DEMOCRACY
IN SCHOOL LIFE

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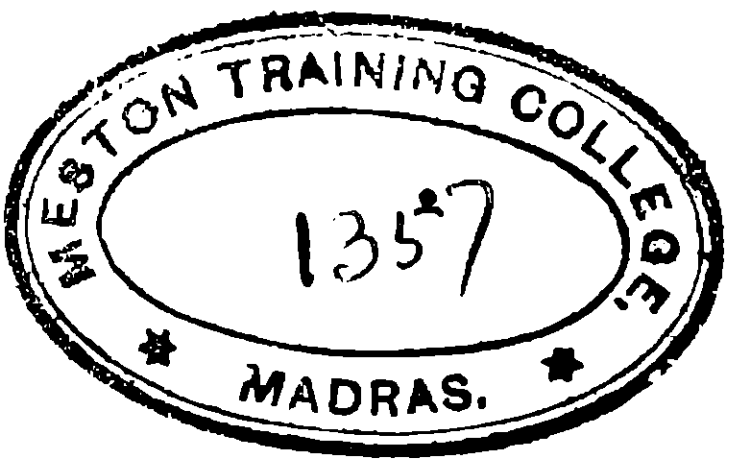
THE ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATION
IN CITIZENSHIP



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FOREWORD

THIS Report, dealing with the democratic way of living in schools, is the work of the Schools Committee of the Association for Education in Citizenship. The members of that committee during the relevant period were:

GORDON BARRY, Secretary of National Association of Head Teachers.
MISS M. DAVIES, Headmistress, Streatham County Secondary School.
MISS R. M. FLETCHER, Senior Woman Inspector, L.C.C.
MISS DOROTHY FOULGER, Schools Department, B.B.C.
B. A. HOWARD, Headmaster, Addey and Stanhope School, New Cross (*Chairman*).
MRS. EVA M. HUBBACK, Principal of Morley College, Hon. Sec. of the Association for Education in Citizenship.
DR. B. E. LAWRENCE, Chief Education Officer for Essex.
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L. F. WALLIS, Headmaster, Willesden County School.
MISS M. WISE, Headmistress, Campbell Secondary School for Girls, Barking.
B. A. WORKMAN, Educational Department, Longmans, Green & Co.

The members sat as individuals and not as representatives of the various bodies with which they were connected. It will be seen, however, that they did, in fact, represent a considerable cross-section of educational experience. But the committee was very conscious that even its combined experience fell far short of the needs of the inquiry and so it launched a prolonged *ad hoc* investigation of schools. It wanted to know what sort of training the schools were in fact providing; how far it appeared to be successful and how far it needed reconsideration. It wanted, in other words, to know the facts; and it publishes this Report in the belief that many other teachers, and indeed members of the general public, would like to know what the facts are. It had the advantage of the help of Dr. Viola, who had

previously visited some 200 schools in England and abroad, and who visited many more on behalf of the committee; at a later stage of the survey it had also the assistance of Mr. James Hemming, now Research Secretary of the Association. Mr. Hemming has also collated the material and written the Report.

Between them Dr. Viola and Mr. Hemming visited seventy-six schools on behalf of the committee. They acknowledge with thanks the substantial facilities accorded them, and they desire the committee to put on record the fact that they met with nothing but courtesy and friendliness everywhere.

When twelve people combine to write a Report of some 55,000 words it may be assumed that no one of the twelve will be able to endorse every comma, every sentence, or even every argument in the Report. Such a degree of unanimity is (fortunately) not found in a democratic committee. But the members of the committee give a general assent to the arguments, and a complete assent to the spirit, of the following pages; they feel that they have learned a good deal from each other and still more from the schools which made their experience available; and they commend their Report to the consideration of all those who are anxious that the schools shall make their maximum contribution to education for life in a democratic community.

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INTRODUCTION

THE Association for Education in Citizenship, under whose auspices this book has been written, has been in existence for some twelve years. Education in citizenship itself has a much longer pedigree. Traces of it can be found throughout the ages. Plato, indeed, wrote a book about it. But, as we shall argue in this chapter, it has acquired particular importance in the special circumstances of our time. And if this is coming to be recognized in Great Britain, it has been recognized still more fully elsewhere.

In Germany, for example, under the Nazi régime, the nineteen-thirties saw a kind of education for citizenship, a training, or rather a conditioning, carried out with all the resources of the State behind it. Everything was subordinated to it—the physical and mental welfare of the child; family relationships; the culture of a whole nation; even the facts of history. When those facts did not square with all the theories of the totalitarian state (Teutonic Model, 1933) the history books recording those facts were promptly rewritten.

