges have greatly improved. Of old the students lived and worked in droves. They fed in common as they do still, and in this there was no cause for complaint; but they usually slept in dormitories, which were very large rooms divided into cubicles, and the greater part of their working life was spent in the college class-rooms, which were very much like the class-rooms to be seen in the older elementary schools. It was hardly possible for a student to be alone, or to obtain quiet, except at times when quiet in the class-rooms and dormitories was secured by college rules. This is now changed. All colleges have recreation rooms and libraries, and in some cases the libraries are quite noble rooms, and well furnished with books. Many colleges and hostels provide their students with study bedrooms, in which a student can study in his own way, and, to some extent, at his own time. In short, the standard of living in the colleges has risen as much as it has risen outside. Descriptions of life in the colleges, as it was forty years ago, more or less, are to be found in the Appendix to the Report which has already been mentioned. They

are well worth reading by anyone who wishes to know how the colleges looked from the inside, and they may perhaps be interesting at some future date, when the report itself has become unreadable to anyone but an educational antiquarian.

Descriptions of training college life as it was twenty years ago, or as it is now, have, to the best of my belief, yet to be written. They would, it is certain, deal with less uncomfortable conditions than those that obtained a generation or so earlier. The writers would have experienced nothing like the austerity that the late Mr Runciman found at Borough Road, the Borough Road College as it really was before Mr Barnett took it in hand. But the life described would, I imagine, be as strenuous as, and more varied than, the life of the earlier period.

It remains to say a word about the colleges during the war period. Before the war, men students of most of the older colleges were enlisted in territorial regiments. Accordingly, the mobilisation of 1914 pretty well drained these colleges of students. Voluntary enlistments at the beginning of the war drew off still more men, and compulsory service later on effectually checked the supply of new students, as it restricted entrance to men who were unfit for active military service. The mixed non-residential colleges became practically colleges for women only, and most of the colleges for men closed altogether. Two or three colleges for men, which remained open, amply sufficed for the men below the military standard, and at the armistice time in 1918, the men in training were very few. The fact must be borne in mind when the supply of teachers comes to be discussed later on in this book. Most of the students who have served in the war have necessarily been scattered over

different regiments, but the territorials who were called out in the first instance constituted college companies, whose histories can be traced and recorded. The brave deeds and lamentable fate of one of these companies, that from Bede College, Durham, are not likely to be forgotten.

CHAPTER XII

The Training of Teachers in University Institutions

THE colleges described in the last chapter, which may conveniently be called two-year colleges, are pretty much the institutions that Kay-Shuttleworth contemplated more than seventy years ago. It remains to describe more ambitious institutions of modern foundation, which aim at providing teachers with a university education as well as professional training.

It is, perhaps, unnecessary to say that there are ten universities in England, viz., taking them from north to south, Durham, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Birmingham, Cambridge, Oxford, Bristol, and London, whilst Wales has its own university. It is less well known that in connection with these universities there are sixteen training departments for elementary teachers, viz., one in each of the three colleges constituting the University of Wales, two at Bristol, two at Birmingham, two in London, and one in each of the other seven universities. One of the London departments, one at Bristol, and one at Birmingham, admit men only. One at Bristol, and one at Birmingham, admit women only. The other departments are "mixed"; *i.e.*, they admit men and women on equal terms. In each of seven of the English universities there is at least one professor of education, and at Oxford there is a reader in education. The universities without either reader or professor are Cambridge and Bristol. Each of the Welsh colleges has an education professor of its own.

The training departments are intended for students who wish to obtain a university degree, as well as the Board of Education's certificate. A student in a training department earns a degree in arts or science on the same terms as any other student. To obtain the certificate he must satisfy the Board that his professional studies—the word professional being used to cover drawing, singing, and so forth—have been satisfactorily completed, and he must also give proof of having honestly worked for his final degree examination. He may obtain the certificate without a degree, and this result is not uncommon. It is also possible, though it rarely happens, that he may obtain a degree, but be refused the certificate.

About half the training departments offer a four-year course, leading up to a final degree examination at the end of the third year, and to an examination in professional subjects at the end of the fourth. Some offer a three-year course, during which the degree subjects and the professional subjects are studied concurrently. One or two give the student the choice of either a three-year or a four-year course. Admission to all the departments, except three, is strictly confined to matriculated students reading for degrees.

A would-be teacher, it may be explained, may obtain a degree without entering one of the sixteen departments. Three university colleges, which are not parts of a university, viz., Nottingham, Reading, and Southampton, have training departments, the students of which may be prepared for the external examinations of the University of London, and the Board's examination in professional subjects. The course at these three institutions is nominally a two-year course, but a third-year is invariably allowed to any student who is at all likely to obtain a degree.

It may be explained, also, that some of the older two-year colleges prepare certain selected students for external London degrees in the same way as the three university colleges.

If it is asked whether a student gets the better general education at two-year colleges, or in the university training departments, the answer is plain. Everything depends on the student and his circumstances. Plenty of excellent teachers, persons of undoubted good sense, have no liking or capacity for science as it is taught at universities, or for the languages, ancient and modern, which constitute the greater part of the arts courses. To drive every teacher through a university course is impossible, and to do so would be cruel, were it possible. No one who has been much inside the training colleges would maintain the contrary opinion.

But the university, it is hardly necessary to say, gives facilities for academic study, with which a training college cannot compete. The college syllabuses, and the questions by which they are tested, may be as good as those of the university, and yet the advantage is all with the latter. The fact is that the university may, and usually does, employ men of real eminence in their different lines, and that the college has to employ persons of less eminence and lower qualifications. The gifts of the university staff would be thrown away on a great many rather humdrum students who will turn into satisfactory teachers; but the student of real ability must be the better for being brought under the influence of a professor of real ability. He gets something at a university which he can hardly get anywhere else.

It may be argued that the external London examinations taken by students in the residential

colleges are as difficult as the internal examinations which the universities provide. This may or may not be so. We may compare examination paper with examination paper, but the difficulty of an examination depends greatly on the standard of marking, and it is not easy to compare the standards of different examining bodies working under different conditions. But if the fact be granted, it does not follow that the residential student's external course is as profitable to him as a genuine university course would be. It is one thing for him to work for an examination, under what are practically school conditions, in a small class in a residential institution, the staff of which will keep his nose to the grindstone. It is another thing to do so under the conditions of a university where he can receive little coaching, and the impulse to study must come from himself. Success in the second case seems to have a moral value which is wanting in the first.

In one way the two-year college has the advantage of the university training department. The residential accommodation at the newer universities is scanty, consequently many students living outside an hour's journey from the institutions are practically excluded. The women students whom the Board subsidises are not as a rule allowed to live in lodgings. In the case of men, lodgings are discouraged, and they are expensive in relation to most students' means. Many students also who live in quite humble homes within a travelling distance do not, it is certain, enjoy the advantages for quiet study, or for social intercourse, which a well-ordered residential institution would offer. On the whole, the training departments are quite local institutions, and the student in one of them, unlike a student in a residential college, such as Chelsea or Westminster, does not come up against men from all

parts of the country. This state of things, however, will not be permanent. The universities will, in time, get their hostels built. Indeed, two large schemes for hostels at Bristol and Sheffield were maturing at the outbreak of war. When the hostels are built, the two-year college will have few attractions for the ambitious student, who wishes to graduate. Even then, such a student, who finds himself unable to afford a course of three or four years at a university, may take his chance at a two-year college as an external London student, but cases of this kind will get rarer and rarer.

The student in the university training department works for his degree in much the same way as any other student of the university. His professional studies are in most respects similar to those of the humbler student in a two-year college. The training departments with a four-year course provide courses of school hygiene, physical exercises, drawing, singing, and practical teaching in much the same way as the two-year college. The training department with a three-year course exacts rather less, especially in the way of physical exercises. In one important respect, however, the training department aims higher than the two-year college. In the two-year college the theoretical treatment of education, as has been already explained, is very simple. In the training departments it is much more elaborate, and stress is laid upon the doctrine that there is a science of education which a teacher should master, and a history of education which is closely connected with the science, and should be taught concurrently with it. This doctrine is advocated strongly in some quarters, and more or less questioned in others, and the arguments for and against it may be briefly stated in the present place. The controversies about it are important, for, if it be correct,

the teaching of education in the two-year colleges is incomplete, and, if it be incorrect, much of the teaching in the university training departments is superfluous.

Up to a certain point, the contention that there is a science of education is unchallenged. No one is likely to deny that the education of children can and should be discussed in a scientific spirit; and if, as Huxley put it many years ago, science is nothing but trained and organised common sense, a science of education is surely possible. It may be argued whether the ascertained facts of the science are few or many; whether they require much or little study; whether they can be expressed in plain English or only in technical language; and whether they lead to generalisations of value. It is never argued that there are no facts, or that all discussion of them is idle.

Neither is it seriously maintained that a young teacher needs no preparation beyond a study of the subjects he has to teach. This extreme opinion was probably always uncommon. Training colleges are modern institutions, but our ancestors believed that, just as the doctor trained his apprentices, or the solicitor his articled clerk, so the schoolmaster trained his assistant. Even Mr Squeers had a system to impart to Mr Nickleby. Whether in practice the assistant received guidance of any useful kind is another thing altogether. At all events, the questions now at issue are not, whether a teacher should receive preparation for his life's work, but how far this preparation should consist of practice under skilled guidance; how far will he profit from lectures and text-books on education; how far from private reading; and what ground ought his lectures, text-books, and private reading to cover.

According to the opinions held by the heads of the university training departments, there is a definite body of educational knowledge to be acquired by reading and listening to lectures, and the man without it is an empiric, who bears to an enlightened teacher much the relation that the bone-setter does to the surgeon. Our practice of education, it is said, in particular, must be founded on our knowledge of psychology. These opinions would have seemed strange to many schoolmasters of the past, but they are not altogether modern. Bain, for instance, wrote :—"The largest chapter in the science of education must be the following out of all the psychological laws that bear directly or indirectly upon the process of mental acquirement. Every branch of psychology will be found available, but more especially the psychology of the intellect. . ." ¹

Supposing psychology to be taken to signify the observations on children which no teacher can fail to make, and the conclusions which the wise teacher draws from his observations, the substance of this passage would meet with general acceptance. It is tolerably clear, however, that a much more formal kind of psychology was contemplated by Bain.

A little later Mr O. Browning wrote :—

"Herbart may be regarded as the founder of modern scientific pedagogics. In the list of German philosophers he stands as the founder of modern German psychology. To estimate the value of his philosophical speculations must be left to others, but there is no doubt that he was the first to see that a national system of education must be founded on a true psychology, and, indeed, it is impossible to form

¹ "Education as a Science." Seventh edition, 1889; the first edition was in 1878.

a scheme of education complete in all its branches until we have arrived at a certain knowledge of the true bases of ethics and psychology.”¹

Here again, so far as the letter of the passage goes, it may not be absolutely impossible to interpret psychology as being the working psychology of the school teacher. In a sense every successful teacher must be a psychologist, just as, according to the proverb, every man over forty who is not a fool must be a physician. But something much more ambitious than this working psychology was probably intended by Mr Browning, and is, certainly, advocated in the University training departments.

If Mr Browning's statement that Herbart is the founder of modern German psychology be put aside, the two passages which have been quoted seem to represent fairly well the principles on which education is taught in the training departments. It is difficult to make it clear how these principles are applied, except by supplying extracts from the syllabuses which the departments follow, and from the examination questions by which the students are tested.

Most of the syllabuses are meagre, and hard to interpret without the help of the examination questions ; but the London and Cambridge syllabuses enter into some detail. The London syllabus for 1915 started as follows :—

The aims of education with regard to the individual pupil and the community.

The endowment of the child as a datum of the educational process. The relation of development to endowment.

¹ “Introduction to the History of Educational Theories,” 1882. I quote the passage as printed, but “national” should doubtless be “rational.”

The fundamental aspects of development and their inter-relations.

The chief stages in general development: their order and mode of succession in children of different types.

The function of the school in regard to general development, with special reference to the work of the class teacher.

The syllabus for the Cambridge Diploma of 1915 includes :—

Education in relation to psychical development.

(a) Chief elements of endowments and their significance in life. Interaction of endowment and environment: general nature of experience: characteristics of chief phases of development.

(b) Processes involved in the acquirement of bodily skill.

(c) Relations of learning to bodily activity, to interest and to purpose: attention.

(d) Chief types of learning and of critical thinking: their characteristics at successive ages.

(e) Conditions of valid inferences and of systematic knowledge.

A study of syllabuses will not, however, carry us very far, as a formidable-looking syllabus may be simply treated, and a simple-looking syllabus may be formidable in reality. To obtain a just idea of the university courses we must turn to the examination questions. The questions that follow were set in 1915. In one sense they are not specimen questions, for they all bear upon the most theoretical parts of the courses; but they show fairly well how far the courses include educational theory, and what knowledge of theory the examiners expect. In studying the questions it has to be remembered that the examinations are mostly "internal," and that when this is so the "external" examiner is in

a position to know in what way the teaching staff of the university has interpreted the syllabus, and he is able to frame his questions accordingly. It follows that questions, that appear to be remote from the syllabus, may quite well be fair tests of the teaching, and that particular questions may not be as difficult as they appear, for they may bear upon points upon which the teaching staff have laid special stress.

What psychological processes are involved in the growth of taste? Show how much you would foster this growth. (Sheffield.)

“The problem of memory-training resolves itself in most cases into one of establishing the right kind of interest.”

Consider this proposition, bringing out clearly what meaning you attach to *memory* and *memory-training*. (Sheffield.)

Distinguish between an ideal and a habit, and show shortly how they are related in mental development. (Sheffield.)

Examine the value of imitation as a force in moral training. (London.)

Give an account of the nature of analogy, with particular reference to its use in the process of teaching. (London.)

From the standpoint of educational theory, compare the value of the two views of the nature of psychology, as (a) the science of consciousness, (b) the science of behaviour. (London.)

On what *psychological principles* would you proceed in teaching a small child to write? (Durham.)

You are put in charge of what is described as a “notoriously inattentive class.” What would be your psychological diagnosis of such a situation? Is it likely to be incurable? If not, what course of treatment would you apply? Why? (Durham.)

