An Outline of the British Education System

Its Structure, Development and Aims.

Stephen N. Williams

PREFACE

The central aim of this paper is to give the reader, in an understandable form, a clear picture of a most complex and confusing subject—an education system.

The education system of Britain has evolved over a long period of time and consequently there are some unique aspects which require explanation both as to how they come to be in the present system and the value of these ' unique aspects ' at the present time.

The writer has attempted to give both the historical background of the system and its development from the educational point of view. Due to the breadth of this undertaking some sacrifice in depth has resulted therefore the interested reader is referred to the bibilography if he desires to follow up any particular point in more detail.

Information about experimental schools and research projects has been omitted since the aim of the paper is present what is typical in the British education system at the present time.

The United Kingdom, a relatively small area (less than 94,000 square miles) with a population of over 50 million, has exerted an enormous influence on the rest of the world politically, economically, culturally, and educationally. Its population density of over 530 persons per square mile is one of the highest in the world; in Europe it is exceeded only by that of Belgium and the Netherlands. Some analysts have referred to Britain as the unknown isle, since her culture pattern is complex and far from easy to understand. The British have been markedly adaptable and have utilized sea power as a primary instrument to national power both when the island was mainly agricultural and when it became heavily industrialized. Reliance upon a democratic philosophy supported by the common law formed the basis for parliamentary government in other countries, the educational system has mirrored and reflected cultural

change. The educational pattern has been in the process of slow change from a " two-track " to a " one-track " system, the latter beginning in the early twentieth century. Furthermore, the system has been so diverse that some students have referred to it as having very little definite pattern.

The United Kingdom is made up of four countries, so that there is a range in educational growth, just as in the United States. Scottish education is most similar to that of the United States, being " single-track " and quite different from that of England. Since World War II and the Education Act of 1944, however, England has been swinging more in the direction of universal education. The Scottish educational system may be summarized as democratic; the laird's and the laborer's sons go to the same school in the same parish. Some 70 percent of all Scottish children reach the end of the third year of secondary school, and many go on to the university and college.

Before World War II and the Education Act of 1944, British education was quite different from what it is today. Before 1944 British education had at least three separate channels. One was the council school, for ages five to twelve, in which a boy's way was paid; another was the church school. This brought about a dualism of council and church schools. The third type was the " public school," really a private school, for ages five to nine and then nine to eighteen. Money was needed to get into these schools despite scholarships, and the schools catered to an elite group.

During World War II England wanted a more nearly equal chance for everyone. For a time it even seemed possible to deemphasize the church and private schools, but a reaction set in and entrenched interests won. The Education Act of 1944 moved ahead to a certain extent but in general children are still allocated at age eleven plus to one of three schools: 15 percent to the technical high school; and the great mass, 70 percent, to a secondary modern school.

A revolutionary change for the British has been the introduction of the concept of the three A's—age, aptitude, and ability. There has been official recognition that children's needs differ and that training should be

adjusted to their needs. Furthermore, the English are moving in the direction of the idea that where there is talent there should be opportunity.

There is some question as to the wisdom of using age twelve as a selection point for the whole future educational career. Is it too early? The English and the Scotch feel that by the time the child is twelve, by means of careful records and tests they can find out enough about his health, intellectual ability, and parental background to tell whether he will be capable of meeting the high standards of education in the college and university. In other words, the United Kingdom feels that it cannot afford to waste its limited higher educational facilities. At the same time, it cannot afford to waste intellectual ability. The children are the great resource of the future.

In general, Britain has begun relatively recently to move in the direction of universal education, and the trend is still complicated by many factors. The government of Britain is a constitutional monarchy buttressed by a deeply rooted devotion to the individual freedoms that is the very essence of the democratic philosophy of government. This tradition of freedom and local autonomy has found application in what is for Europe a unique balance between national authority vested in a universally elected Parliament and local government organized on the basis of popularly elected county councils. A distrust of strong centralized authority and its bureaucratic impedimenta is at the core of British thought and has had, as we shall see later, a determining effect on some of the most characteristic features of British education. This devotion to freedom and natural leaning toward *laissez faire* in government have had to learn to live with an ever-sharpening social conscience, which, since the reign of Victoria, has found increasing expression in the development of collective responsibilities for social welfare. At the mid-century mark, Great Britain stood as an outstanding Western example of the welfare state, with a system of social insurance and a socialistic nationalization of communications, power, and banking which if transplanted to the United States would have been considered revolutionary in the extreme. Indeed, the

platform of the Conservatives in the Parliamentary elections of 1950 was in many respects to the left of any program that the Democratic party had ever offered to the people in an American election. The Labour party of Britain won a smashing victory in the Parliamentary elections of 1945 on a platform of socialization and, although its drastically curtailed majority in the 1950 elections halted its program short of full realization, the party set a new pattern of nationalization of fundamental services, which most informed observers believe will persist in essence regardless of normal political fluctuations.

Whether the program of nationalization and social welfare of the Labour party would have succeeded in attracting the support it did had there been no destructive war and its aftermath of austerity is one of those questions that is too glibly answered in retrospect. It is true, however, that democratic socialism and its principal exponent, the Labour party, were by no means impotent in the years between the two wars. The privation of World War II provided the spark that ignited a well-laid fire. Indeed, when the mighty Beveridge report, with its eloquent indictment of "Want, Squalor, Disease, and Ignorance," appeared, its recommendations for government assumption of responsibility in combating these evils found their way into the election platforms of not only the Labour party but the other two major parties as well.

The British government has been known, however, to have two faces, one for domestic and another for foreign affairs, and the two have often affected contrasting expressions. In the years just after World War II, the world saw evidence that the foreign policy of the Labour government before a closer relationship to old-line imperialism than to democratic socialism. British criteria for action in foreign affairs have always been based in large measure on the realization that it was physically impossible, given its dense population, for the homeland ever to approach self-sufficiency. The welfare of each individual Briton is inextricably bound up with the lands of the Empire, where the natural wealth of Britain lies, and with trade on favorable terms with the other nations of the British Commonwealth and with the rest of the world. This explains why even

a Labour government, however devoted to cooperative social welfare in domestic affairs, will act very much like a conservative one, even to the point of favoring traditional imperialist policies, in foreign affairs.

The education of a country is usually an outgrowth of the cultural, economic, and social status of a people, subject to a cultural lag. In Britain the lag between aspiration and achievement in the setting up of a coherent system of education has been considerable. In addition, the British have until recently shown a conservatism and resistance to change in education that is even stronger than what can normally be expected in so traditionally conservative an institution as the school. It seems that the tradition of *laissez faire* and the fear of bureaucratic control that is an ever-present factor in government support, coupled with this natural bent toward educational conservatism, outweighed the people's developing acceptance of the desirability of governmental assumption of responsibility for social welfare. For example, England has lagged behind her sister democracies in extending the bounty of public funds to education, preferring until recently to leave a considerable portion of the support of education to private initiative. In addition, it was not until 1947 that the minimum school-leaving age was raised to fifteen, a standard of minimum education that was commonplace in the United States decades before.[1)]

In fact, it is sometimes difficult for the American educator to understand why it has taken the British so long to establish a system of universal public education more in keeping with the democratic ideal of equalization of opportunity. It is a peculiar social and cultural phenomenon that the American finds it quite in the democratic nature of things to have a socialized, publicly controlled and supported school system, but resists the extension of such ideas of public control and support to his economic life, whereas the Briton is more disposed to accept advanced social-insurance provisions and the nationalization of railroads, but is inclined to resist rapid extension of public support and control of education.