In Great Britain, of course, we viewed these developments in Germany with suspicion. We did not object to training for citizenship; we objected to training for what we thought was the wrong kind of citizenship. We thought the German training dangerous to our own interests, as indeed it was; and that was a sufficient reason for disliking it. But also, it was alien to our whole habit of thought. There is, we think, something fundamentally wrong about the process of catching people young and imposing a set of arbitrary doctrines upon them before they are sufficiently mature to think things out for themselves. Our feeling arises from the fact that we have a different conception of citizenship. We do not think in terms of an abstract, mystical entity, the State, imposed upon a group of people from above; what we desire is the free and willing co-operation of human beings who have a

considerable degree of independence, but who are willing to sacrifice some of their liberty for the sake of the greater liberty of the community as a whole. We would prefer that children should leave school with some capacity to think for themselves and to form their own ideas; and if this results in their forming many different kinds of ideas, so much the better; that, we think, makes for progress, and is a sign of a healthy community. In other words, we have, using the word in its widest sense, a 'democratic' ideal. We believe in the democratic State, as the only State in which the individual and society are organic to each other, the only condition of society in which the growth of the individual is not antagonistic to the growth of the community. And we believe in it because we think it is the only type of social organization capable of giving full release to the energy and creative capacity of human beings. People will make willing sacrifices for an organization for which they have some responsibility, and to which they feel they belong.

'Democracy' is a term often loosely used. It is thrown about with cheerful irresponsibility in the to-and-fro discussion of our daily politics, and it can easily become debased. Sometimes the words 'democratic' or 'fascist' are hardly more than labels tacked on to policies of which we happen to approve or disapprove. But in fact no political party can claim a corner in the democratic ideal. Democracy is not a question of party politics; it is a conception common to all parties. It is, indeed, more than that; it is a precondition of the existence of our political groups. The whole conception of two, three, or several political parties rests on the assumption that all points of view have a right to be heard; it takes for granted freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and freedom of the press. But these are of the very essence of democracy.

What is this essence? In the last analysis democracy rests upon respect for human personality. The individual is not just a cog in a machine; rather is he supreme, in the sense that governments were made for men and not men for governments, which 'derive their just powers from the con-

sent of the governed': people matter, and matter equally, though in their talents, tastes, and potentialities they are not equal. Just because they are not 'equal', democracy will cherish differences of opinion among them rather than seek to iron out such differences; hence there follow, if the individual is to have his chance of development and if the State is to benefit from the rich diversity of human personality, the principles of freedom of thought, freedom of religion, freedom of speech and discussion, freedom of assembly, and freedom of the press. From this there has developed in Britain the party-system, of which democracy is the *raison d'être*.

In summary, then, we may say that democracy has its underlying idea, respect for the value of human personality; its characteristic quality, independence; its characteristic virtue, tolerance; and its characteristic principles, freedom of thought and of discussion. These seem fundamental, and they also seem uncontroversial. But agreement among citizens of a country upon these fundamentals will not in itself suffice for the effective transaction of public affairs. Principles have to be translated into practice, and for that various institutions are needed. Our own democracy has its characteristic ones. It is unnecessary to list them in detail; they include, for example, our system of law and justice, trial by jury, the judiciary (with its special relation to Parliament rather than to the administration), the secret ballot, the House of Commons, the second chamber, the civil service, indeed the whole machinery of local and national government. But these particular institutions are not necessarily essential to the democratic faith. They are, in fact, not principles but expedients. They have been evolved in our own country over a matter of centuries; they appear to suit our development; they are to be regarded as forms of democracy suitable to one particular country at one particular phase of its history. But we need not regard them as fixed or final. We ought indeed to be constantly at work examining them, adapting them, improving them. Democracy needs *some* institutions, not necessarily these particular

ones. Other democratic countries have institutions differing from the British ones, yet remain democratic in principle.

Democracy is in fact at once an ideal and an actuality. The ideal is realized in different degrees in different countries, but no one supposes that any modern State is a perfect democracy.

Now the democratic ideal has, like all ideals, the defects of its qualities. The obvious difficulty about it is that it cannot be achieved in a hurry. You can make a country fascist in perhaps ten years, but you cannot make it a democracy. Democracy can only realize itself by degrees, through the agency of a more and more completely educated and experienced body of citizens. The democratic State depends for its success upon the knowledge, skill, 'awareness', and public spirit of its citizens; the duties of citizenship thus become far more important and responsible than in any other type of state, and to secure the best possible training for these duties is vital—though, clearly, such training will be far removed from the Nazi kind: we cannot flourish by selling ready-made doctrines to our future citizens. But while we believe our ideal to hold within it the greatest possibilities of future development, and while we think that democratic principles have already justified themselves in practice, we shall also probably admit that their full justification lies ahead rather than behind. We are at the beginning of our task, not at the end. 'Christianity', it has been said, 'is not yet firm on its childish feet.' That is also true of democracy. In any event the twentieth century sees the democratic State beset with very special difficulties.

The totalitarian State, having greater control over the expression of ideas, can create, mobilize, and direct public opinion (for its more limited objectives) with a greater probability of immediate results. It may deliver the short-term goods even if it cannot deliver the long-term goods. And this is not without importance, for though democracy may prove to be the best policy in the long run, men and women have to live, suffer, and die in the short run.

This difficulty is not a new one; it is inherent in the nature

of democracy; it is just part of the price we have to pay. But the times are out of joint and we are in no condition to pay too heavy a price. Democracy has been presented with complicated problems in the last century at too fast a rate for its comfort. It has hardly, so to speak, had a fair chance. If it could at first have confined itself to the problems of the village, then the country, and could have ignored world problems until it had acquired some degree of expertness, its growing strength might have proved equal to its opportunities. But events have not worked out in that simple way. An industrial revolution, and a scientific one, which began during the last century, transformed the position, as it were, overnight. The modern democratic State, the bulk of its citizens only just learning to read and write and in no condition to grapple with the complex problems of civics, woke up to find the range and scale of all its problems immensely increased. It found that machinery was creating vast new problems for industry to solve, that specialization was adding discovery to discovery at a bewildering rate, that commerce was linking together the ends of the earth, that the whole world was tending to become one economic unit. The world had become internationalized in economics before it had become internationalized in politics or in feeling.