“Many of the child’s early school experiences are for him meaningless, hence his bewilderment.”

Show why this is necessarily so, and how “light” gradually dawns upon him. (Durham.)

What is the meaning of self-control? Give some of its main forms, and describe the relation of self-control to general moral development. (University of Wales.)

Upon what factors does the strength of associations depend? Suggest some of the problems of school life in which a knowledge of the formation of associations gives help. (University of Wales.)

“Precepts without concepts are blind. Concepts without precepts are empty.” Illustrate these statements, and show their bearing on teaching. (University of Wales.)

Describe the differences between man and the rest of the animal creation which throw light upon his attempt to provide schooling for his offspring. (Manchester.)

What do you mean by instinct? How far does the study of children’s instincts assist in the study of education? (Manchester.)

Distinguish between the technical meanings of the terms sensation, perception, and apperception. Indicate how far the processes thus designated can reasonably be discussed in isolation from each other. Illustrate your answer by examples. (Manchester.)

“If children are to be taught political principles, we must take care they are not taught to be politicians.”

Discuss the problems here suggested. (Oxford.)

Estimate the value for educational theory or practice of conclusions drawn from the teaching of mentally-deficient children. (Oxford.)

Examine the nature of “explanation” at different stages of mental development. (Oxford.)

Distinguish between perception and apperception,

and show the importance of the distinction to the teacher. (Birmingham.)

Expound the nature of definition, and discuss its place in school work. (Birmingham.)

How does language assist thought? What use would you make of the principles involved in your answer in school teaching? (Birmingham.)

“The essential feature in will is the systematising or organising of impulses.”

Illustrate this statement, and show its bearing upon the problem of “training the will.” (Cambridge.)

In what sense, and by what means, is it possible to develop the reasoning power of boys and girls? (Cambridge.)

Trace the relation between “egoistic” and “social” impulses during the school life of a boy or girl, basing your account as far as possible upon your own experience or observations. (Cambridge.)

Give some account of the mechanism of attention, and show how far a teacher is able to manipulate the attention of his pupils. (Liverpool.)

Bring out your view of the nature of the will by discussing the problem of what is called breaking the will. (Liverpool.)

How far is it true to say that “Induction is the method of discovery, and deduction the method of teaching”? (Liverpool.)

Study of the history of education enters largely into the courses. This study may include a great deal, for it may cover anything from Plato's views on music down to an education committee's powers for providing for mentally defective children. As in the case of the psychological teaching, the syllabuses give little information as to the way in which the subject is treated, and it is necessary to turn to the examination questions for information. The

following questions, amongst many others, were set in 1915:—

Paidocentricism is Dr Stanley Hall's name for the tendency to lay stress on the pupil rather than on the subject to be taught. Show that Quintilian anticipated to some extent the modern paidocentric view. (Birmingham.)

Pestalozzi aimed at psychologicalising education. A living critic maintains that Pestalozzi was no psychologist. In view of these facts, estimate Pestalozzi's rank as an educational reformer. (Birmingham.)

Consider the claims of the Italian Humanists that the education they advocated was at once *liberal* and *practical*. On what grounds does Guarino include Greek as "one of the essential marks of an educated person"? (Cambridge.)

Give an account of the dissenting academies in England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and estimate their importance. (Cambridge.)

What do you understand by Realism in education? What was the relation of the realists of the sixteenth century to the ideals of the Protestants in education? (Durham.)

Summarise Bacon's contributions to educational thought. How far do you think Ratke and Commenius really appreciated Bacon's standpoint? (Durham.)

Compare broadly the work and life in a mediæval university with that in the University of Leeds to-day. (Leeds.)

Describe the work of Bell and Lancaster for the education of the children of the working classes, and consider its value. (Leeds.)

Prove from the *Emile* that Rousseau was acquainted with the principle of the Heuristic method. (Liverpool.)

What does Herbart mean by setting up "morality" as the end of education? (Liverpool.)

What permanent services were rendered to French education by the Gentlemen of Port Royal? (London.)

Account for the English "voluntary system." In what manner was that system affected by the legislation of 1902-03? (London.)

Distinguish the main types of educational foundation in this country before the Reformation. Estimate the importance of the work done by them. (Manchester.)

Sketch the educational organisation of the city of Manchester or some other county borough or county. (Manchester.)

What did Rousseau and Pestalozzi respectively mean when they spoke of "Education according to nature"? (Oxford.)

On what grounds has Vittorino da Feltre been called the first modern schoolmaster? In what respects do educational aims in the present day conflict with his educational programme? (Oxford.)

"The aim underlying Rousseau's method of instruction was to arouse motives and develop capacity." Examine this statement. (Sheffield.)

What is implied in the term, "educational occupation," over and above the mere "work with the hands"? Give examples to show the practical importance of the description. Describe and justify the place of "occupations" in the Dewey School. (Sheffield.)

Discuss critically Locke's attitude towards learning by heart, and the reasons he gives for this attitude. (University of Wales.)

Describe the main steps by which the State has established its control over English education. (University of Wales.)

Besides psychology and the history of education all the courses include a study of school method, or "methodology," as it is queerly termed in the London syllabuses; they mostly include, also, school hygiene.

The courses which have been outlined are defended pretty much on the lines which Bain and Browning indicated many years ago. According to what may be called the professorial doctrine, the teacher should ground his practice on principles which he acquires at the outset of his career. As it is his business to train the child's mind, he should, it is said, know what is generally accepted, concerning its nature and working; in other words, he should study psychology. As it is his business to reason, he should know something of the processes of reasoning; in other words, he should study logic. As he has to train children to think rightly on moral questions, and act rightly, ethics should find a place in his course of study. This is not all. The well equipped teacher should, it is claimed, know what views of education have obtained at different times, what methods the teachers of the past have followed, and how our school systems have come to be what they are; hence the history of education, also, should be one of his subjects of study.

This doctrine is rejected, wholly or partially, by many teachers of experience. They would maintain that the more practical problems which are discussed in the colleges can only be treated properly in the course of actual school work; and that any treatment attempted under college conditions must be unreal and artificial. They doubt how far formal instruction in philosophy or psychology is any aid to the intending teacher. In a sense, they would say, all the information that the teacher acquires about the operations of children's minds is psychology; and, when he adapts his methods to this information, he is acting on psychological principles. It is a psychological truth that a boy remembers best the things in which he is interested, and is apt to forget those for which he does not care; that he remembers a series of associated facts more easily than a series of isolated facts; that he remembers

poetry more easily than prose; that the mind is more active in the morning than in the afternoon; and so on. The teachers in question would protest against the statement that class-room methods are to be deduced from generalisations in psychological text-books. They would rather say that class-room experience gives certain results, which provide data for the psychologist, and suggest methods to the teacher. Any higher claims on behalf of formal psychology they might, perhaps, meet, by quoting William James:—"When then we talk of 'psychology as a natural science' we must not assume that that means a sort of psychology that stands at last on solid ground. It means just the reverse. . . . A string of raw facts: a little gossip and wrangle about opinions; a little classification and generalisation on the mere description level; a strong prejudice that we have states of mind, and that our brain conditions them; but not a single law in the sense in which physics shows us laws, not a single proposition from which any consequence can casually be deduced. . . . This is no science; it is only the hope of a science. . . . At present, psychology is in the condition of physics before Galileo and the laws of motion, of chemistry before Lavoisier, and the notion that mass is preserved in all reactions."

Other teachers, again, would maintain that any serious study of formal psychology is only of advantage to selected students. They would urge that psychology of the formal kind is only intelligible to students who have had some previous philosophical training; that philosophical studies are only useful to minds that have reached a certain maturity; and that to some minds they are uncongenial or actually repulsive. According to this opinion, however valuable formal psychology may be to particular persons, it is wasted effort to press the subject on all intending teachers alike.

The professorial doctrine commends itself to some students, and not to others. Some young teachers, especially women teachers, undoubtedly look back with satisfaction to their university studies of education. It is not uncommon to hear that teaching, that seemed of little use at the time, has proved its usefulness later on. But a quite opposite opinion also finds expression. I have heard an ex-student say:—"The psychology and ethics were useless to me; the method would have been useful, and the history of education interesting, had So-and-so been a better teacher." He was, I understand, giving the opinions of fellow-students as well as his own. He was certainly qualified intellectually to judge of his teacher's performances. Somewhat similar evidence as to Professor Rein's pedagogical courses at Jena has also come in my way.

There is a doctrine intermediate between that of the professor and that of the man who relies on classroom practice. It may be contended that formal psychological studies are valuable to the experienced teacher, though of little use to the beginner. After some years of work amongst children, the teacher may set himself to generalise his observations, and to reason about them, and he may well do so under expert guidance. A plan of this kind finds advocates amongst those who hold that the college student profits little from reading about the generalised child of the text-books. Psychology, under ordinary college conditions, it is said, is like chemistry without a laboratory. The primary facts of education are to be learned by observation at close quarters and experiment, and unless they are learned in this way, discussion of them is somewhat futile. The beginner at college has to take them on trust, because his experience is limited, and his time is short. It is one thing to consult an expert about what one has oneself seen and done. It is quite another

thing to obtain the expert's conclusions about his own experiences. It is yet another to obtain the conclusions which the expert has grounded on the experiences of a third party. If these views are correct, formal psychology, and its application to education, are proper studies for a deferred year of training, *i.e.*, not for a student of twenty or twenty-one, but for a teacher who has rendered four or five years' service in school.

The diploma examinations in the history of education do not pass uncriticised. Some persons believe that the subject may safely be left to the teacher's private reading. Other less radical objectors would challenge the university syllabuses, or some of them, on the ground that they necessitate much reading of doubtful value. Objectors of the second kind would clear the syllabuses of everything of mere antiquarian interest. They would act on the principle that we should not trouble the student with any reading, which does not either make him think out his aims, or else suggest methods to him. Plato's opinions, it would be said, are profitable for study, inasmuch as, whether they be right or wrong, they set the student thinking. Lancaster's opinions, on the other hand, are not particularly stimulating to thought, and of no direct utility, inasmuch as we do not attempt to conduct schools on his methods. Lancaster's life is still less profitable. His activities in founding schools, collecting subscriptions, and arousing public sympathy, have a place in history; but to the teacher, as teacher, they are not of special interest. They appeal rather to the student of the humanitarian movement, which was strong during the time of the Napoleonic wars. Froebel's doctrines are worth study, because, however obscurely he may have expressed them, they still inspire teachers. Froebel's life is not worth study, except in so far as it throws light on his doctrines; the successes and failures

of his educational ventures concern the student very little.

The more radical objection to the diploma history course is quite compatible with a firm belief in the value of educational history, if educational history be taken to mean the history of educational thought. The intending teacher, it is generally agreed, will be the better for a study which may cause him to reflect on his aims, and the right procedure for obtaining them. He may, for instance, read portions of the "Republic" of Plato, not because of their direct bearing on class-room practice; but because the contrast between the philosopher's opinions and established customs stimulates thought as to the justification of the latter. Similarly, the student may gain from studying Spencer's "Education," Matthew Arnold's reports, and some of Huxley's essays. In these works he may find much which he cannot accept. He may, perchance, reject Spencer's opinions upon school discipline, Arnold's upon the value of English grammar, and Huxley's estimate of zoology as a school subject. He will certainly find much which has no immediate outcome. In his reading, however, he will have learnt what eminent men have held the aims of the educator to be, and he may be provoked to think out aims for himself. The beginner may find that very original principles on his part cannot be acted on at the outset of his career, for they may conflict with the circumstances in which he has to work, and with the wishes of his superiors. But even so, it is better that he should have principles and ideals of his own, than that he should carry out some one else's directions without concern as to their value.

Moreover, a time must come when the beginner ceases to be a beginner. As a head master, he may have to plan syllabuses and curricula, and he cannot do this intelligently unless he has some definite principles to

guide him. He may have to settle whether his scholars are to study a foreign language, and, consequently, he must make up his mind why the language is worth teaching. He should be able to say if its study is to be a mental exercise; or to lead to commercial usefulness; or to introduce the learners to a foreign literature; or partly for one of these purposes and partly for another. Questions as to science teaching suggest themselves at once. Before it is decided whether chemistry is to be included in a school course, he must make up his mind whether the chemical laboratory is to provide a training in handiness, accuracy, and reasoning; or to qualify scholars for industrial life; or to enable them to form just notions about the universe which surrounds them; or partly for one purpose and partly for another.

Supposing the beginner never becomes a head master, yet, as a class teacher, he will probably have to settle the treatment of particular subjects. In dealing with history, or geography, or science, or literature he will have to select the substance worth teaching from the immense mass which has to be put aside. If the history of the eighteenth century is to be treated in class, it may be for him to decide if stress is to be laid on the doings of Watt in the workshop, or of Burgoyne at Saratoga, or of Dr Johnson in Fleet Street, or of Chatham in Parliament. In the process of selection he has to face the reasons for including history in a school course; and his choice can hardly be well grounded, unless these reasons are present on his mind.

The question to be discussed is not, whether the teacher ought to read the literature of his profession, but whether he had better be trusted to read it of his own free will, or forced into reading it for examination purposes. It may be debated indefinitely, but one consideration bearing upon it seems worth

suggesting. Whilst some writers on education express themselves in language which he who runs may read, others are far from easy. If, as it may be argued, the difficulty of the difficult writers is due to the nature of their subject, the professor of education may be necessary to expound them, and the university examiner to examine in them. If, as it may also be argued, all that these writers have to say can be said in the language of everyday life, the diploma courses in the history of education are largely unnecessary. Nobody wants a professor to explain the educational writings of Huxley and Matthew Arnold.

It would seem, then, that our own conclusions about the teaching of history turn largely upon our estimate of certain writers. If they are profound and valuable, we may press their study upon the student. If they are merely obscure, we may leave him to please himself.