1) It must be remembered, however, that this provision for raising the school-leaving age to fifteen was first embodied in the Education Act of 1936 and that only the outbreak of the war prevented its realization.

The signs are unmistakable, however, that in public education Britain is catching up. In successive stages from the Education Act of 1902, through the Education Acts of 1918, 1921, and 1936, and culminating in the revolutionary Education Act of 1944, the government, first local and then national, assumed progressively more responsibility for the support of education as the need for expanded educational opportunity intruded itself more and more into the national cosciousness. This gradual injection of government into education was based only partly on the financial inability of private agencies to expand facilities in proportion to expanding need. It was also the result of a growing realization of the necessity of bringing into some rational order a profusion of variegated schools and school systems which had the virtues that come with freedom to develop in their own way, but were by their very diversity illadapted to provide for the expansion that extended universal education inevitably requires.

Few areas in the world can match the diversity of educational institutions that existed in Britain before 1944. Not only were there private schools and schools run by public authority; there were also private schools that received public support and public schools that received private support. Not only were there primary schools and secondary schools; there were also elementary schools that taught on the secondary level and secondary schools that taught on the elementary level. This diversity was largely a natural result of the characteristic British devotion to local autonomy and private initiative in education and the corollary reluctance of national bodies to impose their will. To speak of a British system of education was an almost impossible task before 1944, so luxuriantly variegated was the picture. So strong is this desire for diversity and this resistance against uniformity and conformity that, even after the Education Act of 1944 attempted to establish a logical order and some standard characteristics for education in England and Wales, British authorities left unmodified in an official information handbook the three basic principles of British education which they felt best described their educational system. These three principles are: (1) the decentralization of administration, (2) the prominent part played by voluntary (private)

agencies, and (3) the fact that teachers are not subject to official direction relating to curriculums, syllabuses of instruction, and methods of teaching.[2)]

It is quite true that, in principle at least, the Education Act of 1944 does not seriously compromise the traditional principle of decentralization and local autonomy in education or the right of voluntary agencies to continue to take as much responsibility for education as they are able. However, the economic dislocation of the postwar period has seriously inhibited the financial ability of private organizations to continue to support their educational endeavors in sufficient degree. As will be explained in more detail later, the way is thus open for subsidy and a measure of control from public sources. Much more important, however, are the provisions of the Act that attempt to establish and implement the principle that there is to be equality of opportunity for all and that all children between the ages of eleven and fifteen (ultimately sixteen) are entitled to secondary education, therby finally removing, in principle at least, the persistent inequity of the traditional dual system. (Under the old program, two conceptions of education—one for the elite and one for the masses—were applied in separate systems of school types with widely differing standards and widely differing cultural and social prestige.) It is these provisions that constitute what is perhaps the greatest break with tradition in postwar British education; their far-reaching effects have been held by some to represent a profound social revolution for the British people. This is all the more significant because the Act was passed while Parliament was under the control of a Conservative majority.

In England, as in other European countries, provisions for formal education had their origin in private initiative. On one hand there were the schools for the children of the social elite, culminating in Britian in the still powerful and influential " public schools " (which are private boarding schools of a conservative, classical cast), and on the other hand there were the schools for the poor, established first by religious bodies

2) *Education in Britain: An Outline of the Educational System*, rev. ed. (London: Reference Division, British Information Services, May 1948), p. 3.

and charitable organizations for the children of paupers. The state entered the picture when voluntary organizations found themselves unable to cope with the rising demand for education for the lower social and economic classes, for whom the schools for the elite were socially and economically unattainable. This dual tradition of a system of schools for the masses separate and distinct from a system of schools for the elite has been a tenacious one in British educational history. Although it is true that progressively more far-reaching steps have been taken in our century to modify the concept of " elite " to include not only the socially but the intellectually elite, the fact remains that, until the Education Act of 1944, secondary education was considered by tradition to be selective in character and not a stage of education within the reach of all. As a result, before 1944 the great majority of children did not go into a secondary school, but received their education from the age of eleven and a half to the age of fourteen in a " senior " division of the elementary school; only 15 percent, as a result of the combination of competitive examinations and tuition costs, passed over into secondary schools. With this tradition the Education Act of 1944 broke completely. The specific ramifications in school organizations, facilities, and curriculums involved therein will be taken up later in this paper, but the Act is mentioned here to illustrate a long-coming—and, some might say, long-delayed—change in the social and intellectual status, as has the pupil (and his class was in the majority) who finished his schooling in the " senior " division of an elementary school. The word has now been removed from the official vocabulary of the school regulations, and all schools encompassing in their student bodies the age levels between eleven plus and fifteen or sixteen as a minimum are to be designated as secondary schools, and, no matter what their programs or purposes—liberal, vocational, or technical—they are to be brought to a stage of parity. A secondary education, then, with all that it implies socially, is to be the privilege of all, not just a few.

There are other, equally important aspects of the dual system. The part played by voluntary or private agencies in the support and control

of many schools remains an important characteristic of British education, although its strength seems to be waning fast in the face of depleted private financial resources, making government support and qualifying government controls increasingly significant with each passing year. There are several types of such schools at all levels, subject to varying degrees of public control and support, from almost complete independence to virtually complete dependence. The picture is so complex that it almost defies orderly analysis, but certain general types can be described, with the caution that exceptions and modifications abound.

Most familiar to students of the history of English education are the independent schools, with the so-called " public schools " at their head. They are classified as independent because they receive no grant of public money and are considered to be outside the statutory system of education. These schools are of many types, with the " great public schools " known best by non-British educators for their venerable traditions and their long and honorable record of having contributed to the education of many of the leaders of British thought and action. Administered by private trusts and private governing bodies, these " public schools," together with the preparatory institutions associated with them, are the most influential of the independent schools, but they are far outnumbered by a profusion of others whose exact number and types seem not to have recently been determined. It was estimated in 1948 that their total number was in excess of 10,000 and that they enrolled at least 400,000 students.[3] Some have entered into contract with local communities to provide some part of the education of young people whose education is paid for out of public funds. Although classified as " independent," these schools are all subject to inspection by public authorities.