As if this were not enough, the very size of the modern State was creating its own peculiar difficulties. Each of five hundred Greeks assembled in an Attic market-place could, perhaps, have the feeling that he had some responsibility for decisions taken. Fifty million people can be reached only by radio—and they cannot answer the radio back.

It is perhaps significant that, in many areas of England, a higher proportion of electors voted in 1946 in parish council elections, where the candidates were personally known to them, and which were on a scale, and dealt with issues which they could comprehend, than voted in the national elections of the previous year.

More important, however, than the size is the nature of the modern State. It is characterized by increasing specialization, and that again makes citizenship difficult. In commerce,

in industry, in professional and scientific life, one gets into the habit of thinking that certain things are not one's own concern. The ancients might declare that nothing human was alien from them; Bacon might take all knowledge to be his province: but for most of us these are unattainable ideals to-day. So the average citizen concentrates, and specializes, and tills his own small corner of the field; the larger issues fall out of sight below his horizon. Let the Empire be saved by Buggins —if indeed it is 'Buggins's turn'. At any rate it is not *his* turn; there is nothing he can do about it. Moreover, if he does become aware that this is a defeatist and unworthy attitude, the remedy is not very obvious. For our society is so complicated that the individual cannot see the immediate consequences of his own actions as clearly as he once could. The ultimate effects of actions in the political field become harder and harder to trace. If the fathers eat sour grapes, it is the children's teeth which will be set on edge. Such circumstances, inevitably, encourage the growth of irresponsibility.

All these facts have increased tremendously the difficulties confronting a democratic State. Small wonder, perhaps, that some have turned to the despairing solution of the Dictator: the Man who will lead. It is only too late that they find that he has led them into the abyss.

These facts do not prove that democracy is impracticable, though they do suggest a modification of methods is needed to meet the changed situation. It has already, for example, become impossible for any one citizen to master all the knowledge upon which sound judgement in public affairs depends; he has to make use of the knowledge of experts. Thus there arises a new problem, that of making use of the specialists without being controlled by them, the technique of which has not yet been sufficiently mastered. To train specialists to be broad-minded, and to encourage good judgement in the executive officers who have to assess, co-ordinate, and act upon the advice of the specialists, are two aspects of a problem which has only partially been solved. But, though the facts do not prove that democratic institutions are unworkable, they do indicate that it is extremely difficult to

make them function properly, and that we can neglect no possible method of making them more efficient. And they suggest that, if salvation can ultimately come, as democrats believe, only from the ordinary citizen, then we must give special attention to the problem of training for citizenship. Training becomes of fundamental importance; and if there is any way of making that training more efficient we ought to seek it out. 'Muddling through' is sometimes said to be an English characteristic. If this means that the English, confronted with a situation all the elements and implications of which are by no means clear, have a talent for improvisation which has stood them in good stead, we may accept the compliment. But if it means that we have been too intellectually lazy to exercise foresight and plan ahead, it may be an English characteristic, but it is certainly not an English virtue.

It is true that any institution which educates is *ipso facto* training for citizenship among other things, since it is tending to develop the latent resources of human personality; to make a better man is to some extent to make a better citizen; and there are some people who feel this so strongly that they think that a broad general education, making little or no direct reference to the problems of citizenship in the modern world, is on the whole the most satisfactory training which can be devised. There are others, and among them the sponsors of this Report, who think that a more systematic approach to the problem has now become necessary. But on one point both parties are agreed, that such training as is given should not be of a doctrinaire kind. We have to help young citizens to find their own solutions; it is not for us to impose our solutions upon them. An interest in, and an aliveness to the importance of, modern problems is the goal at which we should aim.

In the ultimate analysis the right attitude towards citizenship turns upon an appreciation of certain facts which in their essence are hardly in dispute, except perhaps by anarchists. Stated briefly, those facts are as follows. We live in a civilization which has gradually become more and more complex.

In that civilization no man lives to himself alone, but each depends on his fellows. Fundamentally, we live by co-operation with other people, not by antagonism to them. There is thus in existence a social contract which no honest man can repudiate unless he is prepared to sacrifice also the gains which accrue to him through that contract; and hence it is a matter of self-respect to contribute to that common stock from which we cannot help receiving. These matters are not controversial at all. But equally, they are not immediately obvious to a boy or girl. For there is a competing idea, rarely formulated but often unconsciously held, that the world is an orange to be sucked, the State a fairy godmother who provides everything everybody wants. Indeed, the State provides much. Whether a boy wins a scholarship, or borrows books from a public library, or falls ill and goes to hospital, or even strolls unprotected through the streets of his town at night, his security and his opportunities alike are derived from that great society of which he is a member; without the support of that society he would be helpless. But the State is no more than ourselves in our corporate capacity: we do these things ourselves; and the young citizen will think wrongly unless he thinks of the state as 'We' rather than 'It' or 'They', and realizes that there is a reciprocal relationship involved. There are rights and privileges, but there are also duties and obligations. The teacher's difficulty is not that these are controversial matters; the difficulty is that of finding ways and means of presenting these facts so that their full import may be grasped.