It will hardly be maintained that, when the history of educational thought is put aside, enough educational history remains to constitute a compulsory post-graduate course. The history of schools and schooling is instructive, but its outlines are simple, and known to every fairly informed person. Very little reading will tell the student how boys were taught in ancient Greece, or in the Middle Ages, or in the grammar schools of more modern times. Learning may, indeed, be expended on all kinds of secondary matters of a historical kind. It is, for instance, interesting to know that the Tudor grammar schools are not really Tudor foundations, but old foundations recast in Tudor times, or to trace the rise and fall of Euclid as a school book. Historical inquiry on points such as these is, of course, well worth making, but it does not appeal to everybody, and to press its results on the student hardly seems wise. The schoolmaster, as schoolmaster, is no more concerned with the truth about the Tudor

foundations than with the rivalry between the long bow and the arquebus. Either subject may interest him as an antiquarian or a student of general history, neither bears much on the work by which he earns his bread.

Still less does mere educational biography seem to be a proper subject for searching examination. If the history of educational thought is to be an educational subject, some biographical details must necessarily be mastered by the examinee, but to examine him in the details for their own sake is about as profitable as to examine him in conchology. Biographical dictionaries exist, and, if he is curious about the lives of educationists, he can easily satisfy himself.

On the whole, it is hard to say how far competent opinions favour the university teaching of education. Many head masters of secondary schools set little store on it; many head mistresses of secondary schools set a great deal. The people who engage teachers for elementary schools do not have much opportunity for showing their opinions one way or the other. In general, their choice lies between the graduate who has received the university teaching, and the non-graduate who has been trained in a two-year college; the London graduates who have been trained in the three university colleges or in the two-year colleges are comparatively few in number. There is a demand for graduates to fill particular posts, which gives the graduate a real advantage over the non-graduate in the struggle for existence and appointments; but it is very doubtful whether, other things being equal, the "internal" graduate, who has followed a university course in education, has any financial advantage over the "external" graduate, who has followed the Board's course. If the "internal" man is a four-year man, he may even be at a financial disadvantage, as he has spent four years in obtaining qualifications which the "external" man has obtained in three.

Perhaps the position may be summed up in the following way. Every one who has a right to an opinion on the matter holds that a beginner needs plenty of school practice under skilled supervision ; and, also, that he needs something more. But there is no general agreement as to what the something more should be, and many of us would be very sorry, were the something more to be determined once for all in a hard and fast way. It would be a pity if the university courses in education were abolished ; but an equal pity if these courses, or anything like them, were made obligatory on all entrants into the teaching profession.

CHAPTER XIII

Elementary School Teaching as a Profession

IN the time of the pupil-teacher system it was possible to obtain teachers in large numbers at small salaries. Teachers' salaries, though low, were high enough to attract working-class boys and girls, and the pupil teacher was a wage-earner from the very beginning of his career. It is not possible to state the average salary of a teacher at any given time, for the Department's statistics were based only on annual returns, made by bodies of school managers, who were often most unbusinesslike people. In particular, it is uncertain how far the annual returns of salaries did, or did not, include sums earned by teachers outside school hours, and the estimated values of dwelling-houses provided for teachers. The rules on these points can be ascertained, but it is impossible to say whether they were observed. According to official statistics, just before the passing of the Education Act of 1870, the average salary of a certificated master was £95, and that of a certificated mistress £57. These figures must be taken for what they are worth.

At this period there was no such thing as a salary scale, and the amount paid in any particular case was a matter of bargaining between the teacher and the managers of his school. In a sense, the Department controlled the market, inasmuch as by raising or lowering the standard of its examinations it could increase or decrease the supply of teachers. But the extent of its control was limited, as any great rise in salaries would have overstrained the resources of school managers, and

led to the shutting up of schools; and, the supply of schools being notoriously insufficient, the risk of lessening it was too serious to be faced. Neither could the Department fix its standard below a certain point, as any great lowering of salaries would have resulted in the better teachers drifting out of the profession. It is probable, but not certain, that the examination standard was so fixed as to make the number of fresh teachers each year about equal to the number of vacancies.

As time went on, salaries increased, though they remained very low in comparison with the earnings of the professions. The larger School Boards paid teachers best, but considerable amounts were sometimes earned by the head teachers of "farmed-out" voluntary schools. At the time of the passing of the Act of 1902 the average salary for a certificated master was returned at £128, and that for a certificated mistress at £86. These figures again, however, are not to be taken as absolutely accurate.

In 1902 the larger School Boards had their salary scales. The voluntary school managers still bargained with the teachers, as their predecessors had done in 1870, *i.e.*, when a post in a voluntary school staff became vacant, the managers allotted to the post whatever salary they thought sufficient to bring forth suitable candidates. The smaller School Boards acted in much the same way.

Since the Education Committees have become the employers of nearly all elementary teachers, salaries have risen considerably; and in 1913-14, the year before the war, and consequently the last year in which the schools have been conducted under normal circumstances, the following averages were reached. In that year the average salary of a head master was £179 in England, and £151 in Wales; that of a certificated assistant master was £130 in the one country, and £118

in the other ; that of a head mistress was £127, and £119 ; that of a certificated assistant mistress was £96, and £91. These figures may be taken as trustworthy, but they need a little explanation.

In the first place, they do not, it may be noted, take into account the value of certain school houses which were provided rent-free, but the number of these houses is not large enough to alter the general position.

Another point is much more important. The salaries for 1913-14 which have been mentioned were salaries earned for service in day schools and nothing more. Exactly what a teacher ought to do in return for his salary is not settled, and it had better remain undefined. According to what, for want of a better name may be termed the extreme trade union doctrine, the teacher receives his salary in return for five and a half hours work on each of five days on each of forty-three or forty-four weeks per annum. So long, then, as he is in his place from nine till twelve, and from two till half-past four on each of these days, his obligations are fulfilled, and for the rest of the year he may dismiss school and school work from his thoughts. This doctrine, or something like it, may be occasionally expressed in letters to the newspapers or in conversation ; but, as far as I know, it has never been endorsed by the National Union of Teachers, and it is not accepted either theoretically or practically by the great majority of teachers. Much work in the way of preparing lessons, correcting exercises, and supervising children's games gets done out of school hours. The extreme opposite doctrine that the elementary teacher's salary secures him body and soul is seldom proclaimed, though, in the past, it has doubtless been held and acted on by particular sets of school managers. It is plainly renounced by the Education Committees, as almost every committee that conducts evening or continuation

schools invites elementary teachers to work in them, and pays salaries for evening school work. Clearly, therefore, in the opinion of the committees, the day-school salary does not entitle the employer to the whole of the teacher's energies. The evening school work, it may be remarked, is fairly remunerative, but some of it is unduly heavy, and there is much to be said for restricting it, as far as may be practicable. Special stress falls on the teacher who is in charge of a large set of evening classes.

The attractions of a profession depend upon other things than earnings in hard money, and, in considering elementary teaching as a career, certain advantages, which it undoubtedly has, must not be overlooked. Neither, however, must they be overstated. In the first place, as has already been pointed out, the school sessions seldom total up to more than twenty-seven and a half hours per week. Too much, however, must not be made of this, for teaching is worrying work, and five and a half hours per day in a class-room, with forty or fifty children, are much more trying than five and a half hours in a bank or office. In the second place, a Government scheme, which was established about twenty years ago, provides allowances for superannuated or disabled teachers. Its details are complicated, and to explain them briefly, yet accurately, would be difficult. It is enough to say that the scheme provides for compulsory contributions to a superannuation fund and compulsory superannuation, usually at the age of sixty-five. The fund is subsidised by the State. Each teacher receives a pension, from the superannuation age onwards, and there are disablement allowances for teachers who break down at an earlier age. This scheme is now, *i.e.*, in 1919, being replaced by a much more generous superannuation scheme on a non-contributory basis.

In the third place, there are various administrative posts and inspectorships, which often fall to elementary teachers. The importance of these posts is not to be exaggerated, for they are necessarily few in comparison with the number of teachers. As regards emoluments, they compare well with teacherships, but badly with the prizes in other professions. To the prizes in law, in medicine, and on the music-hall stage they bear somewhat the ratio which the average salary of an elementary teacher bears to the earnings of an average professional man. The Board of Education's chief inspectors, for instance, earn less than a great many panel doctors.

A word or two may be said about promotion within the profession. In rural areas, where the proportion of head masters to assistant masters is high, promotion to a headship comes early; but the headships are of low value. In many towns where schools are large the headships are comparatively valuable, but hard to obtain. In these places promotion generally comes about forty or not at all—often not at all. In other places, again, intermediate conditions rule. On the whole, the highly-paid headships were few in 1913-14, but some of them were considerably above the average of £179. In other words, a limited number of head teachers earned a good deal more than the average, a larger number earned somewhat less; it follows that the chance was always against the average entrant to the teaching profession obtaining a well-paid post.

On the whole, elementary teaching was a much better paid profession in 1913-14 than in 1902 or 1870. The national standard of living and comfort doubtless rose greatly during the period of forty-three or forty-four years, but hardly in the same proportions as teachers' salaries; and, at first sight, it would seem that teaching should have been more attractive to young people at the end of the period than at the beginning. As a matter

of fact, teaching attracted young people much less in 1914 than it did in 1870, and the reason why this was the case is quite simple. The pupil-teacher system gave a cheap entrance into the profession, whilst the way through the secondary school is comparatively expensive. Working-class parents could generally afford one way, but can seldom afford the other. The pupil teacher, as a pupil, received his instruction from the head teacher of his school, or sometimes, in the days of the School Boards, from the teacher of a pupil teachers' class. In neither case did he pay any fee. In return for his services as a teacher he earned wages. These wages varied greatly in amount. A girl, the first year of her apprenticeship, may have earned as little as £6 to £8; a boy, in his last year, as much as £40. This last amount, however, would have been quite exceptional. The boy or girl in a secondary school, who intends to become a teacher, is often subsidised in a variety of ways by the Board and his Education Committee; but he is seldom as well off as the pupil teacher of the past. To put the secondary school scholar on the same financial footing as the pupil teacher, we must pay his secondary school fee, any school subscriptions there may be for games and the like, his travelling expenses to the school, which may be a long way from the home, and something more than the pupil teacher's wages. The bare wage of the pupil teacher would hardly suffice, for attendance at the secondary school necessitates expenditure in various ways, especially in the matter of dress, which the pupil teacher would have escaped. The subsidies rarely cover all the items which have been mentioned; consequently, many boys and girls who would have been teachers, if they had lived forty years ago, cannot be teachers, now. Moreover, the number of subsidies is limited, and the subsidy is harder to get than the pupil teachership was, as well as less valuable when got. Were it desirable to

revert to the pupil-teachership on its old footing, teachers could be recruited just as easily as at an earlier time.

No one is likely to advocate the re-establishment of the pupil-teacher system. Apart from the obvious educational objections to it which have been referred to in this book, and which have been pointed out over and over again, it is open to another objection which has been pointed out less often. It is against public policy to encourage boys to enter a profession, and then to pay them so badly that the more ambitious will leave it after a few years' service therein, and that the more ambitious of those who remain behind will feel dissatisfied. It was in this way that the Kay-Shuttleworth plan worked. Entrance to the profession was cheap and easy ; but the conditions inside, though attractive from a working-class point of view, were unattractive, as compared with those of other professions, and the leakage out was not inconsiderable. The schools lost, inasmuch as a good deal of the cream of their staffs got skimmed off. The cream itself also lost, inasmuch as the men who composed it spent their best years in starting a career which they never followed up, instead of preparing for their life's work. These losses were to the detriment of the State. Leakage from the teaching profession has taken place, and still takes place in several directions. Many women have retired on marriage ; many men and women have obtained posts in secondary schools, or educational posts abroad ; a certain number of men have become clergymen ; many men, and probably also a few women, have entered into business of one kind or another. The propriety of the retirements on marriage has never been questioned ; indeed, in some parts of England a woman's retirement on marriage is compulsory. Service in a secondary school is not the kind of work for which elementary teachers have been prepared ; but these schools have to be staffed, and the

distinctions between secondary and elementary schools is often so faint, that leakage of this particular kind is not to be regretted. On the other hand, training colleges and pupil-teacherships were not instituted to train clergymen, journalists, or business men; and the more budding clergymen, journalists, and business men can be kept from becoming training-college students, the better will it be for both them and the colleges.

At a very early date the Department made a quaint effort to stop the leakage which has been mentioned. The training-college course was the part of the intending teacher's preparation that was most expensive to the State, for the grant on behalf of a man student amounted to £50 per annum, and that on behalf of a woman student to £35. In order that these sums might not be spent without result, a declaration was exacted from every student who entered a college. He had to declare his intent to teach, either in an elementary school or in some other public institution which gave elementary instruction, though not technically an elementary school. Women as well as men had to declare. The declaration had no legal effect, and it is impossible to say how far it was morally binding. Clearly, a declaration made by a boy or girl of eighteen could not commit him or her to a life-long service of a particular kind. Clearly, on the other hand, an honourable person could hardly change his mind at the end of a two-year training course, and refrain from teaching altogether. The truth is that the arrangement was a bad one. The declaration bore hard on tender consciences, and did not have any effect in coercing shifty people. There were students who rendered no school service whatever, and there were other ex-students who, on giving up school service, voluntarily refunded to the State the whole amount of the grant paid to the training colleges on their behalf. Both these cases were quite exceptional. Very few

students failed to put in, at least, two years' service, and the college always did its best to secure as much as this, otherwise its grant would, or might be, reduced in accordance with some intricate and almost unintelligible regulations, which were in force until the beginning of the present century.

The declaration is now abolished, and the students admitted in 1908, and subsequent years, have had to sign an undertaking, which is a legal document. A man binds himself to serve seven years within ten years of leaving the college; a woman binds herself to serve five years within eight years of leaving. The service may be in any State-aided school, whether elementary or secondary, or in any other school approved by the Board, or on the staff of a training college. If any part of the seven or five years' service is not completed, a proportionate part of the grant paid on the student's behalf has to be refunded by him or her to the State. The undertaking is far more rational than the declaration, but even now the position is not altogether satisfactory, inasmuch as the man who completes seven years' service in school, and then enters on non-educational work, does not employ his talents to the best advantage. He will very seldom be under twenty-seven when he changes his occupation, and he will often be older; consequently, he will have spent his best years in preparing for a profession which he is not to follow. It would be better for such a man either not to enter the teaching profession, or not to leave it.