All other schools are state-aided and therefore subject to closer public control. Very roughly speaking, these schools can be divided into two main types: (1) those which are directly maintained by public authorities and are therefore under their complete control and (2) those which are

3) *Ibid.*, p. 15.

assisted by public funds and are subject to varying degrees of public control. Of the latter type the most numerous are the denominational schools, about 11,000 of them enrolling in the neighborhood of one third the total school population at the primary level (where they are strongest) in England and Wales. Since 1902, when local government authority was first given control over secular instruction in such schools, these denominational schools, once independent of all government controls, have gradually yielded to the necessity of accepting both the financial assistance and the supervisory control of public authorities. The Education Act of 1944 attempted to fit these schools more closely than ever before into the public system of education. Under the terms of the Act, they are required to meet a specified standard of building and facilities. If a school can meet half the capital cost involved in alteration or in new construction, the local government education authorities will furnish the other half and the school retains substantial rights over the management of its own affairs. If it cannot meet half the cost of bringing its plant to the approved standard and keeping it there, the entire financial burden and much of the control passes into the hands of local government authorities. Since it seems likely that most Church of England and some Roman Catholic schools will be unable to meet these requirements,[4] the control of public authorities over denominational schools will probably increase.[5]

One can therefore conclude that, although the heritage of private control and support—a dominating characteristic of British educational history—remains significant, the trend toward greater public controls will undoubtedly continue, as a part of the growing activity of the British government in social welfare and accelerated by the inability of man private of many private agencies to carry their share of the costs. It is doubtful, however, that this trend will ever reach a point at which it will be funa-

4) Sir Fed Clarke, " Recent Reforms in English Education," *Educational Forum*, Vol. XI, No. 3 (March 1947), pp. 289–294.

5) The effect of this trend on religious instruction will be taken up in the section called " Religious Education in the Schools."

mentally in conflict with the traditional British principle of *laissez faire* in education. Singnificantly enought, this instrusion of public controls is concerned with physical considerations, such as buildings and equipment, rather than with considerations of curriculum and quality of instruction.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

We have seen how a deeply rooted devotion to the individual freedoms has found expression in Britain in an unusual degree of local autonomy in government. This principle of decentralization is nowhere more characteristically embodied than in the administration of education. This is true in spite of the fact that the Education Act of 1944 greatly simplified the structure of education and established a system of administrative responsibility that is far simpler and more direct than that which pervailed before.

The Local Education Authorities. The responsibility of providing schools rests predominantly with the Local Education Authorities, of which there are 146 in England and Wales. These L.E.A.'s, as they are popularly abbreviated, are quite different from the Boards of Education in the United States. They are the popularly elected governing bodies (councils) of the counties and the boroughs, whose educational function is but one of the many governmental services that they perform. Each council establishes an education committee, on which both council members (who must be in the majority) and invited members of the community who are experienced in the fields of education serve. The committee members are not paid for their work, but a permanent paid staff works under them.

The function of the L.E.A.'s is to make provision for a full range of educational opportunity through the stages of primary, secondary, and further education set up under the Act in their areas. Although they are responsible to the Ministry for the conduct of the schools in their district,

they have a very real power. It is typical of the working of British government that the local and national authorities have a working relationship based more on consultation and cooperation than on a hierarchy of power, with both local and national agencies subject to acts of Parliament.

The Ministry of Education. The central authority over education on England and Wales is the Ministry of Education, with the politically chosen Minister of Education, a member of the Cabinet, at its head, assisted by a Parliamentary Secretary, also a member of the government with a seat in Parliament. The staff of the Ministry consists of permanent civil servants divided into two groups—those who serve at the administrative central headquarters and those who acts as Inspectors assigned mostly to the areas administered by the Local Education Authorities.

The function of the Ministry is to supervise the carrying out of national policy in the schools. The Ministry does not maintain, provide, or directly control any kind of school. Yet it exercises considerable power through the inspectional and advisory function of His Majesty's Inspectors. The work of the Inspectors can be classified into three general areas:

1. Inspecting the schools. This consists not only of inspection and report but also of consultation with school authorities and with teachers and, where necessary, giving advice. Before 1944 only state-aided schools were subject to inspection; under the terms of the Act all schools, including the independents, are open to inspection and must conform to minimum requirements.
2. Representing the Minister in local areas on administrative matters.
3. Advising the Minister in matters of educational theory and practice and being responsible for the Ministry's publications on aspects of school practice.

In addition, two Central Advisory Councils, one for England and one for Wales, have been established, which are available to the Minister for advice on educational theory and practice and which may take the initiative in making recommendations to the Minister.

Comparison with the United States and Other Countries. It will be seen

that, although the United States and England share a devotion to the principle of decentralization of educational administration, their ways of working out the principle are fundamentally different. American local Boards of Education have some powers and responsibilities analogous to those enjoyed by the L.E.A.'s but are independent, officially nonpartisan bodies with no governmental responsibilities save the direction of education. The same holds true of state Boards of Education in the United States. Similarly, there is no body in the United States analogous to the British Ministry of Education, with its two political heads, the Minister and the Parliamentary Secretary. In this respect the British system of tying in the national educational policy making with the political party in power is comparable to other European systems, especially those organized with in a parliamentary scheme of government. The United States Office of Education parallels the British Ministry of Education only in its fact-finding and study function. It enjoys no such significant privilege as, for example, that of inspecting and giving advice on the national system of schools.

Finance.[6] Significant, too, is the comparison with the United States in the proportion of support of education expected of local communities. On the average, the American local unit is expected to provide two thirds of the cost of running its schools out of local revenues; this is a much larger proportion than that expected of the average British community, and it paves the way for greater inequalities, which depend on the wealth or poverty of the local community.

Education in Britain is financed partly by Parliamentary grants taken out of national tax revenues and partly by local tax resouces of the L.E.A.'s. The proportion of grants by the national Ministry to the L.E.A.'s varies according to the need and the resources of the L.E.A.'s. In general, however, national funds provide almost two thirds of the total expenditure for education in each L.E.A. area. Of the estimated expendi-

6) The principal source of current statistical material for this and other aspects of education is *Education in* 1948, Report of the Ministry of Education London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, June 1949).

ture of the L.E.A.'s in 1948–1949, the Ministry was expected to grant 132 million pounds sterling out of national funds and the L.E.A.'s were expected to pay out of local taxes the balance of 83 million. In the face of so large a proportion of financial support by the national government, the degree of local control and autonomy enjoyed by the L.E.A.'s is remarkable and attests to the strength of the British tradition of decentralization.

The rise in expenditure for education reflects rising costs and the expansion of facilities called for in the Education Act of 1944. In the decade of the forties, expenditures for education more than doubled and national income did not keep pace with them. The percentage of the national income devoted to education increased from 1.44 percent in 1944–1945 to 2.24 percent in 1946–1947.

PRIMARY EDUCATION

Under the revised organization of schools, primary education covers all provisions for children below the age of eleven. As previously noted, the term " elementary " has been removed from official education terminology by the Act of 1944. The old " elementary " school, as the inferior half of the old dual system of schools, bore the stigma of social and educational inferiority. The " elementary " schools represented in the dual tradition a system of schools apart, reserved largely for those of lower social class and lower intellectual attainment. The British social climate had long developed beyond the philosophy of special privilege embodied in the inherited educational structure, but so tenacious was the structural inheritance that it was not until 1944 that a break was made. This removal of the term " elementary " was therefore symbolic of the intent of the British people to substitute the principle of equality of opportunity in education for the traditional principle of special privilege based on social and economic class. This meant much more than the mere changing of labels, however. It meant enlargement, reorganization, and improvement of facilities, involving not only physical plant and equip-

ment but the training and retraining of personnel and the enrichment and reorientation of curriculum, at a time of painful austerity after an exhausting war. The gap, therefore, between intent and realization, usually considerable in the best of circumstances, can be expected to be particularly large in this case.