At the outset two obvious ways suggest themselves in which the schools can assist in training for citizenship.

There is first the 'indirect' approach, through the normal subjects of the curriculum. Some subjects, such as history, are peculiarly susceptible to this kind of treatment; and it is true that almost any subject can be so handled as to exhibit its bearings upon the problems of citizenship. The sponsors of this Report, while not wishing to decry this kind of treatment, which they feel is valuable, nevertheless believe it to be, by itself, inadequate.

There is, secondly, the 'direct' approach, actual lessons being given on the problems involved in being a citizen. These lessons take a variety of forms in schools and are called by many names: current affairs, civics, citizenship, social science, economics, and so forth. They are not often called ethics, but moral problems inevitably arise in such courses, and a discussion of moral issues is an essential part of such lessons. The value of such work depends almost wholly upon the spirit actuating those who attempt it. When such work is done unimaginatively, when lessons degenerate into no more than, say, a discussion of the machinery of government, it will be ineffective; but when it is so conducted as to arouse an interest in public affairs, and to throw the emphasis on the duties, rights, obligations, and privileges of citizenship, the case is very different; few teachers who have seen this sort of work wisely handled would doubt its value. It is less important, for example, to point out the difference between a rate and a tax, or between direct and indirect taxation, or to outline the details of parliamentary procedure, than it is to arouse a sense of obligation upon which these things depend. And it is of less importance to develop the details of legal procedure, to enlarge upon the functions of petty sessions, quarter sessions, and so on, than it is to bring out the fact that some form of law, or government, or regulation is a necessity of social life; that law, when wisely made, preserves liberty rather than destroys it, and was in sight from the earliest moment at which man began to live in some sort of association with his fellows. It does not follow that details should be avoided; some amount of reference to them will be necessary, in any school, if the work is not to be left in the air. But the fundamentally important thing is the creation of the right attitude of mind—a public-spirited, thoughtful, and inquiring attitude—based on the realization that the community is not something outside us, but an organization of which we are an integral part. Detail is of value as far as, and only as far as, it contributes to this end.

These approaches, however, do not need to be developed farther here. They have, in fact, been studied in some detail

by the Association for Education in Citizenship and the results of that study may be found in *Education for Citizenship in Elementary Schools* and *Education for Citizenship in Secondary Schools* (both Oxford University Press).

The present book may be regarded as a companion volume, for it deals with yet another approach. And we venture to think that, on the whole, it is a more fundamental approach. In previous productions we have really been considering teaching *about* citizenship rather than training *for* citizenship, and 'training' is a wider term than 'teaching' What *training* in the democratic way of life can be given in schools, not through formal lessons, direct or indirect, but through the life of the school itself? What practical training can the schools give? That is the subject of the present investigation.

Teachers have always stressed the fact that a school is very much more than a correspondence college or a teaching shop. It is a *community*; a community whose members live together, work together, play together, learn how to give and take, and shoulder at least some share of governing themselves. Through its institutions a child may learn gradually, and without consciously realizing what is happening, that freedom implies restraint, and that liberty can only realize itself in a community through the willingness of its members to make sacrifices for it. No training for citizenship can be equal to that gained by *living* in a community.

How substantial this contribution is depends, of course, upon the school. It depends upon its tone; upon the skill with which its institutions are framed; upon the opportunity they give for exercising initiative; upon the amount of self-government which is encouraged; upon the calibre and outlook of the staff; upon the ideals of those directing its policy. These matters will be studied later in this book; but no one will doubt that life in a good school does give many opportunities for the growth of public-spiritedness, and public spirit is a more mature quality than team spirit. The public-spirited person acts upon his own initiative, whereas the member of a team may be content to do just what the others do. Team-spirit is a valuable educational ideal up to a point;

beyond that point it ceases to be an asset and becomes a liability. It is important in modern life that a man should be able to act as a member of a team, and should be capable of subordinating his own desires and inclinations to the needs of a larger unit. But it is also important, unless the whole democratic ideal is misconceived, that he should be able to think for himself and take his due share in determining the general purposes of the community; and if at any point cultivation of the team-spirit defeats this latter end, as sometimes it does, then it is a sign that something else is needed.

In this introductory section, we are concerned with raising issues; we make no attempt to prejudge them. But we must make clear the difficulties, which are considerable. Democracy in schools, and democracy in adult life, are different things. Few persons, we imagine, would believe that to be educated on completely authoritarian lines is the best possible preparation for membership of a democratic community in later life. On the other hand, we cannot go to the other extreme and dismiss the subject with the naïve statement that, if we want to produce a democratic community, we must organize the school upon completely 'democratic' lines, taking over into the school community, lock, stock, and barrel, just those institutions which appear to be successful in a democratic community of adults. To argue thus would be to make a false analogy between the members of a school and the citizens of a community.