Of late years the supply of elementary teachers has shown signs of drying up. The state of things during the war period is, of course, abnormal, and it would be waste of time to quote the war figures; but in 1913-14, the last year of peace, and in previous years, a serious situation had been reached. In the four years, ending 31st July 1914, the number of subsidised entrants into

the profession averaged only a little over 5,400, *i.e.*, about 1,200 boys and 4,200 girls. The 5,400 represents not the teachers who obtained their full qualifications in the years in question, but the young people, usually pupils in secondary schools, who announced their intention of becoming teachers. A proportion of these beginners always fail to complete their course of preparation, and become qualified teachers. Also, it must be remembered, that a certain number of those who qualify themselves, elect to enter secondary teaching. Indeed, speaking broadly, no young teacher whom the secondary school authorities will engage, undertakes work in an elementary school. Something must be added, as well as taken away, from the 5,400. It is quite possible to enter a training college and obtain the Board's certificate without becoming a "pupil teacher," or a "bursar," and without being included in the 5,400; but the number of people starting in this way has its limits, and it was obvious, in 1914, that the total number of entrants was insufficient for the needs of the country. In that year the schools of England and Wales, with a little over 6,100,000 children, were staffed with about 165,500 adult teachers, about 109,000 of whom were fully certificated; and it was pretty generally agreed that there were too few teachers rather than too many. The number of children per teacher, it is true, averaged less than thirty-seven; but in rural districts and in small towns there were, and there still are, many small classes under teachers of low qualifications; besides this there were many head teachers of large schools who could not take charge of classes. There were, on the other hand, a great many classes of more than thirty-seven children. Classes of sixty—the maximum size allowed by the Board's regulations—were, and are by no means, unknown. The small classes in the rural areas are unavoidable, partly because of

structural considerations, but partly and mainly because, where the population is small, the classes must be small. It follows, that 165,500 teachers are too few for our needs, rather than too many, unless, indeed, a lowered birth-rate quite alters the position.

The extension of continuation schools, which will be necessary now that attendance at continuation schools is becoming compulsory, will, in the end, make a fresh supply of teachers still more necessary. Evidently the continuation schools will, in the first instance, be largely staffed by teachers drawn from elementary schools.

Before the war period, the Board never intervened directly to regulate teachers' salaries. In an indirect way it did intervene, for its regulations determined the minimum number of teaching posts in subsidised schools, and its examinations the number of persons qualified to hold these posts. But even this indirect intervention did not amount to much. As most committees employed more teachers than they were bound to employ, the requirements as to a minimum staff seldom operated. Nor was it possible to incline the market in the teacher's favour by raising the examination standard, and restricting the supply of teaching power; or in the committee's favour by lowering the standard and increasing the supply. Anything like a surplus of teachers over teaching posts, or of teaching posts over teachers, would have produced an outcry which it would have been hard to resist.

It is hard to say what did regulate salaries. To a certain extent the committees competed against each other for teachers. London and certain places round London, for instance, paid much more than the country generally. The average salary of a London assistant was considerably above the average salary of a head teacher in the counties. In some urban districts the salaries were as high as in London; in others, much

lower. The county boroughs, on the whole, paid less than the urban districts, the non-county boroughs less than the county boroughs, and the counties less still.

In the main, I imagine, salaries were regulated by the pressure which the education rate exercised on the ratepayers, and the pressure depended more on custom than on the actual amount of rate. The ratepayers would pay what they were used to pay, but not much more. What would be tolerated in one place would not be tolerated in another. Friends of education and the teachers' personal friends would, of course, pull one way, and economists another; but the educationalists would seldom bring about a sudden rise in the expenditure sanctioned by public opinion, and still less often would the economists secure a material reduction. It was really custom that ruled.

During the war period the number of entrants into the teaching profession, *i.e.*, the number of boys and girls who declared their intention of becoming teachers, increased, though not very heavily. On the other hand, the number of men who completed training-college courses shrank enormously, and on the whole, as the war went on, the outlook as to the supply of teachers grew blacker and blacker. At last the Board abandoned its negative attitude on the salary question, and took three important steps to improve the prospects of teachers. In the first place, it established the principle that the minimum salary for a certificated master should be £100, the minimum for a certificated mistress should be £90, and the minimum for an uncertificated teacher, £65. In the second place, it regulated its grants for elementary instruction according to a system which weakens the ratepayer's objection to increases of salaries. The formula which now regulates grants is complex, and it cannot be stated compactly without the aid of algebra. Its result, however, is evident. When a

committee increases salaries, a large proportion of the increase comes back to the ratepayers in the form of an increased State grant. Moreover, the Board also takes power to reduce grants when salaries do not reach a satisfactory level. It is nowhere defined what a satisfactory level may be, but the Board has published various specimen salary scales, which show roughly the level it expects. The scales are far higher than the average scale obtaining in 1914. One or other of them is now being generally adopted, either as it stands, or in a slightly modified form.

Inasmuch as the future of prices cannot be forecasted, it is impossible to say how far the new scales will meet, or fail to meet, or more than meet the situation. If the rise in prices which took place between 1914 and 1918 is to be permanent, it is by no means certain that teachers, as a body, will be better off under the new scales than they were under the old. If prices fall to the old level, or anywhere near it, the teacher's gain will be striking and important. All that is certain is that the specimen scales, which are very like the actual scales now coming into force, provide :—

Certificated assistant masters with salaries starting at £100 or more, and rising to a maximum varying from £190 to £300; certificated assistant mistresses with salaries starting at £90 or more, and rising to a maximum varying from £150 to £240; head masters with salaries varying from £140 to £400, according to the size of the school and to length of service; and head mistresses with salaries varying from £125 to £300 in a similar way.

In consequence of the new scales, the salary expenditure of the committees, which was over £17,000,000 in 1915-16, may be expected to mount up considerably, perhaps to the extent of 50 per cent.; but a large proportion of the increase will be a national, and not a local burden.

A third step to improve teachers' positions has been lately taken. An Act, passed in 1918, replaces the contributory superannuation scheme of 1898 by a system of State pensions and break-down allowances. The pensions and allowances established by the Act of 1918 are much higher than those under the earlier Act, and henceforth teachers' contributions to the superannuation fund will absolutely disappear.

In the matter of pensions, indeed, the teacher's advance is beyond question. Henceforward, all his contributions to the State pension fund will cease, his pension will become due at sixty instead of at sixty-five, and, without an inconceivable rise in prices, its purchasing value as well as its nominal value must be far higher than in the past. According to the Superannuation Act of 1918, the pension may be as much as half his fixed salary; and, in addition, he may receive, on his retirement, a gratuity of considerably more than a year's salary. A fair number of teachers will receive the maximum of salary and gratuity, and many more will approach it.

Now that the State has once intervened on behalf of the teacher, it will probably have to intervene still more. It has put itself in a queer financial position, inasmuch as it has fixed a minimum salary for the teacher, but no maximum; and yet made itself liable for a pension varying directly, other things being equal, with his final salary, which will nearly always be the same as his maximum. Besides, as has already been explained, it pays to each committee grants, which increase along with the committee's salary expenditure. Consequently, it has become responsible for much expenditure, which it does not control.

Furthermore, though State action has brought about some much-needed rises in salaries, it has not resulted in uniformity. So long as similar areas pay salaries at different rates, discontent will naturally exist, and

express itself in teachers' strikes and various other ways. Absolute uniformity over the whole of England might be undesirable and unjust, as living is more expensive and unpleasant in some places than in others. Rents are higher in London than in the northern cities. Work in the Black Country may be more meritorious than work elsewhere, and so forth. But uniformity in similar circumstances is to be desired. There is no reason why, as at present, Kent should pay better than West Sussex, or West Sussex should pay worse than Kent. Nor is there any reason why, as at present, there should be a huge difference between the salary scale of Portsmouth, on one side of Spithead, and that of Ryde on the other. So long as these contrasts obtain, teachers will grumble and agitate, and sooner or later the State may have to demand, not only the levelling up of some scales, but also the levelling down of a few.

It is doubtful if the State will ever take the next step and establish a national scale of salaries. One reason why it should not do so has already been mentioned. Some places are much more attractive than others, and to give each place a fair choice of teachers we must frame not one national scale, but a number of scales, carefully adapted to local circumstances. The central authority might possibly do this, but it will probably elect to leave the task to the local authorities, prescribing only certain limits between which they must work.

It is unlikely that the State will take the still further step of making elementary teachers into national servants. Such a plan would be open to one weighty objection, which is quite apart from the difficulty of establishing national salary scales. Once the teacher becomes a national servant, control over him, and, consequently, control over the schools, must pass from the local authority to the central authority. The local authority might continue to provide school premises; but,

so far as educational matters were concerned, it would be little more than an advisory council. All real power, *i.e.*, the power of appointing, promoting, and dismissing teachers would rest, theoretically, with the central office at Whitehall, but practically with the central authority's officers in different parts of the country. This result would be unfortunate; local interest in education and local control over it are closely connected, and the former is unlikely to survive the latter. If, as almost everyone agrees, local interest is worth preserving, it would be better to strengthen it by increasing the responsibilities of local authorities, rather than to weaken or destroy it by any avoidable centralisation.

It may be asked how far such advantages as elementary teachers have recently gained are due to the action of their society, the National Union of Teachers. It is not easy to answer. The Union includes a very large proportion of the teachers; its organisation is complete; its activities are marked; and it would be absurd to say that they have had no effect. To a great extent, however, the Union has been forcing an open door. Opposition to the proper payment of teachers comes mainly from small groups of people; those who dislike all expenditure from public funds; those who think schooling unfits a man to earn his living; and those who wish no man to earn more than the average man. The economists, who are the only objectors to be taken very seriously, have received great shocks since 1914, and are now somewhat benumbed; at present the nation seems to be in favour of public education, and prepared to pay for it.

Had no Union ever existed, the last year or two would almost certainly have seen a considerable increase in salaries and pensions. Several remarkable circumstances concurred to produce an increase; along with the scarcity of teachers, there came the fall in the

purchasing power of money, the growth of public familiarity with an enormous national expenditure, and the appointment of an education minister, able, and willing, to master educational questions, and expound them to Parliament. Inasmuch as some of its members discouraged boys and girls from becoming teachers, the Union may have helped to create the scarcity; but it is not responsible for the financial consequences of the great war, and it probably had nothing to do with Mr Fisher's appointment as President of the Board. It seems safe to say that no amount of organisation could have obtained from any previous Parliament the grants readily voted by the Parliament which expired in 1918.

No discussion of teachers' salaries and prospects would be complete without some reference to recent agitations for putting women's salaries on the same footing as men's. The formula of equal pay for equal work sounds well, but difficulties attend its application to school teaching. In imaginary republics, and conceivably in the England of the future, men and women may work side by side in every occupation, and receive pay at equal rates. But in England, as it is, there are more careers for men than for women; consequently, any particular career which is open to both on equal terms is exposed to a great inrush of women. The proportion of women teachers must necessarily be large, inasmuch as young children of both sexes, and girls of all ages, are best managed and taught by women. It must not, however, become too large, inasmuch as boys beyond a certain age limit are best managed and taught by men. It follows that a due proportion of men teachers ought always to be maintained. It may be argued what this proportion ought to be, for opinions undoubtedly differ as to the age at which the average boy ought to be put under the care of a man. Few persons, however, would put the age of transfer below eight or over twelve. If

the right transfer age be eleven, and those who would put it higher are rather exceptional, about one-third of the boys in elementary schools will be above it. If the age of leaving school rises, the proportion of elder boys will, of course, increase. It seems to follow that at least one-sixth of our elementary teachers should be men. The proper proportion cannot be estimated exactly ; but, probably, it should be over rather than under one-sixth, as the head teachers of boys' schools, with a mixed staff, are necessarily men, and the right transfer age is more likely to be under eleven than over eleven. In 1913-14, the last year in which statistics were uninfluenced by the war, the proportion of men was a trifle over one-fourth. This may have been needlessly high, but the difference between one-fourth and one-sixth is not very great, and the room for a reduction in the proportion of men is but scanty.

The total squeezing out by men might be checked by rules reserving for them a certain number of posts ; but the men starting as teachers on an equal-pay basis would, in all likelihood, be of lower calibre than the women ; it might become difficult to reserve posts for these men, and there would be a real danger of the profession being dominated by women, and unmarried women. Marriage may, theoretically, be no bar to promotion, and particular married women have attained to eminence in educational work ; but it is generally the unmarried and unencumbered women who climb highest on the promotion ladder.

As has been explained, the older teachers in our schools were trained and prepared for their work in one way, and the younger in another. It is natural to ask which plan has given the best results. A complete answer is not altogether easy, inasmuch as youth has some advantages, and experience others, and the results of these advantages cannot be readily separated from

those of training and preparation. Two considerations may, however, be taken into account.

In the first place, it is obvious that, so far as academical knowledge is concerned, the advantage lies with the younger men and women. In the training colleges of thirty and forty years ago, there was much industry, but, as has already been pointed out, it was badly directed. No one who knows the facts will dispute that literature, history, geography, and science, and probably, also, mathematics, were much better taught by the training colleges in the period after 1900 than in the period 1880-1900. Furthermore, a large proportion of the teachers who became qualified in the earlier period did not pass through the colleges, but obtained their certificates by passing an examination on very easy terms. If there is anything in academic education at all, the younger teacher ought to be wiser than the older, and to have a wider outlook.

The second consideration is, from its nature, more disputable. It is sometimes stated that the teachers trained in the twentieth century are less devoted to their work than those trained in the nineteenth. In particular, it is said that the men who now leave the colleges are half-hearted in their duties. My own belief, which I give for what it is worth, is that the accusation is not altogether unfounded, but that, put in a sweeping and general form, it is untrue, and that, as far as it is true, it is not new. Of necessity, only impressions can be recorded on such a point, as industry is not a thing that can be measured up in a scientific way. But when the impressions of many independent persons concur, they are not to be put aside lightly; and, as I apprehend, the training college officers who instruct the students, and the head teachers under whom the ex-students work, agree pretty well in representing the position as follows. The teaching of large classes of small boys is not a task

that appeals greatly to young men. There are some rather exceptional men, as there are many women, who have a vocation for teaching, and may find an interest in dealing with elementary reading and arithmetic. The average young schoolmaster who is put in charge of a junior class will do his work honestly, because he considers it his duty, or because he will suffer if he is remiss; but he will do it without great enthusiasm. There remain men who have an actual distaste for teaching, and are teachers merely because they have found no other employment. Nothing is gained by denying the position of such persons, and nothing, on the other hand, by exaggerating their number. There is no proof that the training colleges turn them out on a large scale, or that they are commoner than they were forty or fifty years ago.