Since this reorganization of British education is an outstanding example of the attempt of a people to give belated structural implementation to a long held social principle, the various parts of The British school system are discussed in some detail in this section and those that follow.

Infant and Nursery Schools. Public provision of facilities for children below the age of six has been much more a part of education in England than it has been in the United States. Under the Education Act of 1918, Local Education Authorities were empowered to establish day nurseries for infants ranging in age from one month to three years, and nursery schools for children from two to five. Although the depression that followed World War I prevented the full development of these schools, the desirability of such an extension of the ladder of public education down ward continued to receive recognition, and the Education Act of 1944 required the L.E.A.'s to provide infant-and nursery-chool facilities where they were needed. The facilities are provided either in separate schools (the plan preferred by the Ministry) or in separate classes in the regular primary schools. In 1948 the L.E.A.'s maintained 398 separate nursery schools enrolling 20,343 children (an increase of approximately 12 percent over the previous year), and almost 180,000 children under five were enrolled in the regular primary schools. As was to be expected, the increase in facilities for children under five was usually concentrated in areas where married women with children were employed in industry.

The work of the infant schools has largely developed away from the formal heritage of the three R's handed down from the nineteenth-century infant-school movement, and away from the more formal aspects of the practices of Froebel and Montessori. Emphasis is placed on play and games (especially those that can be conducted in the open air), development of good habits of health and safety, and social activities. Regular

medical inspections and the responsibility of keeping a record of each child's physical and mental growth are features of the program.

Primary Schools. Primary schools are now to funish the education for children from five to eleven years of age, and at eleven plus there is to be a complete break, with the student entering a secondary school. This is the goal of the Act of 1944, but the necessary reorganization will take many years to complete. Before 1944, the elementary school for the great majority of English children extended to the then terminal year of compulsory schooling. Only about 15 percent entered secondary schools after their eleventh year, as a result of tuition costs and a grueling set of Special Place Examinations (to qualify for a relatively small number of "special" openings in secondary schools). These examinations had the dual effect of restricting entrance to secondary schools to the intellectual elite and of restricting the elementary-school curriculum in accordance with the demands of preparation for the examinations. The Special Place Examinations are now a thing of the past, and, although there still remain many unreorganized elementary schools embodying "senior" programs to the age of fourteen and even fifteen, of the pupils in publicly maintained and assisted schools were enrolled in separate primary and secondary schools.

Although the Ministry of Education does not prescribe the exact curriculum to be followed, except in physical education, the following subject areas are ordinarily included: English language, handwriting, arithmetic, drawing, nature study, geography, history, music, hygiene, physical training, handicrafts, domestic subjects, and religious instruction. (For the last-named, see the section on religious education.) However, a publication of the 1931 Board of Education (now the Ministry of Education) emphasizes that "the curriculum of the primary school is to be thought of in terms of activity and experience rather than of knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored."[7] Accordingly, many primary schools have experimented successfully with newer concepts of cur-

7) *The Primary School,* Report of the Board of Education (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1931).

riculum and method, such as the Dalton plan, the project method, and community-centered studies.[8]

SECONDARY EDUCATION

It is on the level of secondary education that England has always shown the greatest diversity and it is on that level that the most far-reaching changes are under way. So great is the diversity and so very much in a state of transition is the secondary-school system that it is difficult to give a reasonably inclusive picture of the present status. The discussion that follows is an attempt to sketch the fundamentals as they are being developed on the basis of the blueprint set down by the Education Act of 1944. Since the minimum school-leving age has now been raised to fifteen (later to be raised to sixteen) and since an education truly secondary in nature is to be the right of every adolescent, not only is the number of facilities to be increased but the nature of the facilities is undergoing basic changes in keeping with the new demands. The main types of secondary schools have been defined, which, under the terms of the Education Act of 1944, the L.E.A.'s are obliged to provide, either as separate schools or in any combination of multilateral or comprehensive schools that local conditions and preferences may warrant. These three types are grammar schools, modern schools, and technical schools.

Grammar Schools. The grammar schools are in the main an outgrowth of the schools that once formed the bulk of " secondary " education and were provided by the L.E.A.'s since 1902. They offer a nonvocational, liberal general education, " especially suited for children with an interest in learning for its own sake." In these schools children up to the age of eighteen (many leave, however, at the age of sixteen after having taken a secondary certificate examination nationally administered by the Ministry) are prepared for university entrance and for the professions. The grammar schools, although less tradition-bound in curriculum and method

8) H. C. Dent, " Progressive State Education in Britain," *Educational Forum*, Vol. X No. 2 (January 1946).

than the independent " public schools," which are described below, are similar to the latter in purpose. Their curriculum and method than the independent " public schools," which are described below, are similar to the latter in purpose. Their curriculum, once officially recognized as the only one other than that of the " public schools " that was worthy of the label " secondary," and still so esteemed by many, is academic and subject-matter centered, with emphasis on foreign languages (if more than one foreign language is offered, at least one is Latin or Greek), English language and literature, history, geography, mathematics, and science. There is, in addition, physical training, some type of manual instruction for boys, and domestic science for girls. In January 1948, these schools, numbering over 1200 units, enrolled more than a half million students. In addition, most of the private schools at the secondary level are of the grammar-school type; some of them are independent and some are in receipt of public grants (see the discussion below on the " public schools ").

Modern Schools. The modern school is destined to become the secondary school for the majority of students up to the minimum school-leaving age. Modern schools are an outgrowth of the former " senior " divisions of the elementary school, and their number has been increasing steadily since the Hadow report, which recommended that the " senior " divisions of elementary schools be reorganized into separate schools or divisions, was made official.[9] In January 1948 there were more than three thousand such schools enrolling just short of a million students. The curriculum is a combination of general education (usually concentrated in the early years and paralleling that of the grammar schools, to make transfers possible) and practical education geared to individual and local employment interests, needs, and opportunities. It not being tied to the requirements for university entrance or to the special requirements incumbent upon a technical or vocational school, these schools have the greatest leeway in developing programs geared to the interests and needs

9) *Education of the Adolescent,* Report of the Consultative Committee, Sir W. H. Hadow, Chairman (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1926).

of their students and their communities. Significant in that respect is the widespread development of school activity known as " local studies." The " local studies," which are actively encouraged by the Ministry, are similar in conception to American " core " programs centering in problems of community life and involving the active cooperation of the community and extensive out-of-school activity. The 1948 report of the Minister of Education[10] goes out of its way to describe some of these activities and to emphasize that those mentioned are typical rather than outstanding:

> Actual examples of such projects undertaken by schools in 1948 include an investigation by a girls' secondary school into the costume, furniture, industry, and habits of the people over a specified period of time. Much of the work was done at the Geffrye Museium in London, with the help of the Curator. Two secondary schools in a midland town " adopted " a farm. In another area a boys' secondary school undertook an ambitious piece of study in connection with an agricultural estate. The work lasted a year and involved a wider use of mathematics and science than is usual in the secondary modern school course. A girls' school made a study of local housing, both new and old, and visits were made to new estates and sites to study methods of construction and the planning of services. With the good will of tenants, small groups of older girls visited occupied houses of various kinds. . . .