A school has affiliations on the one side with the family and on the other side with the State; but it is neither a large family nor a small State. It is a school. It is true that schools are communities, but they are communities in a special environment: they are not just adult communities in little. They have their own peculiarities in that they contain a mixture of adults and children, the adults forming a numerically small group but having special functions; their own limitations, since most of their members are very young; their own opportunities, since if need be they can reconsider, reorganize, and make fresh starts; and their own laws of development, since child-psychology is not just a simplified

form of adult-psychology. It is obvious, therefore, that we have to proceed very cautiously if we wish to compare a school with a State.

This point deserves further elaboration. Among other reasons, democracy as a political system for adults is believed in because (i) it is the only system which, through giving the citizen responsibility, develops his potentialities, and (ii) it seems in fact to give better results in the long run than any alternative system—dictatorship, bureaucracy, 'benevolent despotism', &c., because (iii) it can be increasingly based, not indeed on perfect knowledge and impeccable judgement, but on sufficient experience and good sense in the average citizen to make the system work.

But in school life the matter stands rather differently. While it is still true that the aim of a school is to develop the individual boy or girl—a school having no life, and no meaning, apart from the lives of the human beings educated in it—possible alternative systems now exist. There is, for example, something akin to benevolent despotism which cannot be rejected out of hand for a school as a democrat would reject it for a State; for it really is true that in the school community, which contains teachers as well as children, some know more, are more permanently associated with the community, have no substantial axes to grind, and have at least some chances of exercising power without being corrupted by it.[1] Moreover, there is far less knowledge or experience available among the pupils than among the members of an adult community.

There are, however, compensating advantages. Failure in the school need never be catastrophic. It will not lead to a war, or a famine, or to disorganization bordering on anarchy. In a school one can learn from one's failures and begin again, without paying the price the world demands for failure.

[1] No doubt teachers, like statesmen, would in the end be 'absolutely corrupted' by 'absolute power'—if they had it. But they rarely or never have it. One surmises that nowadays even the head of a school run on the most rigid of authoritarian lines would find plenty of checks upon his authority—teachers, parents, old boys, governors, and inspectors, for example, to say nothing of regulations and finance.

There is an additional reason why the institutions of the school need not copy too slavishly those of the State. The school may be able to point the way to *better* institutions. Not all democrats are satisfied that the present institutions of the State are adequate to the demands of the twentieth century. It may be that we are groping our way towards a new relationship between leader and led, and the schools may be able to contribute something of real value to a social pattern which has not yet fully evolved.

What emerges? That we must give up any idea, when dealing with young people, of a 'democratic' way of life in schools? That would be a counsel of despair; and it would also be plain nonsense, since we hope the reader will discover from the following pages—if he does not know it already—that there are hundreds of schools in the country which, in a democratic atmosphere, are at this moment giving training in the democratic way of life which is full of hope for the future. What emerges is just this, that there is a problem to be investigated which cannot be solved by facile comparisons of the State and the school. The conclusion is simply that the institutions of adult democracy are not *necessarily* the institutions most suitable to schools. They may be or they may not be: that is precisely the problem under investigation. The point we are concerned to make is that the school 'democratic' community is not a mere copy of the adult democratic community. Its problems, its difficulties, its opportunities are *sui generis*. They have to be thought out afresh. That is what we have tried to do in this book.

B. A. HOWARD,
Chairman of the Committee.

INVESTIGATORS' NOTE

THE purpose of the survey was to find what forms school democracy can take. A large proportion of the schools visited, therefore, were selected because of the excellent work in school democracy which they were known to have carried out. The Report should not be taken as an attempt to give a complete assessment of general average development. Nevertheless, care was taken to survey as many types of school as possible. Sixty-five day-schools were visited and 11 boarding-schools. Of these 27 were boys' schools, 20 girls' schools, and 29 co-educational. The 76 schools may also be classified as follows:

12 Primary Schools.
21 Secondary Grammar Schools.
20 Secondary Modern Schools.
2 Secondary Technical Schools.
21 Miscellaneous (Independent Schools, all-age schools, approved schools, &c.).

Some schools visited stand among their own wide acres; others exist in cramped spaces, hemmed in on all sides by the dingy brick of congested urban areas. To bring home this contrast we cannot do better than give the different staff–pupil ratio of some of the schools:

a primary school	1 : 40
a modern secondary school	1 35
a secondary grammar school	1 : 20
a public school	1 12
a progressive independent school	1 : 6

But, whatever the apparent disparity, schools of all types are found to have close links if they share a belief in democracy as a way of school life. For the spirit of a school depends not upon material conditions—however much these may help or hinder—but upon human beings and their relationship with each other. It was what was common to these democratic schools that we sought to find and analyse.

W. VIOLA
J. HEMMING

CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND OF DEMOCRACY

'A loving heart is the beginning of all knowledge.'

CARLYLE

'We have realised to-day that democracy is much more than a political creed or method of government, that it is a social ideal embracing every aspect of the life of society.'

H. C. DENT, *A New Order in English Education*

THE first part of this Report is the most difficult because in it we have to attempt to describe the essential background of personal relationships and community purpose upon which the democratic school depends. We cannot postpone this attempt to recapture atmosphere to a later position in the Report, because to do so would be to give the impression that we believe the machinery and methods of democracy to be the essential parts of it, whereas we cannot too much emphasize our conviction that democracy is a permeating spirit within a democratic school community and not just an arrangement of civics lessons and pupils' councils, although these may well be features of it.