In the case of women, also, the state of things is probably much as it was of old. Amongst women there are, as there always were, more vocations for teaching than amongst men, and there is, as there always was, less positive slackness. On the other hand, the worst women teachers are, perhaps, more wooden and ignorant than the worst men. Amongst the best women teachers, also, though there may be more enthusiasm for teaching than amongst the best men, there seems to be less for the subjects taught.

CHAPTER XIV

School Inspection and the Choice of Inspectors

A BOOK on elementary schools would not be complete without some reference to school inspection and school inspectors. The history of inspection can be easily outlined. From 1863 onwards, for many years, the Department's inspectors were mainly employed in holding the annual examinations which have been described. Until late years the inspector's main duty was, as he was at one time told in so many words, and as was always understood, to ascertain the facts on which the State grant was calculated. He was, however, also asked to prepare an annual report on every school which he visited, and a summary of this report was always forwarded to the managers of the school.

The inspector's annual report was to a great extent a sham, for it pretended to a completeness which it could not possess. In the time available he could not possibly obtain information on all the points which the report covered. He was supposed to report on the structure and state of the premises, the furniture and apparatus, the registration, the accounts of schools not under School Boards, the discipline and organisation of the school, the training of pupil teachers, and the character of the instruction. A report which dealt properly with all these subjects would have been an elaborate document; but lengthy reports were not welcomed by the Department, and the printed form in use was arranged on the assumption that the information supplied under each head would be brief indeed. In practice, unless he were unusually conscientious, the inspector contented himself

with describing premises, furniture, organisation, and so forth, as "good," "fair," or "satisfactory," and writing a few summary remarks which the Department might transmit to the managers.

Though the summaries were nearly always short, they differed a good deal in character. Some inspectors supplied statistical information about the results of the examination. Some tried to hit off the character of the school in a sentence or two. Others differentiated between class and class, or between subject and subject. The majority of the summaries, if not the great majority, doubtless gave rough justice to the schools, but many which were not unjust were too brief and vague to be satisfactory. This was not usually the fault of the inspector; he was expected to be concise, and he was rather in the position of having to pour a quart into a pint measure. The best summaries, I apprehend, were those which simply described the examination results, and mentioned any circumstances which told either for or against the success of the school. A summary avoiding all attempts to praise or blame the teaching which produced the results was, at all events, harmless. A summary of a more ambitious kind was of doubtful value, as the inspector's knowledge of what went on in the school was necessarily limited. Looking to the conditions under which he worked, he could, more or less, measure the results, but he could only guess at the machinery behind them.

The position is now quite altered. The Board's inspector is not obliged to visit schools at any stated times, or expected to prepare reports unless he has something to say. He may visit a school once a year, or more often, or more seldom. He has to satisfy himself and the Board that the schools with which he is concerned are efficiently conducted, and from time to time he has to write reports, sometimes for the informa-

tion of the Board alone, at other times for both the Board and the education committee. The reports which are written are far from being annual; indeed, the Board could not possibly obtain an annual report on every elementary school. The staff available for elementary school inspection is smaller than the Department's; the number of schools is larger, and the inspection of a school on modern plans, though less strenuous than the holding of an annual examination on the old plan, takes considerably longer. Some of the education committees, however, have inspectors of their own, and can obtain from these officers the information that they need.

The Board's inspectors are not uniformly distributed over England. In places such as London, where there is a large local staff, the Board employs very few men. In areas where there are no local inspectors the Board's staff is comparatively large, perhaps as large as the Department's was twenty-five years ago. It follows that the schools in some areas are inspected wholly by the Board's staff, and those in other areas partly by the Board's staff and partly by the committee's. It is entirely open to a committee to employ, or not to employ, inspectors, and to base its action on their reports, or on those of the Board's inspectors at its discretion.

In proportion to the number of scholars and institutions, the Board's staff of inspectors for secondary schools is much larger than its staff for elementary schools, consequently it is possible for the Board to be kept in touch with each individual secondary school. The Board also arranges for the pretty complete inspection of each technical school or class of any importance. In the case of elementary schools, however, the tendency of the Board is to look more and more beyond the individual school, and to consider the system of schools which each committee maintains. Were we to travel a little further in this direction, and to leave all

detailed inspections to the committee's officers, a symmetrical system of inspection could be reached. Symmetry is always a good thing in itself, and it may seem that, if the Board cannot arrange for inspecting all the schools, as the Department did, it should not arrange for inspecting any. But, however attractive this plan may appear, there are strong objections to it. Many of the committees provide schools for small populations, and would be unable to employ an inspector for more than a fraction of his time. Many others would have work for one inspector, but for one only. The inconvenience that would result from small places clubbing together to employ an inspector is obvious enough; it could, however, be overcome. Less obvious, but much more serious, are the objections to the employment of any inspector who works single handed and not as a member of an organised body. A person in such a position can obtain no second opinion when he is in doubt or difficulty; and in school inspection, which cannot be carried out according to any rigid rule, the value of a second or third opinion is very great indeed. If the single-handed man is of the self-confident type, he may condemn teaching which is not really bad, and force on wiser people methods which are not really sound. If he is diffident or easy going, he may tolerate teaching and methods which he ought to condemn. Any inspector may, of course, err in either of these ways; but, if he belongs to an organised body, his actions will be checked by those of his colleagues. There can be no appeal against the judgment of the single-handed man, and, except in the case of actual misconduct on his part, it must be difficult to get rid of him. This last point is of considerable importance. However competent and fair-minded an official may be, we do not want him to take root in any particular place. Transplantation will be good for him, and good for the soil.

Lastly, it is useless to disguise the fact that in a number of small places an inspector would be exposed to all sorts of non-educational influences which he would find it hard to resist. One teacher may be related to an unpopular owner of cottage property. Another may be the son-in-law of the head of the Blue party. A third an incisive and eloquent speaker at Buff meetings. The smaller the place, the greater the difficulties of this sort that may be imagined. It seems to follow that, so long as small educational areas exist, it would be unwise to leave all inspection in the hands of the committees.

At the same time it is doubtful if certain large places need two sets of inspectors. In London, in particular, duality of inspection seems superfluous; the population is larger than that of many independent countries, and the committee might be trusted to make sure of the efficiency of its own schools.

Inspection by local inspectors, it may be remarked, is not necessarily cheap. The Board can, and often does, employ an inspector in the areas of two or more committees. Consequently, in the case of an area which provides too much work for one man but not enough for two, or too much for two but not enough for three, it can practise economy more readily than the committees. For similar reasons the Board's inspectors should spend rather less on locomotion than the same number of local inspectors. The railway lines, on which cheap travelling depends, cut through the different areas in various complicated ways. A committee's inspection system will only be cheaper than the Board's in so far as its scale of inspectors' salaries is lower. The advantages of local inspection, as against national inspection, are not then economic. They are solid, only because the committee which maintains the schools will often prefer information from its own staff, rather than

from a staff which it does not control. It may like demanding reports rather than asking for them.

The local administration of education generally is, in fact, not cheaper than centralised administration would be. In some ways centralisation has the advantage. The larger the office, the greater the possible division of clerical labour amongst its staff. The less, also, proportionately will be the expenditure on printing and stationery, as it is cheaper to produce a large number of each of a few printed forms, than a small number of each of many. The objections to centralisation are not at all financial; they result from the fact that it is apt to kill off local interest and responsibility, and slow to adapt itself to local needs and circumstances. Few of us would like to see all elementary schools ruled from one centre, as the post offices are; but to institute a centralised administration of education would not be an extravagant plan.

To the best of my knowledge our inspection machinery, though unsymmetrical, works smoothly. The committees generally receive the information that they want, and in places where both the Board and the committee employ inspectors, the relations between the two staffs are harmonious. In London, in particular, good relations are maintained, as they have been maintained ever since the Board of Education replaced the Department, and the education committee the London School Board.

The inspector's position must be made clear. The Board's inspector is, neither in theory nor in fact, the official superior of the teacher whom he inspects. He is employed by one body, and the teacher by another. Neither, except in the ways which will be mentioned in the next paragraph, has he power to call for any change in the arrangements of a school. If he finds unsatisfactory teaching or structural faults in a school, it is his

duty to report on them to the Board. Unless his report conflicts with the regulations, the Board transmits it to the committee; if it applies to a non-provided school, it is transmitted also to the school managers. Speaking generally, it is for the committee to take action on the report; but in a really grave case the Board may warn the committee that, unless action is taken, the grant paid to the school will be withdrawn. Cases of this kind have never been common, and they tend to become rarer and rarer.

The Board's inspector has control over a school only in two ways, and in these ways his power is limited. The regulations require every school to have a time-table signed by him, and also a syllabus approved by the Board; and the approval of the syllabus is delegated to him by the Board. But in both cases he is only a judge of first instance. If he refuses to sign a time-table or objects to a syllabus, the head teacher or school managers may appeal to the committee, and the committee may appeal to the Board. The decision of the Board is final. It may direct the inspector to withdraw his objections to the time-table or syllabus; or it may sustain his action and warn the committee that the grant to the school will be forfeited, unless the time-table or syllabus be modified. It is seldom, however, that a formal appeal of this kind has to be decided before the Board; and unless the objections to the time-table or syllabus were serious and patent, it is unlikely that the Board would take the extreme step of refusing recognition to the school. Time-tables and syllabuses have a strong family resemblance; and eccentric time-tables and syllabuses, at which an inspector would seriously protest and which a teacher would object to alter, are not very common. Given an eccentric time-table and an uncompromising head teacher, the situation would probably be discussed and settled by the

inspector and the committee's officers, and not dealt with in official correspondence.

The committee's inspector can exercise whatever of its powers the committee may delegate to him. He may be authorised merely to prepare reports on schools and teachers, or to give advice which has to be followed. The Board's inspector, for instance, could, at the utmost, but suggest to a head teacher that the teachers of two classes should change places, whilst the committee's inspector might have authority to demand the transfer. In general, the committee's inspector is not empowered to give specific directions on such a point, or on kindred points; but knowing the mind of the committee, he can speak on its behalf with a good deal of confidence.

The Board lays down no exact rules as to what its inspector may, or may not do, when he visits a school. One or two principles which should guide his action are, however, clear and generally understood. He does not visit merely to listen to lessons, and to observe the school routine; neither is he to spend all his time in questioning and examining the children. His interference with the routine must be cautious and regulated by common-sense considerations. He must not call for radical alterations in the time-table, lest they result in general confusion; but he may often be justified in asking a teacher to substitute one lesson for another. In some lessons he will probably not intervene at all; he may intervene at the close of others to question the children; in other cases, again, he may give some written test which will occupy the whole time of the lesson. He may, and should, examine the school syllabus, the children's exercise books, and any examination questions the head teacher may have set. He refers to the last named because they throw light on the treatment of the syllabus, and show what aims the head teacher puts before himself and the staff.

But the inspector does not judge the class teachers on the result of the head teacher's examinations. If, for instance, arithmetic be accurate or inaccurate, the inspector must find out its strength, or weakness, for himself, and not merely adopt the head teacher's opinion about it. The reasons why all this is so are plain. The head teacher is responsible for the general state of the school, and he cannot be a proper witness for, or against, himself. The class teacher may well complain if the inspector passes on the censure of a third party. Lastly, the committee will be led astray, if what purports to be the inspector's report is not an independent report at all.

During a day the inspector who visits an elementary school will seldom test more than from seven to nine lessons. He will probably reach his school during the progress of religious instruction, which usually lasts from the opening of school at nine up to about twenty minutes to ten. An inspector of the Board must not interfere with this instruction or make any remark upon it. Until it comes to an end, he must spend his time in examining the syllabus, the registers of attendance, the children's exercise books, or the state of the premises. An arithmetic lesson of about forty-minutes length usually follows the religious instruction, and during the forty minutes he will be able to investigate the arithmetic of either one or two classes. He may, perhaps, examine the arithmetic exercise books of both; set some suitable sums for the children in one class to work; and either question the other orally, or listen to its teacher's explanation of some arithmetical difficulty. An interval for recreation usually follows the arithmetic lesson, and between the recreation and noon, when the school meeting ends, there will be two more lessons of rather over half an hour each. The afternoon meeting is usually divided up into four

lesson periods of about the same length, *i.e.*, of half an hour, or rather over half an hour each ; but the drawing and needlework lessons are generally of double length. Certain lessons, drawing and writing, for instance, can, of course, be assessed in a comparatively short time, but others cannot safely be judged unless the inspector is present from beginning to end.

In the course of a day the inspector should be able to form a sound opinion on the work of two or three classes. In the case of a really good school he may, perhaps, deal with four, as after two lesson periods, together lasting an hour, he may be able to say confidently that the work of a particular class is good. But, if he be wise, he will not found an unfavourable judgment upon two lessons only ; or, at all events, he will not express it in a report. The two can only cover a fraction of a teacher's work, and they can hardly furnish sufficient evidence that would condemn the work as a whole.

Enough has been said to show that a complete investigation of a large school's activities must be a lengthy task. Supposing the teaching of each subject to each class were to be tested, two classes could scarcely be dealt with in a day, and a school of five hundred boys might easily occupy an inspector for over a week. As a matter of fact, a complete investigation of this kind is seldom possible. In practice, it is found that the character of a class' work can be safely inferred from the character of part of it, provided, of course, that the part be properly chosen and of sufficient size.