The modern schools usually offer, in addition to the general curriculum, some specialized work in the last year of a student's course (at latest). For the girls there are classes in cooking, home management, dressmaking, laundering, needlework, art, etc., and for the boys classes in wood and metal work, technical and machine drawing, physics, chemistry, etc.

Technical Schools. The secondary technical schools are an outgrowth and extension of the junior technical schools, which provided a two-or three-year course for boys and girls after their graduation from the elementary schools, and which have existed since 1905. These schools work

10) *Education in* 1948, pp. 32–34.

in close relationship with the principal industry or business of the community they serve, and they are intended to give a general education related to the future occupations of their students. It is repeatedly emphasized, however, that these schools are not intended to be trade or vocational schools but schools " in which the bias, especially in such fields as the sciences and mathematics, lies toward their practical application."[11] There are as yet relatively few such schools in existence; in January 1948 they numbered a little more than three hundred and enrolled about 70,000 students.

Multilateral and Comprehensive Schools. As an alternative to establishing separate schools for each of the three courses—grammar, modern, and technical—several L.E.A.'s, notably the London county council, have established multilateral schools, somewhat like the American comprehensive high school, in which all the secondary students of a district are taught together. Such schools follow a general core for the first two years, after which the students are placed in the special program for which they are best fitted.

Another alternative is to arrange various types of secondary schools together on one campus so that the advantages of both heterogeneous social grouping and homogeneous educational grouping may be achieved.

The " Public Schools." The " public schools," which are not owned by the state, are traditionally the most respected of all English secondary schools. Predominantly boarding schools, they form the backbone of the English aristocratic educational tradition. Some of the more famous, such as the nine " Great Schools," Charterhouse, Eton, Harrow, Merchant Taylor's, Rugby, St. Pauls's, Shrewsbury, Westminster, and Winchester, all established before the end of the sixteenth century, are familiar to all readers of English literature. Offering a combination of classical and liberal studies aimed at university preparation, and dedicated to the kind of character building and social realism that is expected to build the

11) Mervyn W. Pritchard, " The Challenge of Secondary Education in Postwar England," *Bulletin, National Association of Secondary-School Principals*, Vol. 33, No. 162 (April 1949), pp. 67–73.

English " gentleman," their work has recently been much praised and much criticized. On one hand they are extolled for their character building and thorough intellectual training. On the other hand they are criticized for their educational conservatism and social exclusiveness. In general, the " public schools " are of two types : those which are classified as " independent " and those which receive substantial direct grants from the Ministry of Education. They were made the subject of a comprehensive report by the Fleming Committee in 1942,[12] in which the particular kind of social and scholastic training offered in these schools was extolled as being of very high education value, especially in its emphasis on the humane studies and in its training for responsibility. The Committee accordingly recommended that such training as these schools are especially equipped by tradition and competence to offer be made available to all pupils who would profit by it, regardless of whether their parents could afford the considerable costs of tuition and maintenance. The boarding feature of the public schools was considered to be particularly valuable—so valuable, in fact, that the Committee's recommendation that boarding-school facilities be made available to all pupils who could profit by them was incorporated into the Education Act of 1944. Since the L.E.A.'s have not seen fit to undertake the founding of new boarding schools on any significant scale, they are making increasing use of the device of paying for the maintenance at private boarding schools of selected students from their districts.

The programs of the " public schools," as well as those of the many preparatory schools associated with them, are decidedly conservative, with a tranditional emphasis on the ancient classics, modified less than in other types of British schools by twentieth-century social and economic change. Methods are conservative, with great emphasis on the discipline of periodic examinations. Stress is laid, in addition, on sports and games and education for character. The corporate life of the school community is controlled with a view to the development and cultivation of the

12) *The Public Schools and the General Education System* (London : His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1944), pp. 27–257.

qualities that make a gentleman.

It is significant for an understanding of British educational philosophy to note that, in spite of the criticism heaped upon them, the public schools have not only retained the respect accorded them traditionally by the British people but have become the recipients of increasing public financial support.

Problems of Transition. Many more years will be required for the satisfactory application of the blueprint for secondary education set down by the Act of 1944, with its provision for an unprecedented expansion of facilities and for the inclusion of many diverse elements in one coherent pattern. A major problem is still the establishment of seprate secondary schools in place of the upper years of the old-line all-age elementary schools. In January 1948 there were still over eight thousand such undifferentiated all-age schools enrolling over a million pupils. One of their greatest problems was that of providing an extra year of education for the fourteen-year-olds who were for the first time required to stay in school until the age of fifteen. The quality of this extra years' schooling was admittedly not as high in the all-age schools as it was in the secondary schools,[13] possibly because of the nonsecondary orientation of the teachers in the all-age schools. A more serious problem, stemming from the same fundamental causes, is to equalize in effect as well as in law the professional and public esteem accorded the various types of education now called secondary. There has been the inevitable friction between " old " and " new " secondary schools and secondary teachers. True parity of standards and esteem cannot be achieved by law alone, and one of the great educational tasks of the leaders of English education is to break down the still prevailing hierarchy of esteem ranging from the traditionally respected " public school " at the top down to the lowly senior elementary school at the bottom.[14]

13) *Education in* 1948, pp. 9–11.

14) Sir Fred Clarke, " Recent Reforms in English Education," *Educational Forum*, Vol. XI, No. 3 (March 1947), pp. 289–294.

FURTHER EDUCATION

The term " further education " is used by the British to describe all education beyond the minimum required by law. It includes postsecondary vocational education as well as cultural and recreational education for young people and adults beyond the minimum school-leaving age. The L.E.A.'s have for some time had the power to establish and administer further education, but under the terms of the Act of 1944 they are enjoined to provide such education in a manner and extent approved by the Ministry. In postsecondary vocational and technical training, there has been expansion since the end of the war as the result of a realization that public and private provision for such training has lagged far behind that prevailing in the United States; in public postsecondary and adult recreational and social education, the plans of the British are ahead of those prevailing in most countries.

According to the law, all young people must receive some form of education to the age of eighteen, and educational facilities must be made available to all persons above that age who desire them. All young people below the age of eighteen who are not in full-time attendance at some school must receive part-time education. In addition, adequate vocational, cultural, and recreational facilities must be developed by the L.E.A.'s in cooperation with one another, with the universities, and with private agencies which have been active in these fields.