It is true that the developing spirit of democracy, and the machinery through which that spirit is made effective, act and react upon each other at every point; but without the spirit the machine is merely a soulless contrivance which may produce the motions of democracy but is not democracy. Our first task, therefore, must be to analyse the emotional climate of a democratic school community in so far as this is possible.

The Essential Characteristics

But first, what is our criterion of a democratic school community? As has already been stated, many schools were chosen for investigation because they are actively experimenting with how best to make school life an experience of democracy in action for all taking part. Nevertheless, quite

inevitably, a marked difference in stages of development was observed between school and school. This graduation enabled us to postulate what are the means of measuring the development of a democratic school community, by closely investigating the make-up of those schools where the total quality was outstanding and comparing it with that of schools less well advanced.

In every democratic school community that has, as it were, reached maturity, one is impressed by the quality of personal relationships between the members of the community and by the width of outlook and purpose of the school as a whole. We may, therefore, assume that these are essential elements. Put thus briefly this may sound little, but in fact the vigour, friendliness, release of personality, productive capacity, and general high dynamic of a fully democratic school seem to grow from these twin roots of good human relationships (which is the individual side) and community purpose (which is the communal side). The interpenetration of these two characteristics seems to produce an environment of higher spiritual and mental fertility than is possible without them; or when they are inadequately developed.

Types of Background

Perhaps the best way to make clear the sort of background we have in mind is to present as abstractions—that is, as though they existed independently, whereas in reality they are usually found in combination—the three patterns of personal relationships and purpose that are discernible in schools to-day.

The first may be described as 'purely organizational'. The 'organizational' school operates rather like a factory. It takes in children at a certain age as its raw material, carries them on from stage to stage, giving them at each a certain prescribed selection of facts, and finally turns them out as finished, or partly finished, products by the test of certain recognized standards—of course allowing for a proportion of rejects. Baldly described that is *part* of what every school has to do. But schools that are ruled by this one aspect of

their functioning are perforce at the mercy of the restricted purpose and personal relationships which such a motivation imposes. The pupils will tend to see their school life as something necessary for getting a job, but nevertheless an obstruction to real living; the staff will be inclined to conceive their function as primarily to add this or that piece to the skill or knowledge of their pupils; and the headmaster will be mainly concerned with keeping the wheels turning smoothly and the level of production well up to standard.

Of course, people being people and not machines, a degree of general human friendliness and community incentive will be found in the 'factory' school, but in all sorts of ways the inadequate purpose and poorly developed human relationships show themselves. There will be an exaggerated striving after personal kudos on the part of the able, and an excessive dependence among those of lower ability. Those who achieve the best results in the narrow sense will consequently win the highest community approval regardless of the quality of their over-all contribution to school life. Because there is no clear social motivation, incentive is conspicuously lacking among the 'duller third', and therein lies one reason why a more rigid discipline has to be imposed in an attempt to control their undirected energies. The disciplinary pattern in its turn produces estranged relationships between pupils and staff—the awkward tenterhooks of the struggle for mastery between the 'rival camps' of staff and pupils. It is also noticeable that anything that obstructs output (in the narrow sense), however valuable as an enrichment of social and cultural life within the school tends either to be excluded or rigidly relegated to second place. In fact, purpose and personal relationships are brought down to a utilitarian level. Each individual exists and functions mainly for a personal objective and in considerable isolation from his fellows; a condition which is usually aggravated by an excessive dependence upon the element of competition. Thus, what co-operation there may be is an accident of overlapping functions and mere propinquity of personnel rather than the accepted pattern of community behaviour. The considerable

isolation of each individual is paralleled by the estrangement of the school from society as a whole.

A second type of school, although met only occasionally, warrants study because its approach is often a source of confused understanding in other schools. It might be called the 'happy family' establishment, originating no doubt as a reaction from the 'factory' type of school. The objective of the 'happy family' school is that all its members shall be friendly and smiling. Consequently everything is done to build personal relationships on a 'pals together' ideal. Of course, this is all right so far as it goes; but *merely* the pursuit of friendliness and happiness, without a higher objective to give substance to happiness and a meaning to friendliness, is in itself inadequate. The personal relationships of 'let's all be friends together' are often found to be as imperfectly developed as those based on mere utilitarianism. Happiness cannot exist in isolation because happiness is not a thing in itself to have or not to have; it is a personal or communal state of being which arises from self-fulfilment through full functioning in a free society. A community that concentrates upon friendliness and happiness purely for themselves isolates itself as certainly as the one that focuses all effort on material advantage. This is not, of course, to say that friendliness and happiness are not aspects of good personal relationships, right values, and a clear objective. On the contrary, they are the proof that they exist. But they are nevertheless by-products. They can exist in a fully developed state in a school only when the community is motivated by a broader purpose than personal or communal comfort.

The third type of school embraces, but passes beyond the content and purpose of the other two. This type is the democratic school, in which there is a heightened community self-consciousness, because there is a full realization of the part that the school plays in society and the contribution that each member has to make in developing and enriching the life of the school community. The human relations found in this type of school are more complete than in any other, because they are based on co-operation and shared responsi-

bility in working for a community objective which transcends while including the merely utilitarian or narrowly personal. It is with this type of school that this report is concerned. We should add that as yet it exists only rarely in a fully developed form.