In reporting on a school the inspector has two obvious considerations to bear in mind. The committee which maintains the school usually wishes for information as to its general character, and wants to know whether the work of any teacher rises above the general average or falls below it. Whilst the committee's wishes are quite reasonable, there is another side to the

question. The teacher has a right to claim that his work should be deliberately judged, and not unfairly condemned. He may also claim, though he seldom does so in so many words, that his fellow-teacher should not be overpraised so as to have an undue advantage in the struggle for existence, or, rather, promotion. The teacher's contentions are not really in conflict with the committee's; on the contrary, justice to him is for the committee's interest as well as his own.

Two precautions which go a long way towards preserving justice are always possible. One is that the inspector should blame no teacher, either directly or indirectly, in a report until he has ascertained what the teacher has to say for himself. Discussion between the two men will often tend to modify an unfavourable verdict, and sometimes to confirm it. It may turn out that the inspector is mistaken as to the work being weak; or that the weakness results from circumstances beyond the teacher's control; or that the teacher does not understand his subject or know how to teach it. The other precaution is that, when the inspector is in doubt as to any serious point, he should obtain a second opinion before he commits himself to a report. Looking to the way in which the Board's inspectorate is organised, this plan is always possible.

As has been already said, reports are not required¹ from the Board's inspector at any stated times. He prepares them, presumably, when the committee asks for them, or when circumstances arise to which the committee's attention has to be called. It follows that the interval between report and report may be very long or comparatively short. On the whole, the number of reports written is much less than of old, but the reports,

¹ As a matter of fact, report writing has almost come to an end during war-time. I describe the system that existed before the war began, and is likely to revive after its close.

on the other hand, are much longer. The Board rarely objects to a report merely on account of its length, and the document not unfrequently enters into considerable detail.

The inspector's report, it may be explained, though it sometimes finds its way into local newspapers, is not written for publication, but for the information of the committee, the school managers, and the teachers concerned. Consequently, the inspector has only to make himself intelligible to those who know something about schools in general, and the particular school to which his report applies; and he need not guard against possible misinterpretations by the man in the street. If the report gets published, the responsibility for publication rests with the persons to whom the document is addressed.

Reports on the educational work of schools are not often challenged; and, in case of challenge, it generally turns out that the inspector has overlooked one of the precautions which have been mentioned. Protests against an inspector's animadversions on school premises are more common. This is not at all surprising. It is often arguable whether an old building should be replaced at once, or patched up, or recognised for a term of years, or recognised indefinitely. Managers of an old non-provided school are often unwilling either to give it up, or to improve it, and they are apt to take one view of the situation, whilst the inspector takes another. When this difference of opinion arises, the Board ascertains the opinion of the committee, and the facts about the premises, and decides as best it can, usually after reference to its architect. The belief that an inspector can "condemn" a school is, I may say, current in some country districts, but it is quite unfounded.

Schools and classes that border on inefficiency are

now rare, and it is seldom necessary for an inspector to report very adversely on a teacher. Still, unfavourable reports are at times unavoidable, and in particular the inspector has the unpleasant task of calling attention to failures in mind, energy, and health, that tell against usefulness in school. Cases of complete breakdown, either physical or mental, though painful to deal with, are usually straightforward and simple from the administrative point of view. Partial breakdowns and, in particular, the partial failures of energy which come on with years, present much more difficulty. Experience seems to benefit some persons, and fossilise others. Some teachers over fifty, and even over sixty, are, I apprehend, quite at their best; if somewhat less energetic than in their youth, they are wiser and better informed. Others are less active, more opinionated, and no wiser than they were at thirty or forty. A teacher over forty-five or so, who has not obtained promotion, has little chance of it; consequently, he is without one motive for zeal. If after thirty years of routine he finds himself an assistant master in a town school, or head master of a small country school, if he has no love of teaching for its own sake, and no very strong sense of duty, he is quite likely to become a spiritless and slack worker. The usefulness of such a man varies as his physical vigour; and, like his physical vigour, declines as he grows old. It is often hard to say how he should be treated. The inspector not infrequently has difficulty in deciding whether he should, or should not, report adversely upon a teacher of this type. The committee with which the ultimate decision rests has a similar difficulty in settling whether the elderly teacher, who has received one or more unfavourable reports, is to be retained or dismissed. If he is dismissed and turned adrift, not only does he suffer himself, but the teaching profession, and the schools which it controls, suffer

indirectly. If he is retained, his scholars suffer more directly. No general rules for determining his case seem possible. I can only suggest that, when it arises, the opinion of more than one inspector should be obtained. Sometimes, of course, a transfer from an arduous post to a less arduous post may be an alternative to dismissal; but this plan would discourage men of certain temperaments, and in their cases might bring about a collapse, instead of warding it off.

Personally, I am inclined to think that administrators do not sufficiently recognise the extent to which impaired health, stopping short of a breakdown, results in poor school work. Or the extent to which it could be cured by periods of rest, or by change of occupation; by light manual labour, for instance. Sabbatical years and homes of industry for teachers are, unfortunately, things of the future.

Something may be said about the composition and organisation of the Board's inspectorate. Its elementary branch—which is much its largest branch—is, of course, the successor of the Education Department's inspectorate, which at one time had a triple organisation. After the passing of the Education Act of 1870, the Department amalgamated the three sets of inspectors which had previously inspected the Church of England, Roman Catholic, and the Wesleyan and undenominational schools. The clergymen, who had inspected the Church of England schools, necessarily constituted the great majority of the whole body. After the amalgamation, laymen only were appointed, and clerical inspectors have been extinct for a good many years.

Before and after 1870, and as long as the Department existed, the appointment of inspectors rested with the President of the Council, who was, if he cared to exercise his powers, the real head of the Department. It used to be complained, and especially by teachers, that the

inspectors obtained their posts through political influence, that they were appointed too young, and that they had no practical knowledge of school work. It is impossible to say exactly what motives actuated the presidents in making their appointments; but the complaint about political influence seems to have had a small foundation. I can think of two inspectors who were closely connected by marriage with well-known statesmen, of a third who was related to a somewhat less celebrated statesman, of two who were sons of local politicians, and of a sixth who was believed to owe his appointment to certain electioneering exploits; and there may probably have been other cases of the same kind. But these officers were only a few amongst a large number. The man who had political influence behind him was exceptional, and most of the Department's inspectors belonged to quite humble and unimportant families. The other complaints were better founded, but both were probably exaggerated. The unsatisfactory inspectors employed by the Department—and such individuals existed—failed, I should say, rather on the moral side than on any other. Either they would not trouble to learn and carry out the necessary examination routine; or they made rules for themselves, and imposed the same, in defiance of the Department's rules, on the schools with which they came in contact. Two or three elderly men, who could be mentioned, acted in a peculiarly absurd and arbitrary way. All this, however, is now a matter of ancient history, and it is useless to dwell upon it.

The Department's inspectors inspected only elementary schools and training colleges; the Board's have also to inspect secondary schools, technical schools and classes, and institutions of various kinds. It follows that the collective duties of the inspectorate, though not necessarily those of any individual inspector, are much more complicated than of old. To meet the new condi-

tions, one organisation has been adopted for England, and another different organisation for Wales. In England there is one set of inspectors for elementary schools, another for secondary schools, and a third for technical schools. In Wales all kinds of schools are inspected by one set of men. Something is to be said for either plan. The Welsh plan has administrative advantages, and may be ultimately adopted in England. An inspector spends his time partly in visiting individual schools, and writing reports upon them, and partly in keeping the Board informed about the educational machinery and conditions of his district. If the first duty stood alone, the English plan would clearly be preferable, for no one man can criticise elementary, secondary, and technical schools from an expert point of view, though he may have a general knowledge of the work of all. The second duty, however, is becoming more and more important; and it is desirable that all inquiries the Board directs in any area should be made by one man, and that each committee should have relations with one inspector, and with one only. In places where all inspections of individual schools might be entrusted to the Committee's officers, the advantages of the Welsh plan seem overwhelming. In other places the educational objections to the Welsh plan can be overcome more readily than the administrative objections to the English. The Welsh organisation does not, of course, necessarily confine an inspector to his district. On the contrary, the inspector should supply his own deficiencies by calling on his colleagues for help. If his own experience of secondary schools is slight, he should, when a secondary school requires careful inspection, obtain the help of some one familiar with secondary school work, and similarly in other cases.

From what has been said, it will be seen that the Board now employs four bodies of inspectors, three for

England and one for Wales. Besides these there are inspectors of schools of art, and one or two other inspectors employed for special purposes. In each of the four bodies there are, naturally, gradations of rank, and each works under the general superintendence of a chief inspector, who is himself responsible to the Board. I believe the Board's treatment of its inspectors to be judicious. It steers a wise course between two opposite dangers. It does not, as the Department at one time did, leave the inspectors without guidance or control. Nor, at all events, in the case of the elementary branch—the only branch as to which I have a right to speak—does it attempt to lay down minute rules for them to follow. The district inspectors of this branch arrange their own work in their own way. They give their own instructions to their subordinate staff; at their own discretion they confer with the education committees, or the committee's officers; and they decide for themselves whether their reports shall be few or many, long or short. There is no fixed rule either as to what an inspector shall do when he visits a school. The Board trusts to his honesty that he will not waste his time, and to his good sense that he will spend it properly.

The Board's inspectors are not all men. The appointment of women inspectors began, on a very small scale, a good many years ago, and the proportion of women has steadily increased since. The inspection of classes in cookery and laundry work is entirely in the hands of women, and the inspection of classes in needle-work is, in a great measure, entrusted to them. Women inspectors seldom inspect schools in charge of men head teachers, and they are never placed in charge of districts; otherwise, they do much the same work as the men inspectors.

In late years great care has been taken in the

selection of inspectors, both men and women; and, to the best of my belief, the political influence, of which there were traces in the past, has had no bearing on the more modern appointments. Whether a similar standard of purity can always be maintained is doubtful. Inspectors must necessarily be appointed by selection, and not on the results of examination; and in the case of selection, the sons-in-law and nieces of cabinet ministers will possibly have some advantage over other persons. To guard against the possibility of favouritism is not, however, a matter of first importance, for the cabinet minister's connections may quite well prove worthy and hard-working public servants. In making appointments the first essential is to secure good sense, good health, and the good temper, which is generally the result of good health. The second, to hold a proper balance between academic qualifications and experience in teaching. The first point is obvious, but about the second there is something to be said. The doctrine that all elementary schools should be inspected by experienced elementary teachers is at first sight attractive, and it is advocated in various quarters. Yet it is open to objections. The man is rare who combines high academic honours with substantial experience of elementary schools. The reasons why this is so are simple. Elementary school teaching in itself cannot attract an ambitious man, and the student who reaches the level of an Oxford or Cambridge fellowship will never become an elementary teacher on the chance of obtaining an inspectorship at the age of thirty-five or forty. The prize must be uncertain, and were it certain, his hopes would run higher. Such a man may, however, accept an assistant inspectorship at the age of twenty-five or twenty-six. Even so he sacrifices something, for the educational service of the State has no prizes comparable to those of law, medicine, and trade; but there

are always men of a high order who will prefer a moderate but safe competence to the chance of a brilliant career. The moderate competency will attract particularly the man who desires time for study or research, and imagines that his official duties will leave him leisure for these pursuits. His imagination, it may be remarked, will generally, though not always, turn out wrong, as the man who can be both a diligent inspector and a serious student must possess unusual powers of work. The two inspectors, viz., M. Arnold and F. W. Myers, whose writings have become well known to the world, were certainly not noted for their diligence as officials.

In short, if the Board wishes its inspectorate to include the best products of the universities, there is only one plan it can adopt. It must catch them young, and make up for their lack of experience by training them under experienced colleagues. I would argue that this is the right policy as regards a fraction, say, one-fourth or one-fifth, of the appointments; and that an inspectorate, containing an element selected in this way, would be stronger than one made up entirely of experienced teachers. The argument rests on the firm ground that high honours are a proof of ability, and that men of high ability are needed on the Board's staff. It is not an undemocratic argument, for the poor but gifted student's road to the university is not difficult, even now, and is likely to be easier in the future.

The force of this argument will be more fully appreciated if it be remembered that the inspectors have to conduct examinations of a somewhat advanced kind. The Board's examination for the teacher's certificate is entirely in the hands of inspectors, and rightly so, as its direction could not be wisely entrusted to persons who have no first-hand knowledge of elementary school needs. Neither could its direction be wisely entrusted

to persons without considerable academic knowledge, though humbler persons can be, and actually are, employed in marking examination papers, and so forth. It seems to follow that on examination grounds, quite apart from all other grounds, the inspectorate should include men of academic eminence.

CHAPTER XV

Improvements and Research in Education

IF it is asked how our schools are to be improved, it is impossible to give a complete answer. Certain suggestions may be made with more or less confidence. For instance, we may think, as has already been argued, that the teaching of history would improve rapidly were better history books provided. But there remain many important points on which no reasoned opinion seems possible at present.

Before passing to the unanswered questions, I will venture one appeal to the people who control the schools, *i.e.*, to the education committees. It is that they should provide every school with a reference library for children, and put reference books of a more advanced kind within reach of every teacher. Children's libraries are to be found in, or in connection with, a great many schools; but they contain too much of Jules Verne, Henty, Kingston, and Ballantyne, and of the books specially written for young girls, and too little of anything else. Standard fiction is not wanting, but there is very little solid reading forthcoming. Nothing is to be said against the fiction, much in favour of it, and the generality of children, like many of their elders, will never read anything else. Unless, however, our schools are failures, there must be children who have a desire for information on history, or science, or technical matters, or geography. We may believe such children to exist in elementary schools, just as in all other schools. Doubtless, they are few, in comparison with

those who are content with the fiction ; but whether they be one in twenty or one in fifty, it is well worth our while to provide for their needs.

Reference libraries for teachers are almost equally desirable. Teachers are not wealthy people, and they cannot be expected to buy for themselves the more expensive standard books. Modern books which have not run out of copyright will often be quite beyond their means ; and, besides these, there are many books which it is wise to consult from time to time, but unwise to buy. An economist may say that public libraries are available. This is true of some places, but not of others ; and supposing there are public libraries, the books therein are not at hand at the moment the teacher wants information.