Vocational Education. Three main types of postsecondary vocational education are in operation: (1) full-time training in technical and commercial colleges and art schools; (2) part-time day courses, for which young people are released by their employers; and (3) evening classes at colleges and evening institutes. Of these three types, the last has been attended by most students, but the number of students taking advantage of full-time and part-time day courses is increasing with the evident approval of the Ministry and responsible representatives of industry and business. The L.E.A.'s have been required to submit to the Ministry

for approval plans for establishing and maintaining vocational training within the reach of all who need it, so that it will be financially possible for anyone to " equip himself for employment without the need to resort to evening classes after a hard and possibly exhausting day."[15]

Assisting in the evaluation of existing provisions for vocational education and in the planning of new provisions are regional advisory councils, regional academic boards, and a National Advisory Council on Education for Industry and Commerce, which is comprised of seventy-two members chosen partly by the regional advisory councils and partly by the Ministry and representing universities, L.E.A.'s, teachers, employers, and employees. The effect of these bodies has yet to be seen; the National Advisory Council has been meeting only since June 1948. The statistics for 1948, however, show a significant increase in both full-time and part-time day enrollments. Most crucial is the need for buildings and equipment, which were already inadequate in 1939, before the devastation of war decimated facilities.

County Colleges. The Fisher Act of 1918 required that every child between the ages of fourteen and eighteen attend a part-time continuation school, but this provision, along with others, turned out to be far ahead of both the educational ideas and the financial resources of its time, and it was finally discarded. The provision for part-time schooling up to the age of eighteen was retained by some L.E.A.'s, however, and was rearmed by the Act of 1944. The Act called for the creation of county colleges, which are expected to cater to the needs of approximately a million and a half students. The schools are to be attended one day a week for forty-four weeks each year, or the equivalent. The curriculum is expected to be of a general and avocational nature, with some additional training to help the students in their vocations. Here, too, the need for new buildings and equipment is seriously holding back the realization of the plans; however, the purpose of the provision and the nature of the work being carried on and contemplated make the county colleges one of

15) *Education in Britain.*

the most forward-looking and interesting developments in English post-war education.

Youth Service. The Youth Service, concerned with the leisure activities of young people between fifteen and twenty, is a joint enterprise of the Ministry and the L.E.A.'s and is assisted by voluntary organizations. The Service assists many local youth clubs with money, facilities, and counsel, and it is now considered an integral part of the educational system. An idea of the importance of the Service can be derived from the fact that, in spite of shortages and the higher priority that had to be given to other activities, the L.E.A.'s expended £1,550,000 on it in 1948.

Adult Education. Adult education is another activity in which the L.E.A.'s assume primary responsibility, with much moral and some financial support from the Ministry. Activities are varied and many, including courses given by universities in extension programs and at special summer schools, by units of the Workers' Educational Association, and by more than twenty residential colleges. In 1948 the Workers' Educational Association alone sponsored almost six thousand courses with an attendance of more than 65,000 students.

The Workers' Educational Association deserves special mention as a significant force in adult education. Founded in 1903 as a means of educating underprivileged workingmen in the ways of social action aimed at improving their lot, it has steadily increased the scope of its activities. Its courses include a broad range of fields, from economics to the fine arts; about 12 percent are intensive tutorial classes that make unusually high demands of the students. Significantly enough, the proportion of manual laborers among the students, once dominant, has decreased from one in three in the decade before the war to one in five in 1949.[16]

16) S. G. Raybould, *The Next Phase* (London: Workers' Educational Association, 1949). This book, written primarily for students and members of the W.E.A., is summarized and reviewed in "The Case for the W.E.A.," *London Times Educational Supplement*, July 15, 1949, p. 489.

THE UNIVERSITIES

Britain, in sharp contrast with other European countries and with the United States, has no state universities. The twenty universities in England and the five in Scotland and Northern Ireland are autonomous institutions, subject to no significant control but their own. This autonomy, which embraces all aspects of university life—appointments, scholastic requirements, curricular and methodological policies, disbursements of funds, etc.—has not been compromised by increasing government subsidies in the last decade. At the present time, more than half the income of the universities is in the form of Parliamentary grants, and another considerable portion stems from the L.E.A.'s.

In following the discussions on current university developments in British journals, one finds the leitmotif of government support without government control affirmed so absolutely by educational, government, and lay spokesmen that one feels oneself to be in the presence of a firmly rooted principle which the dislocations of war and its aftermath have not weakened. No set of educational institutions—indeed, not set of institutions in the entire British social structure—illustrates so well this principle of paying the piper without dictating his tune.[17]

The universities in Britain fall into several distinct categories. Most familiar to people in other lands are the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, both dating from the twelfth century and both unique in their organization and practices, not only in the Educational world at large but in Britain as well. They are organized in a number of relatively small residential colleges and societies with their own buildings and staff.

17) (a) *University Development from* 1935 to 1947, Report of the University Grants Committee (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1948). This report documents the increasing dependence of British universities of financial support from the government and the continued autonomy of the universities.

(b) "The Universities and the Nation," *New Statesman and Nation*, December 11, 1948, pp. 516–517. A discussion of the implications of the University Grants Committee report mentioned above.

In addition, there is a central university in both Oxford and Cambridge which offers lectures open to all students. The method of education by which Oxford and Cambridge are most widely known is the tutorial system of individual instruction, which remains without a significant, comparable counterpart in other countries. Associated mainly with instruction in the arts, the method consists of weekly conferences with a tutor based on essays prepared by the student on some designated aspect of his required course. This emphasis on individual contact between tutor and students, reinforced by the inevitable closeness of contact that results from residence in a small academic community (the average number of students resident in an Oxford college is 170, in a Cambridge college, 270), is a function of the time-honored objective of personal character development, which, of all objectives, British educators have always put first.

A second general category of institutions of higher education is represented by the provincial or civic universities in England, the four Scottish universities, and the two universities in Wales. These are largely unitary in pattern rather than loose federations of constituent colleges, nonresidential (with the exception of St. Andrews and Edinburgh), and set in large centers of population from which they draw a high proportion of their students and to which they are bound in increasingly intimate bonds of community contact.

The University of London alone comprises the third category. It is both a federation of colleges and schools, about thirty in all, and an examination and degree-granting body for these constituent schools and for " external " students from all over England and overseas whose home schools do not enjoy the degree-granting privilege. Its constituent schools embrance a large variety of types—for example, the Imperial College of Science and Technology, an institute of education, a number of medical schools, a school of economics, and several general colleges such as University College and King's College. Among the institutions which offer university-grade instruction but do not grant degrees, and whose students receive degrees from the University of London, are local

university colleges in cities and towns (Southampton, Exeter, etc.) which someday may become full-fledged universities along the lines of precedent set by such former university colleges as the Universities of Birmingham, Manchester, and Nottingham. (The newest of these, the University of Nottingham, changed its status from university college to charactered university in 1948).