It will now perhaps be seen why it was logical to put general social atmosphere before machinery. Clearly, unless the head and at any rate *some* members of the staff in any school *want* to establish the closer and richer personal relations and wider purpose without which a democratic community cannot exist, there can be no true democracy for that school whatever councils and committees are set up.

Because we have emphasized certain points in order to get across something of the character of the emotional climate found in a democratic school it is hoped that the impression has not been given that democracy has its head in the clouds too much; on the contrary, democracy in a school, as well as enriching personal relationships and widening the outlook of the people who experience it—both staff and pupils—has a stimulating effect upon the whole practical side of school life. The last chapter of this section of the Report is devoted to an assessment of individual development resulting from the experience of democracy; it will suffice to say here, therefore, that it is most noticeable that the school as an organism seems to become more practical under a democratic régime. The more aware the school becomes of itself, and the part it has to play as a community, the greater are its productive powers and the readier its practical responses to the challenge of events. It is as though the vigorous friendly atmosphere of democracy in action acts as a catalyst which releases personal and social energy.

The Problem of Personal Relations

So much for the general atmosphere; we will now turn to a brief consideration of the pattern of personal relations in a democratic school. One of the most interesting results of the survey was the realization of the immensely important part that the head plays in a democratic school community.

It might be supposed that a head who exchanged his position of absolute authority for that of 'primus inter pares' would, like King Lear, lose his influence at the same time as resigning his autocratic power. The contrary, however, proves to be the case. For one thing, the democratic head does *not* resign his absolute authority, which is a part and function of the position to which he has been appointed; rather does he bring in the whole school to share it to the limits of the capacity of its various members.

In addition, because all the functions of the democratic community are more closely interwoven, the personality of the principal is able more completely to permeate the whole life of the school. Thus, by losing the limiting self of the isolated autocrat, he finds a fuller self as the guide and stimulus of a creative community. A Fleet Street journalist once said that the test of a good editor is that, on the one hand, his character influences the whole paper, and that, on the other, it does not make the slightest difference to the production of the paper if he is out of the office for a week. The position of a democratic head is somewhat similar. Under democracy every member of the school community is making a full personal contribution, and a great deal of functional authority is relegated, yet the attitude and values of the head find their way everywhere and pattern the life of the whole social organism so that they have a more enduring quality, and do not depend on the 'rustle of the gown' for their influence.

Of course, an authoritarian head can also be a presence everywhere by the power of his personality and the integrity of his principles; but this is found to be something quite different. The autocratic 'presence everywhere' may be respected, but is also feared; and fear inhibits. The democratic head wins high respect but does not arouse fear because he is seen as a member of the team, even if as a very important member—which indeed he is. The moral impact of the head upon a democratic school community is wholly positive; it has a liberating effect upon his or her own personality and simultaneously helps to free the personalities of

the members of the school and the energies of the community as a whole. Anyone visiting a democratic school will be struck by how far more closely its atmosphere manifests the personality of the head than in authoritarian establishments where the social climate is not only comparatively flat and lifeless, but also stereotyped.

The head–staff relation in a democratic school is marked by a higher degree of friendliness, co-operation, mutual consultation, and mutual respect than in an authoritarian school. The members of the staff seem more self-confident and better informed about the working of the school as a whole. The summing up of a new member of the staff at one school visited—'Everyone knows everything here; my last school was run like a secret society'—states the difference very well. In an authoritarian school the head's first response to any idea he has would often appear to be 'Whom can I tell to do that?' whereas that of a democratic principal is 'When can we have a talk about that?' There is, in fact, in the democratic school a constant give and take of consultation between the principal and the members of the staff. It is this getting together on the job as a team that seems to provide the practical means of maintaining the sound personal relations between head and staff that are a marked feature of school democracy.

It is also necessary to add that, far from a comradely relationship producing slackness, the reverse seems to be the case. Because each member of the staff is given a greater sense of participation in the running of the school, and therefore an increased feeling of responsibility towards it, more, not less, effort on behalf of the school is forthcoming from the staff, while a stronger social influence is brought to bear on any member who tries to dodge responsibility.

The wide influence of the head in a democratic school community finds its counterpart in the greater ease with which the personalities of members of the staff can make themselves effective. The interests and enthusiasms of the teachers can readily find an outlet; and the contribution of

every teacher in staff-meeting, form-room, or school organization takes on a more personal quality because there is in a democratic school a greater chance of self-determination for every individual and group. The teachers are never reduced to the semi-puppet status that authoritarianism at its worst sometimes gives them, but become whole people whose personalities can find effective expression in the life of the school. Thus, the personal qualities of the teachers are a most important element in school democracy. If too many teachers on a staff are afraid of participating and prefer to be directed, although democratic machinery is still worth establishing, it will operate sluggishly. As one head put it, 'Without the co-operation of my staff, we should never have reached top gear.' Democracy is adventure; indeed it is gay adventure, for work and laughter get along more easily side by side in a democratic school; but it needs the support of those who love life and adventure if it is to grow strong. It needs personality, and enthusiasm, and the stuff of life. For all these it depends to a considerable extent upon the human qualities of the staff.