Some of the unanswered questions which offer themselves are quite elementary. Thus, the proper length of the school day has not been determined by our authorities on educational grounds. It could not, it may be objected, be settled on these grounds alone, for many things have to be taken into account. We have to arrange school times to suit the public convenience, and to prevent children running wild or being improperly employed. Children's employment in domestic duties can only be checked by keeping them at school ; legislation may prevent them from being hired out to employers, but no machinery that we may devise can regulate the tasks they execute for their own parents in their own homes. All this is perfectly true, but, nevertheless, it would be wise to solve the problem on educational grounds alone. The solution would help us to settle time-tables, in cases where what we may call the social factors do not present themselves. It is likely that investigation would point to the shortening of school hours rather than to their lengthening ; it seems probable that many schools do little useful work during the last

hour of the afternoon session, especially in winter time. But, however this may be, it is certain that school hours, as they stand at present, are determined by custom and not on any principle. In this matter we are simply following the rule of thumb practice which our predecessors established in the nineteenth century.

Another doubtful question, which has already been mentioned, is that as to the minimum age at which school attendance should become compulsory. We ought to be able to say whether a child requires formal schooling at the age of five, or six, or seven. Here again, as in the previous case, non-educational considerations have to be taken into account; but here again, whilst we recognise their weight, we ought to be able to give an answer from an educational standpoint. We ought to know whether the child who enters at five has any advantage over the child who enters at six, and whether the child who enters at six has any over the child who enters at seven. Obviously, the child of eight who entered at five, is likely to be in advance of the child of eight who entered at seven; but the output of our schools is not made up of children of eight, and the comparison should be made when the two children reach the age of thirteen or fourteen. Many teachers are of opinion that the child who enters late is at a disadvantage; but in existing circumstances this child is nearly always afflicted with poor health, or vagrant parents, and either way no safe conclusions can be founded upon his school progress. Conceivably, the professional opinion may be correct, but it does not rest on any ascertained data; in this case, as in the last, it is really custom which guides us.

Other important questions which are still open could be dealt with on purely educational grounds. Outside opinion interferes but little with school courses, and hardly at all with school methods. The school, for

instance, is free to decide whether a boy should learn to write before he learns to draw, or learn to draw before he learns to write, or whether the teaching of writing and drawing should be concurrent. At one time the teaching of writing always preceded that of drawing; at present drawing often comes first. Possibly it is indifferent which of these plans be followed. Probably the modern practice may be right; not improbably free-arm drawing ought always to come first of all, as according to the physiologists, the nervous machinery for moving the limb develops before that for using the fingers. Experiments in teaching drawing and writing have been made by various people at various times, but, to the best of my knowledge, no one can speak confidently as to the merits of the alternative plans.

The age at which the teaching of reading should be begun is another open question. On this point, as on the last, the Board's regulations keep a prudent silence; but custom settles it that a child should master the old Standard I. in reading before he is eight, or but soon after. This standard used to be defined in the Department's regulations, as the reading of books not confined to words of one syllable; the one-syllable words in the books might be difficult or easy; the two-syllable words were generally, if not always, words of regular notation, such as butter, basket, mutton, etc. In practice, children begin to learn reading about the age of five. Possibly custom is right, but we cannot be sure of this until we compare the progress made by children who begin reading at five with that made by children who begin at six, or seven, or eight. It is not merely progress in reading that has to be considered, but the general progress of the child. It is possible that early proficiency in reading is a disadvantage to a child, and a school that teaches no reading to its lower

classes is perfectly conceivable, and not to be condemned without a trial.

Another open question concerns secondary schools more than elementary, but it bears on all schools that have to teach a language not spoken in the children's homes. Plenty of children have to learn languages outside their own vernaculars, and it is desirable to know how far the vernacular language should be studied before another language is begun. One theory, that the elements of two or more languages may be learnt concurrently and with little effort, was, it is believed, adopted by the Russian aristocrats. A wealthy Russian prince would, according to tradition, employ a French tutor, an English governess, and a German nurse, in order that his children might pick up French, English, and German, along with their native tongue. If this theory be correct, an infant school in a Welsh-speaking part of Wales ought to divide its language-teaching into a Welsh half and an English half; a secondary school wishing to teach French and German ought to provide plenty of French and German lessons for all its lower classes. It may be, however, that the Russian prince was wrong, and that it is best to learn one language at a time. According to this doctrine, children who speak Welsh in their homes should put off learning English until about ten, *i.e.*, as late as possible, if it is to be mastered before leaving school at fourteen. Similarly the secondary school should not attempt to teach two foreign languages to its younger scholars, even if it attempts to teach one. The study of German, or Latin, should be postponed until a considerable amount of French has been acquired, and French should not necessarily be begun in the lowest class. The two theories seem to be in conflict; a good deal has been said for each, and it is important to know which is sound.

The Board's system of physical exercises, which has been mentioned in a preceding chapter, does not meet with universal approval. It has its friends, but on the other hand we may read, in a recent standard book,¹ that it is, at the best, a necessary evil, that it would be quite unnecessary were child life organised in a healthy way, that as the exercises are taught some little good is done, but that they usually appear boring to both children and teachers. The book goes on to say that children need something more interesting than the Board's scheme, that skipping and dancing would be preferable to it, that vigorous exercises, at least half-a-dozen times a day, and for not more than two or three minutes at a time, have very great advantages, and that it is rather absurd for the central authority to prescribe school exercises in detail. Another book,² by quite distinguished people, goes still further. It makes no reference in so many words to the Board's syllabus, but maintains that gymnastic systems, which delight "certain arm-chair pedants," may be dismissed as fitted for valetudinarians rather than children. Occasionally, it is said, movement cures have great value for the sick and deformed, but the healthy need none of them. Our national character has not been formed by waving our limbs and pulling at ropes in dreary obedience to the directions of a manual, but in contests, struggles, and emulations on the field, the river and the moor. Where doctors differ it is not for a layman to give an opinion, but later on I will suggest a method which might help to settle the differences between Dr Kerr and the Board's medical

¹ "School Hygiene." Newsholme and Kerr. George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1916, pp. 179, 184.

² "Manual of School Hygiene." Hope, Browne, and Sherrington. Cambridge University Press. New and revised edition, 1913, p. 193.

officers, and also some other doubtful points mentioned in this chapter. In the meantime I may say that, according to my own observations, the Board's physical exercises often do seem boring, though they are not, perhaps, "usually" so; also that, as a matter of fact, there is no rope-pulling in the Board's scheme, though there is a good deal of what may be called limb-waving.

On various matters of school hygiene we have insufficient information. Amongst these are prominent the warming and ventilation of schools, two things which have to be considered together. Central heating is generally believed to be unsuitable for small schools. I know of one instance, at least, where it answers quite well in a school for about 120 children, Iwade, in Kent, and probably the belief is quite wrong. But rightly or wrongly, it is widely held, and the managers of small schools depend upon open fires and stoves. The fire-places, especially those of the older types, give bad results; they promote ventilation, but they consume large quantities of fuel, and only warm small portions of the rooms. In rural schools we may sometimes see chimneys which the chimney-sweeper could climb. The newer fire-grates are less extravagant, and rather more efficient than the old ones; but they are not really efficient. Consequently, managers who wish to keep small schools warm usually have recourse to stoves, and here a difficulty comes in. They do not know what sort of stove, or what sized stove is needed in any particular case, and there is no one to tell them. If they apply to the Board, they will receive the negative information that the Board does not approve of completely closed-in stoves. If they apply to the makers, they will receive a catalogue, but they cannot learn from this what article will meet their needs. If they ask for advice, they may be told that No. 18 in the catalogue will serve for 6,000 cubic feet of air space, No. 19 for 8,000 cubic feet, and

so forth. But it is, of course, useless to say, baldly, that a stove of a certain size will warm a room of a certain size. The heat capacity of a room is determined by its shape as well as by its size, by the number of outside walls, the aspect of the school, and the nature of the building. In the case of a top floor or a one-story building, a great deal depends upon the presence or absence of a ceiling. A great deal also depends upon the amount of ventilation demanded. If we do without fresh air, like the Esquimaux, it is fairly easy to keep warm. Without information on all these points, the maker cannot be expected to prescribe the right stove for a room; with the information, he should be able to do so. As a matter of fact, he does not often receive it, and supposing he receives it, he is unlikely to use it in a scientific way. The position will not be satisfactory; until it is ascertained what each stove in the market can do under varying school conditions. Once this were known, the buyers of stoves could set down their own special circumstances on a convenient printed form, and the sellers could advise, with some confidence. There is really need of a special research in physics, which at present it is nobody's business to make. It would be tiresome and rather expensive, but not particularly difficult. The experimenter would have to investigate the two different duties of a school stove. It ought, it is almost needless to say, to be able to warm an empty room up to about 55° , and to maintain this temperature during working hours. During the first operation, doors and windows may be kept shut, as the room will be untenanted. During the second, the conditions will be more complex, as the room loses heat through the three renewals of air per hour that are usually considered necessary, whilst it gains a considerable amount of heat given out by the children. Possibly this amount may compensate for the loss in two renewals out of the three.

We are without sufficient knowledge about open-air schools. The open-air schools that exist are sheds, which keep out the rain but let in the wind. They are interesting institutions; but, as far as I know, they are only attended by delicate children, for whom open air is specially prescribed by a medical officer. Possibly, all children would be the better for an open-air treatment, and the ideal school building should be a row of sheds, facing south. Possibly, a school planned in this way might have no warming apparatus, and be a summer school only. Possibly, it might be provided with warming apparatus, and movable sides to be taken away in summer, and fixed up in winter. Possibly, the right plan is not to shut in the sides or supply heat, except in very severe weather, but to keep the children warm by thick garments and frequent movements. Possibly, again, one plan may be wise in some places, and a different plan in others.

Unfortunately there is nobody empowered to investigate the problems that have been mentioned, and many others. There are people competent to research in education, and many researches have been undertaken; but, speaking broadly, the researches have been inquiries, and not experiments under scientific conditions. The reasons why this is so are apparent. It is tolerably easy to make inquiries, but no one can experiment without leisure and material; and in the case of education the competent man seldom commands both these things.

A certain machinery for research actually exists. As guides to its policy, the Board has whatever department committees it cares to appoint; and as more permanent guides it has its Consultative Committee, and its Department for Special Inquiries; but the help it gets from all these is limited. The Committee has no officials of the Board amongst its members; it is com-

posed of representatives of educational interests. It is a rather cumbersome body. Its members are busy people, whose homes are scattered all over the country ; it cannot meet very often, and, as a body, it cannot do much more than collect opinions. It cannot conduct experiments in education, partly because its members have other things to do, and partly because it has no control over any school. Nor can it direct experiments, as it has no funds, and no staff for the purpose. Nor is it in a position to start inquiries on its own initiative ; its function consists in answering the questions which the Board puts to it. At different times the Board has asked its opinion on a variety of subjects, and on these it has produced reports and made recommendations. It has, for instance, reported on the school attendance of children under five ; on attendance, compulsory or voluntary, at continuation schools ; and on practical work in secondary schools. On the whole, it does work of much the same character as the departmental committees, which the Board, like all other Government departments, appoints from time to time. In dealing with what may be called educational politics, the Consultative Committee has, from its representative character, an advantage over a departmental committee. A controversy between the National Union of Teachers and the secondary schools, for instance, might be better discussed by the Consultative Committee than by a departmental committee. In one case, the representatives of the opposing interests would meet face to face, and probably reach some compromise, which both sides would accept. In the other, the evidence of both sides could be taken, and the arguments of both heard ; but the committee could only speak for itself, whilst the Consultative Committee would, to a considerable extent, speak for the parties to the dispute. On a purely educational question, however, the Consultative Committee could probably do

nothing which a departmental committee could not do equally well, and in a shorter time.

The Board's department for special inquiries and reports has but a minute staff, and this is mainly employed in obtaining information needed for administrative purposes. The department is often asked about the value of foreign and colonial examinations, the status of foreign and colonial educational institutions, and so forth. In its early days, under the headship of the present Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leeds, it published a great mass of literature. Much of this was not the work of the Board's officers. Much consisted in descriptions, sometimes very diffuse, of foreign schools and colleges, and bore but little on British problems. All this had little claim to be called research. Of late years the department has published a good many pamphlets of smaller bulk. The department must not be blamed if it has done nothing in the way of experiment. Like the Consultative Committee it has no control over any school, and its business, which is quite a useful business, consists in describing things as they are.

The university professors of education might seem to be the proper people to discover and discuss improvements in their own subject. Their professorial duties during term time, though doubtless sufficient, are probably not of crushing weight, and their vacations are far longer than those of schoolmasters and officials. It is the business of a professor to make and direct researches, and he can speak with an authority which is denied to less learned persons. The misfortune is that the professor, as professor, has no footing in the schools, and no authority over them. Even supposing him to be a school manager, he can only exercise the authority which the education committee delegates to him. There are two possible exceptions to this statement.

He may become a manager of some residential elementary school, which is not maintained by an education committee; in which case, along with his fellow-managers, he may control the instruction, both secular and religious. Or he may become manager of a non-provided school, in which case, along with his fellows, he may control the religious instruction so far as the trust deed allows. The residential schools, however, number very few, and the second possibility is unimportant.

On the whole, the professor's opportunities for experiment are very limited. He cannot, for instance, easily arrange that in school A, reading shall not be taught to children under six, and that in school B it shall be taught to all over five, and then proceed to compare the results in the two cases. Supposing he wished to try such an experiment, he would have to convince the committee of its advantages, and he would often fail to do this. Yet the experiment might be most fruitful, supposing A and B were similarly situated and similarly staffed, supposing the populations round A and B were not of a shifting character, and supposing the experimenter could devote six or seven years to his investigations. Given the necessary conditions, the results would carry us much further than any amount of speculation about the proper age for learning to read, or than any study of the history of infant schools. This particular experiment, like most others, would not contravene the Board's regulations, and could be carried on without reference to it.

The authorities of the non-university training colleges are still less able to conduct experiments in education. The members of their staffs have less prestige than the university professors, more routine work, and no more control over the schools. The Education Act of 1902 puts certain elementary schools that were formerly in close connection with the older training colleges in

exactly the same position as all other elementary schools. These schools may be described in the official lists as "model" or "practising," but this now signifies only that the majority of the managers are appointed by, or with the concurrence of, the governing body, or the principal of the college.