A fourth category includes the many institutions of university grade serving the fields of technology and agriculture, which are predominantly independent of the universities and grant their own degrees and diplomas. The question of whether such institutions should be closely related to specific universities (as is the Manchester College of Technology to the University of Manchester or an American college of engineering to a comprehensive university) or separate (as is the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in the United States) has been a subject of lively controversy for many years, especially since the postward need for technical training has made expansion in this field acutely necessary.[18]

Enrollment and Admissions. Much has been made of comparative enrollment statistics which seem to show that the proportion of the population attending institutions of higher education is about nine times higher in the United States than in Britain. Such statistics are misleading for several reasons. First and foremost is the fact that the British secondary-school course is longer than the American and, consequently, the first semesters of the American college are comparable—chronologically speaking, at least—to the upper forms of the British secondary school. Allied to this circumstance is the fact that in the American college only one out of every two entering freshmen will earn his degree, whereas most of the students entering British universities succeed in earning their degrees. Reasons for the lack of " wastage " in British as compared with American universities lie in differences of kind rather than in quality of student population and in differences in courses offered. The British university,

18) " The Case for the Technical University," *London Times Educational Supplement*, January 20 and 27 and February 3, 1950. A series of three articles by a number of authorities analyzing the many factors involved in this problem.

with its rigid and exacting academic curriculum, its limited range of offerings, and its tendency to favor intense specialization, attracts a smaller proportion of secondary-school graduates than does the much more comprehensize American college or university, with its emphasis on general education and its wide choice of areas of specialization. In the United States the student enters college expecting guidance as to his academic and professional choice, because that is one of the objectives which a college education is expected to fulfill; the British student entering the university, however, has already made his choice and, since he has been selected on the basis of exacting entrance-examination requirements, is reasonably sure to persist in his goal of graduation.

Although the more exclusively academic nature of British higher education will in all probability prevent expansion on a scale comparable with that in the United States, there has been spectacular development in the years following World War II. Enrollment has more than doubled, and the pressures resulting from the beginning of equalization of opportunity at the secondary level on one hand and the ever-increasing need for trained people in the higher professions on the other hand will inevitably result in trends toward even higher enrollment in the second decade after the war. It is significant, however, that, in the face of pressures toward larger enrollments, the average American university looks happily toward a building program, a larger staff, and the opporutnity to serve a greater number of students, whereas its British counterpart is disposed rather to see in expanded enrollments dangers to the maintenance of proper intellectual standards, and looks forward hopefully to a " stabilization " of enrollment at a figure nearer to the prewar status, so that the proper traditions of scholarly intimacy can be restored.

Admission to a British university is by examination only. Beginning in 1951, the basis is the " general examination " administered by university examining boards to students finishing their secondary preparation. This examination may be passed at three levels—ordinary, advanced, and scholarship, and the universities will require a significant proportion of the student's grade to be at the advanced level, in addition to requiring

a certain distribution of subject matter areas.[19]

Curriculums and Standards. Typical of the British universities, and peculiar to them, is the offering of two types of courses in the faculties of arts and science—an honors course and a pass, or general, course. The honors course provides for intensive specialization pursued on a high and exacting standard. The pass course provides for more general studies pursued with somewhat less intensity and on a somewhat lower standard. Even though a bachelor's degree is offered for both, the pass degree compares roughly with the American bachelor's degree, whereas the honors degree is roughly comparable in standards and kind of attainment to a superior master's degree in the American universities.[20]

Universities in England favor the honors degree, and the majority of students enroll and succeed in honors; the Scottish universities, on the other hand, favor the general degree, with many more students enrolling in the general than in the honors course. The question of intensive specialization versus a broader competence has caused lively controversy among British educators in the last decade, much as the issue of general education versus specialized education has been in the forefront of academic discussions in the United States. The issue is complicated in Britain by the fact that narrow specialization has traditionally been linked with the academically more desirable honors degree, whereas a more integrated, broader pursuit has suffered from being linked with the less desirable pass standard. It has been felt by many that the intense specialization of the average honors program is achieved at the expense of broad cultural and citizenship development. Proposals and experimental programs to

19) Prior to 1951, university examining boards administered two separate examinations. The first was the School Certificate Examination, taken at the age of fifteen or sixteen and regarded as a school-leaving examination. The second was the Higher Certificate Examination, taken at the age of seventeen or eighteen and regarded as a qualifying examination for the professions and for university entrance. Both were replaced in 1951 by the single " general examination " mentioned above.

20) I. L. Kandel, " Great Britain and Northern Ireland," in *Universities of the World* (Washington: American Council on Education, 1950), p. 439.

meet this challenge include (1) establishment of new degree courses, both at the honors and pass level, in such broad fields as " Philosophy, Natural and Human " and (2) provision for courses in the humanities and social sciences for science students and courses in the method and function of scinece in the modern world for arts students.[21]

World War II and its aftermath made the British leaders actuely aware of the need for greater numbers of trained people in the scientific professions, and led, as in the United States, to a boom in the fields of natural science and technology, with the inevitable accompanying decline in relative popularity of the humanities. This circumstance, in a land of dominant humanistic traditions in higher education, has had the impact of a revolution on the universities of Britain. The problem of achieving university programs in keeping with national needs of trained professionals, without unduly sacrificing cultural breadth and citizenship objectives, has become an issue of national concern and has found expression even in debates in Parliament. The University Grants Committee, which disburses the national funds now forming a dominant proportion of the British university budgets, has been most careful not to earmark the bulk of its disbursements, preferring, in the familiar British tradition, to leave such decisions to the universities themselves. There is real question, however, whether more central planning will not inevitably develop and compromise to some extent the unique autonomy which the universities have traditionally enjoyed. At present certain funds are earmarked to encourage development in certain directions, especially in the fields of science and technology. Whether this is indeed a temporary, emergency expedient, as has been officially indicated by the University Grants Committee, or whether it will be found necessary to continue such earmarking with its accompanying effect on the determination of which types of program will flourish and which will find themselves hard put to survive, remains to be seen. The problem is similar in some respects to the one brought about in the United States by federal research

21) Ernest Barker, *British Universities* (London : Longmans, Green & Company, 1946), pp. 18–19.

grants in the applied sciences, which stimulate university activity in technical fields while the humanities, faced with this competition from a suddenly affluent academic neighbor, find themselves on the defensive.

The Students. Traditionally, the universities in England belonged to the private system of schools rather than to the state aided system and recruited their student body largely from those classes that were served by the private schools. Although this did not mean that the universities were the exclusive preserve of the aristocracy, it did mean that the larger segment of the population was, by the existence of the dual system of schools, prevented from obtaining the advantage of a university education for its able sons and daughters. To be sure, scholarships have always been available, and the scholarship examinations have always been open to all those with the necessary qualifications; yet the graduates of the private schools, especially the hallowed " public schools," were always in a favored postion because of the orientation of their schools toward university preparation. However, with the equalization of opportunity at the secondary level and with the attainment of educational dignity by the state-aided schools, more and more students from the stateaided schools are finding their way into the universities, and much of the future expansion of enrollment will consist of such students. It is the intent of British educators and government leaders—not without opposition, however—to make higher education available to all on the basis of interest and ability alone. The fruition of this ideal must of course await a full realization of equality of opporutnity at the secondary level, but efforts are being made to remove at least a part of the serious economic barrier that stands in the way of university education for sons and daughters of lower- and middle-income groups. In 1945 about half the students in the universities were " assisted " in one way or another; it has been proposed that financial assistance to two thirds of the students would more nearly approximate the need. Typically enough, the logical next step—to make the universities free to all, using public funds to pay the bill, has not been seriously considered. The British fear of government domination and the uncompromising devotion to private, institutional autonomy

have effectively inhibited any such proposals.