Teachers may and do experiment in their own schools, but the extent to which they can do so, under strict conditions, is limited. It is hardly practicable to divide a school into two sections, conduct them on different plans, and compare the results obtained. Two different systems of learning to read, or two systems of physical exercise, for instance, cannot well co-exist in one school; difficulties in organisation and staffing will usually prevent anything of the kind. The teacher can say that such and such methods were employed, and that such and such results followed; but he can seldom say positively that certain results were obtained by one method, and that certain other results would have been obtained by another.

The education committees are the only authorities that can sanction experiments on any large scale. The members of the committees are not likely to experiment in person, for they are usually occupied with their own concerns, and most of them are unversed in the details of school work; but they might well entrust systematic investigations either to their own officials, as the London committee has done in various cases, or to outside experts; to the university professors, for instance. The relative advantages of different systems of physical exercises would be one of many suitable subjects for inquiry. Most likely it would be possible to settle this vexed matter by experimenting under strict conditions. Two similar, similarly situated, and similarly staffed schools might be selected; the Board's syllabus might be followed in one of them, and such a plan as Dr Kerr

would recommend in another. The results of the two systems might be collated and compared by two or three experts, say the medical officer of the committee, a university professor of physiology or hygiene, one of the committee's inspectors, and a university professor of education. The two first of these would, naturally, pay most attention to the physical development of the children in the two schools; the two last to the effects, if any, which the exercises produced on discipline, organisation, and mental progress. Definite conclusions which might be of real importance could probably be obtained after three or four years of observation, and still more valuable conclusions in eight or ten years. Inasmuch as all elementary schools have to follow the Board's scheme of physical exercises, this experiment could not be attempted without the Board's consent. But it is scarcely conceivable that this consent could be refused, if demanded by such a committee as that for London or Manchester. The Board, if pressed, could not maintain the quasi papal infallibility of its medical officers, and the superiority of its authorised scheme over all other possible schemes.

There is one other important matter on which a committee could not experiment freely. The law fixes the age at which school attendance first becomes compulsory. Consequently, experiments in raising the age of entry are impossible without legislation. The committee, also, could not shorten the length of school sessions except to a limited extent, for the minimum length of a session is fixed by the regulations. Nor could the committee run a half-time infant school, for here again it would come up against the law. But as to methods of instruction, the committee is absolutely master; and as to curriculum, it is practically master, as the Board's regulations are framed so as to leave any variations possible.

It is, of course, essential that educational experiments should only be conducted by competent and responsible people. The crank¹ must be kept out of the school-room, and the genuine researcher within bounds. The latter has to remember that the primary aim of a school is to teach the present generation of children, rather than to devise plans for teaching the next. But research in a school should be no more incompatible with the children's education, than research in a hospital is with the patients' treatment. Just as the compounder of a new drug administers it with caution and in slowly-increasing doses, so may the inventor of new educational plans apply them with discretion. Supposing, for instance, he believes that reading is begun too early in school life, he would not dream of jumping up the age for beginning from five to eight. He would take short steps. In his experimental school he would raise the age from five to six, or only to five and a half. If the change gave good results, he would again raise the age by six months, and again note the results before he tried any further changes.

The experimenter must also remember that what children can do is one thing, and what they ought to do is another. Much that is possible is inexpedient. A skilful but wrong-headed enthusiast could produce a splendid crop of precocious children; but to do this is no more sound education than the growing of Christmas green peas is sound agriculture. The experimenter will have to consider whether he is forcing on the child, or allowing its healthy development. Consequently, he will not be content with noting the results that he can obtain on a particular day. As far as he can, he must

¹ For warnings against the crank, see Sir James Crichton Browne's articles in "Child Study" for 1914, especially his account of the ingenious plan for forwarding children's progress by electrifying their class-rooms.

watch the children after his experiment is concluded, as well as during its course.

Experiments to be really useful must be on a large scale, for it is only by statistical methods that we can determine what is for the greatest good of the greatest number. Children differ much in mind and body, and conclusions drawn from individual cases are rash. If anything is certain, it is certain that the forcing on of children is a thoroughly bad plan; yet some heavily-pressed children have prospered. J. S. Mill, for instance, attained eminence in spite of his nursery studies in Greek, and other precocious children have grown up to be distinguished men.

Similarly, it is dangerous to argue that the method which succeeds in one particular case ought to be generally adopted. The success may have been due to the personal gifts of the teacher, and not to the method itself. A's "dramatisations" of history, as he conducts them, may give excellent results; so may B's lessons on nature study; or C's methods of teaching reading. But, in other hands the dramatisations may be very dull affairs, or they may degenerate into slanging matches between young Yorkists and Lancastrians; the same nature studies may result merely in the destruction of plants; and C's methods may give no better results than any other methods. A prudent researcher would collect and collate a large mass of evidence, before he committed himself to an opinion that other teachers would do well to imitate either A, B, or C.

The danger that well-advertised methods may be adopted on insufficient grounds, or even imposed on unwilling teachers, is quite real. Possibly there is no one who would make the "dramatisation" of history or morris dancing compulsory; but there are those, unless I am mistaken, who would insert nature study into every school course; and there have certainly been persons

who have believed themselves to be the owners of the only orthodox method of teaching reading, and have not hesitated to say so.

Perhaps I may close this chapter and the book by suggesting that the Board should strengthen¹ its department for inquiries. Though the department cannot experiment, it might, if staffed on a suitable scale, keep a record of educational experiments, and act as a centre of information in a way which is impossible at present. The ideal inquiry department would be a living up-to-date encyclopedia of education, and a living bibliography of such educational literature as is worth study. The officers charged with reading, assessing, and indexing the educational literature of Germany, America, and our own country, would have a weary task. But many things come easy by practice, and a staff could be trained to sort out the useful productions, and star them, just as Baedeker stars the good hotels.

¹ To an extent this has been done, or rather, is being done. An inspector has lately been selected to be a staff inspector of elementary schools, and it will be his business to keep the Board acquainted with the progress of educational research. Technically, however, he will not be an officer of the Board's inquiry department.

APPENDIX I

THE Board of Education's publications, like those of other Government departments, are published through the Stationery Office, and they can be obtained from that office at the following addresses:—Imperial House, Kingsway, London, W.C. 2; 28 Abingdon Street, S.W. 1; 37 Peter Street, Manchester; 1 St Andrew's Crescent, Cardiff; 23 Forth Street, Edinburgh; or from E. Ponsonby Ltd., at 116 Grafton Street, Dublin. They are not, as a rule, stocked by booksellers, but they can be ordered through any bookseller.

The Board's statistical and official year runs from 1st August to 31st July. During the year 1918-19 it published its Report on its work in 1917-18, and the regulations under which money grants, recognition, and so forth will be given during 1919-20. For the years previous to the war period, two volumes of statistics, educational and financial, were issued. The educational statistics have been carried up to 1913-14, the financial statistics up to 1912-13. The Report itself, however, contains sufficient statistics to satisfy most readers.

The Education Department used to issue an annual volume containing its Report, statistics, and regulations, but the regulations could always be obtained separately.

The Board's regulations for elementary, secondary, and technical schools are published separately, and there are also published separately various sets of subsidiary regulations, syllabuses, memoranda, and other documents. No documents, except certain examination syllabuses and a list of official publications, can be obtained direct from the Board.

A student of the Board's statistics—if such a person there be—will find various traps set for him. He must look sharply to the heading of the pages, or he may mistake the figures for England alone for those of England and Wales taken together, or vice versa.

A beginner may be puzzled by the use of the words "department" and "school." Confusion arises from the fact that in ordinary talk the department is spoken

of as a school somewhat in the way in which a soldier speaks of his battalion as his regiment. As a matter of fact, all the children under an independent head teacher constitute a department, and a school may be made up of one, two, three, or even four departments. A department may be for boys only, or girls only, or infants only, or for boys and girls, or for boys, girls and infants, or for girls and infants. The typical rural school is a one-department school, including boys, girls and infants. The typical London school is a three-department school for boys, girls and infants respectively. When a boys' department, the corresponding girls' department, and the infants' department that feeds them are situated on a single site, they nearly always form a single school. When they are in different premises, they may or may not be separate schools. On the whole, there are in England and Wales about 21,000 schools and over 32,000 departments.

The Board's regulations for elementary schools are known as the Code; there is no corresponding name for its other sets of regulations.

The Education Authorities' "Directory," published annually at the office of the "School Government Chronicle," 2 and 4 Tudor Street, E.C.4, is, as its title implies, a directory, and neither a hand-book of statistics nor a guide to the regulations of the Board. It contains, however, a great deal of information; for instance, the names of the officials employed by the committees; the number of schools under each committee; the produce of a penny rate in each case, and so forth. It deals with secondary and technical education, as well as elementary.

APPENDIX II

STATISTICS of an elaborate kind, which could be supplied to any extent, would only encumber a small book like this. But the following figures, which are approximately correct, are instructive. They may suggest caution to the persons who complain that the progress of the last half century has been slow.

(1) Year.	(2) Population of England and Wales (in Thousands).	(3) Child Population of England and Wales between 3 and 15 (in Thousands).	(4) Number of Children Attending all kinds of Ele- mentary Schools Controlled by Department or Board (in Thousands).
1871	22,712	6,316	1,802
1881	25,974	7,308	4,070
1891	29,002	8,015	4,838
1901	32,528	8,277	5,778
1911	36,070	8,737	6,067
1914	6,111

In 1871 about 40 per cent. of the children between seven and twelve, and under 13 per cent. of the children between twelve and fifteen, were attending schools of the kind described in column (4). In 1911 these percentages had risen to about 92 per cent. and 53 per cent. respectively. The non-attendants at the schools described in (4) were made up of children in hospitals, poor-law schools, industrial schools, reformatories, residential institutions not inspected by the Board, army schools, secondary schools, children taught at home, and children at work. In 1911 no children under twelve were exempt from school attendance, but all over fourteen were exempt, except a limited number of blind, deaf, and defective children; a fair number

between thirteen and fourteen were exempt, and also a few between twelve and thirteen.

The following table shows the adult teachers employed in 1870-71 and 1913-14, the last year before war conditions arose :—

	1870-71.	1913-14.
Men teachers certificated - -	6,700	36,966
” ” uncertificated - -	600	4,654
Women teachers certificated - -	6,200	71,766
” ” uncertificated - -	1,500	36,753
” ” supplementary un- certificated - -	...	13,368
Total adult teachers - -	15,000	163,507

This table takes no account of the pupil teachers serving in 1870-71, or of the student teachers, of whom there were about two thousand in 1913-14. It refers also only to “ordinary public elementary schools,” which in 1913 included 40,000 to 50,000 scholars below the totals given in the first table. On the whole, it will be seen that in 1870-71 there was one adult teacher for every 120 children; in 1913-14 there was one for every 37 or 38. Of course, in practice, the size of the 1913-14 classes varied considerably; many were as small as 20, many as large as 60. In 1870-71 a very large share of the instruction was given by pupil teachers, aged from thirteen up to eighteen or nineteen.

It is not worth while quoting any statistics for the abnormal war period. It may be added that for the next few years, school attendance will fall off, in proportion as births have fallen off during the last few years; the birth rate, which was over 28 per thousand in 1900, was under 18 in 1917 and 1918.

APPENDIX III

A Short View of the Chief Education Acts, so far as they bear on
Elementary Schools

THE Act of 1870 provided for the supply of sufficient elementary schools everywhere. It established elected school boards in London, and in all other places where the necessary schools were not provided by voluntary effort. It gave school boards certain powers to make school attendance compulsory.

The Act of 1873 amended the Act of 1870.

The Act of 1876 gave districts, not under school boards, powers to make school attendance compulsory. It forbade the employment of all children under ten, and of all children between ten and fourteen who did not reach certain educational standards.

The Act of 1880 made compulsory school attendance obligatory everywhere.

The Act of 1891 abolished school fees in the great majority of schools, and reduced them in most of the remainder. It provided an extra grant from the State to compensate the school managers and school boards for the loss of fees.

An Act of 1893 made it obligatory on school boards, and certain other authorities in non-school board districts, to provide for the education of blind and deaf children.

Another Act of 1893 tightened up the law of school attendance.

The Act of 1897, which was passed in the interests of denominational schools, provided their managers with special extra grants, which the school boards did not share. These grants, of course, came to an end when the Act of 1902 began to operate.

The Act of 1898 provided for the superannuation and pensioning of elementary school teachers; its provisions are much too complex for description in the present place. It was amended by the Act of 1912.

An Act of 1899 amended and strengthened the Attendance Act of 1893.

Another Act of 1899 gave school boards, and certain other authorities in non-school board districts, powers to provide for the education of defective and epileptic children.

A third Act of the same year established the Board of Education, as has been explained on p. 8.

The Acts of 1902 and 1903 abolished School Boards, and established "local education authorities" everywhere, as has been explained on p. 8.

The Act of 1906 gave the education committees powers to provide meals for children.

The Act of 1907 gave the committees power to provide for the medical inspection and medical treatment of children. This Act was amended by the Act of 1909.

The Act of 1910 gave committees for counties and county boroughs powers to provide boys and girls leaving school with information and advice as to employment.

The Act of 1914 made it the duty of the committee to provide for educating defective and epileptic children, and strengthens the Act of 1899 with regard to them.

The Act of 1918 simplified and strengthened the law of school attendance. It makes attendance compulsory on all children between the ages of six and fourteen, and gives the education committee power to exercise compulsion in the case of children between fourteen and fifteen. It leaves it to be settled between the Board and each committee whether attendance in the committee's area shall or shall not be compulsory on children between five and six. It requires the education committee to provide instruction in practical subjects, *i.e.*, hand-work of various kinds, gardening, cookery, and laundry work. It requires the committee to provide instruction of an advanced kind for promising scholars. It provides for the establishment of nursery schools. It abolishes school fees in all elementary schools. It makes many administrative provisions. It also provides for compulsory attendance at continuation schools.

The School Teachers' Superannuation Act of 1918 establishes, as has been related, a teacher's pension scheme on a non-contributory basis.

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