Additional Problems. With its universities, as with its entire program of educational endeavor, England is plagued with an actute shortage of the materials—both human and otherwise—needed to put its ambitious plans into operation. There is a severe shortage of university facilities throughout the nation, and even where money is available the competition for building materials and labor with the even more crucial need for housing is frustrating. In addition, there is a severe shortage of teaching personnel. Partly because faculty salaries are low in relation to salaries in other professions, there has been a serious reluctance among university students to enter into a teaching career. It is hoped that the new salary scales established in March 1964 will increase the number of worthey aspirants to a university career.

Since the need for trained persons in the fields of science and technology is greater than the available supply, there is no problem of post-university unemployment for students specializing in these fields. But the problem of unemployment among arts graduates is serious. A movement toward steering them, after additional training, into the public services, business, and industry is being considered. However, in contrast to the United States, where B.A.'s are increasingly welcome in these fields (a New York department store recently advertised for Phi Beta Kappa's and go them!), in England it will take time before certain prejudices against the academic tradition can be eliminated.[22)]

SOME CONCLUDING GENERALIZATIONS AND COMPARISONS

The British blueprint for education, if fully realized, will give Britain for the first time in its history an organization of education closely consistent with the democratic ideal of equality of opportunity regardless of economic and social circumstances. That progress in carrying out the

22) I. L. Kandel, *loc. cit.*

plan has been limited is due primarily to the financial difficulties of a nation faced with the problems of reconstruction in an insecure postwar world. Until the plan is realized, British education will continue to present a confusing picture of many school types, based largely on the traditional " dual-track " system, which separated the education of the elite from the education of the masses, to the social and cultural detriment of the latter.

This change to a socially and educationally more equitable " single-track " system is still in a very early stage, but even in its beginnings it is making itself felt not only as a move that will require enormous expansion in facilities and teaching personnel but as a profound social revolution which is elevating the educational level of singnificant portions of the population whose opportunity was once undemocratically limited. This equality of opportunity in education is a long-delayed outgrowth of the general movement of social reform which reached its climax in the controversial program of nationalized social insurance and nationalized utilities of the postwar Labour government. However, this basic reform in education has the support of all major parties and was made into law during the tenure of a Conservative government. It can be assumed, therefore, that the equalization of educational opportunity, with its accompanying revolutionary expansion and reorganization, is an ideal accepted in principle by the British people without significant opposition.

In contrast to the continental-European pattern of centralization, the British favor a decentralized education with maximum autonomy at the local level. This is a natural result of the typically British strength of local government. In spite of the fact that almost two thirds of the public education comes from the national government, the primary control of education rests with the popularly elected Local Education Authorities, with the national Ministry of Education exercising general powers of inspection and charter. An extreme example of support without accompanying control is the relationship between the national government and the universities, which maintain their traditional freedom from outside control even though they are becoming more and more dependent on

national funds.

As in the United States, private shools, both denominational and nondenominational, enjoy coexistent status with the public schools. In Britain, however, nonpublic schools may receive financial support from public funds, either directly or through student scholarships. Once dominant in numbers and in prestige, many of these private schools are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain themselves, and some are being forced to yield much of their financial independence, and in some cases a share of their autonomy, to public authorities. All schools, public and private, as in the United States, are subject to standards regulated by public authorities.

Religious instruction, safeguarded by conscience clauses, is a part of all public education and is regulated by an " agreed " syllabus set by religious authorities. This is in the tradition of countries with an official state religion, and in contrast to the United States, where religious instruction, owing to the strict separation of church and state, plays a very small role in the public-school curriculum.

Through the establishment of the county colleges, unfortunately still largely on paper, Britain is embarking on a promising experiment in part-time compulsory education beyond the full-time compulsory education limit. In their emphasis on avocational education, civic education, and education specifically geared to the individual's needs, and in their planned close relationship to the community, these institutions will occupy a place unique in the educational world.

Britain shares with the rest of the world an urgent need for trained persons in the higher branches of technology and applied science. This has resulted, as in the United States, in an unprecedented expansion of enrollment in institutions of higher education and a crucial taxing of university resources, both human and material. Of the problems arising from this expansion, the following seem to be felt most seriously: (1) the problem of maintaining the traditional high standards of student achievement, (2) the weakened status of the arts and the bleak employment outlook for arts students, (3) the training and recruitment of teach-

ing personnel, and (4) the problem of the threatened replacement of the small, intimate academic community and its most famous manifestation, the tutorial method, by large classes and an impersonal relationship between faculty and students. The average British university comumnity looks askance at the large-scale educational enterprise that is becoming so much a part of the American scene.

The participation of the lay public in education is high. Programs of adult education flourish and are administered partly and often conjointly by the L.E.A. 's and voluntary orgaizations, such as the Workers ' Educational Asscciation. In addition, to judge by frequent debates in Parliament, the establishment of many government educational comissions, and the frequency with which educational news and issues are considered in lay publications, there is abundant evidence of a growing public interest in matters educational. Conversely, members of the educational profession are participating increasingly in civic affairs.

It is evidence of high democratic purpose indeed that, in the face of tragic problems of reconstruction and the necessity for stringent austerity, Britain is embarking on an ambitious plan for the democratization of its school system. To be sure, it had been lagging in making educational application of its philosophy of social welfare, but its all-out effort to catch up is exciting the admiration of democratic peoples.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BAKER, E., *British Universities*, Longmans, Green, London, 1946.

" The Case for the Technical University," *London Times Education Supplement*, Jan., 20 and 27 and Feb. 3, 1960. A series of three articles.

CLARKE, Sir Fred., " Recent Reforms in English Education " *Educational Forum*, Vol. XI, No. 3 (March 1947)

DENT, H. C. " Progressive State Education in Britain ", *Educational Forum*, Vol. X, No. 2, Jan. 1946.

EDUCATION OF ADOLESCENTS, Report of the Consultative Committee, London 1926.

EDUCATION IN BRITAIN, AN OUTLINE OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM, rev. ed. London, Reference Division, British Information Services, May, 1948.

EDUCATION IN 1948, Report of the Ministry of Education, London, June 1949.

KANDEL, I. L. "American and English Education Compared", *Educational Forum*, Vol. XVII, Nov. 1946.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND GENERAL EDUCATION SYSTEM, London, His Majestie's Statioery Office, 1944.

PEDLEY, R. *THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL*, Pelican, London, 1963.

PRITCHARD, M. W. "The Challenge of Secondary Education in Postwar England", *Bulletin, National Association of Secondary School Principals*, Vol. 33, No. 162 April 1949.

RAYBOULD, S. G. *The Next Phase*, London, W.E.A., 1949.

"The Universities and the Nation", *New Statesman and Nation*, Dec. 1948.

UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT FROM 1935 *TO* 1947, Report of the University Grants Committee, London, 1948.