The direct relations between head and pupils are, of course, of great importance. Most democratic heads make it a rule to be regularly available to any member of the school; and this is a valuable aid to welding the school into a community. Some delightfully frank and friendly head–pupil relationships were observed. Such frankness was seen to be the basis of the true courtesy found in the best democratic schools. In the presence of complete authoritarianism the child treats the head as hardly human, and is polite in order to avoid trouble; at a half-way stage children are tempted to test authority by experimenting with being guardedly insolent; but when a fully democratic relationship is established this sort of showing-off quite disappears, together with any fear of authority as such on the part of the child, and what springs up in its place is a mutual respect expressed through courtesy on both sides. The relationship between head and pupils, in fact, becomes an aspect of their different social functions in the school community; it is no longer the strained relation-

ship between the one who holds supreme powers and the other who has none.

If the principal's personal relations with the staff and pupils are sound, those between staff and pupils are likely to be of the same quality of friendliness, frankness, and mutual respect. There is also a marked similarity between the quality of head–staff–pupil relations and those between prefects, form-captains, &c., and the general school proletariat. The democratic spirit is infectious; sound human relations and team-work at one level tend to be reproduced at others. As one head of a junior school put it, 'If the head becomes a dictator to his staff, this is passed on to the children because the teachers become dictators too.'

Perhaps the most difficult achievement of all for the democratic school is to bring the general staff fully within the orbit of the community. Cooks, cleaners, and caretakers, because their place in the school community is less clearly defined, are often treated as outsiders by the pupils. The way of authoritarianism is to insist that the pupils behave with consideration to the general staff, but the greater triumph of a democratic school is to develop the pattern of personal relations within the school to include all its members, so that the caretaker is as genuinely appreciated for the part he plays in the school's life as the head or the teaching staff. Some schools visited make a point of inviting the caretaker to council meetings whenever anything is under discussion about which he may have his own point of view.

By developing personal relations fully a school achieves a high degree of corporate self-consciousness so that action in isolation, and hole-and-corner discussions and complaints, are replaced by a lively general awareness, open discussions, and socially agreed actions. One head expressed it, 'We have no use here for fear and suspicion.' By getting rid of those two enemies of sound values and carefree human relations, the democratic school creates for itself an emotional climate in which for each and all a happier and more abundant life is possible.

Sound personal relations are also found to produce an

emotional stability which is a great asset to a school community. Under a rigid ordering of things there is always present a fear of the unknown reaction of authority to any happening within the school. When the school is composed of people teamed-up in action, all in a comprehensible relationship with each other, and actuated by a common purpose, every member knows where he is and feels secure. This atmosphere is a great help to the timid and discouraged. Thus, just as a harsh and uncertain emotional climate inhibits action or stimulates revolt, so the social and friendly climate of a democratic school releases personality and encourages co-operation.[1]

Some schools have succeeded in extending warm and friendly personal relations beyond the school community itself; so that certain governors and parents become 'one of us'. This is only possible when the outsiders visit the school fairly frequently. But there can be no doubt that every human contact of this sort that the school is able to develop embellishes its communal life.

Contrasts in personal relations are plainly noticeable not only between schools running to different types of discipline and organization, but also between primary and secondary schools, and between segregated and co-educational establishments. The *complete* design of relationships as outlined above is obviously only possible at the secondary stage; but progress in this direction can be made with the nursery and junior age groups. If a primary school child cannot see the relationship between his school and society as a whole, at least he can understand that his form is a part of the school community, and form life can be made as social and *meaningful* as possible. The fact that a form of more than thirty *precludes* the full development either of a social sense or of a close personal relationship between teachers and pupils is itself an indictment of the size of forms frequently found in junior and nursery schools. A democracy cannot afford large forms. Junior schools were visited that have managed to run one or two small forms, in spite of an overall staffing ratio of

[1] For Dr. C. M. Fleming on this point see close of chapter.

1 : 40. In these forms, whether the children are selected for advanced work or because they are backward, a much enhanced social sense is found and also a really fruitful relation between children and teacher.

Co-educational schools seem to be able to develop easy, happy, personal relationships more easily than segregated schools. The whole emotional atmosphere is noticeably freer, perhaps because a co-educational school is a more complete social unit. The mixing of men and women in the staff common room also seems to add to the naturalness of a co-educational school community, no doubt for the same reason. Some co-educational schools segregate the staff into separate common-rooms, but teachers who have experienced both believe that there is 'less tension and more sanity' when there is a common staff room for both sexes.

It was also observed that schools in which the staff are drawn from a mixed age range are at an advantage compared with those where the staff is disproportionately composed of either young or elderly members. This is possibly because a school with a staff that is, as it were, a cross-section of society has a more complete outlook and is therefore more naturally attuned as a social unit, and meets more completely the varying needs of the pupils for adult example and guidance.

The Broad Outlook

Finally, the breadth of outlook observable in a democratic school community must be emphasized. Children and staff in such schools seem interested in a wider variety of things, and to be more aware of life in the round. Great contrasts were noticeable in the liveliness of conversations between similar forms in democratic and authoritarian schools; in the latter the whole focus of attention was on saying the right thing to this stranger; in the former a much higher proportion of children were prepared to talk, and there was more content in what they had to say. The same difference was observed between talks in the staff-rooms of the two types of school.

This width of outlook also seems to be related to a sounder

appreciation of human values. The height of social virtue in an authoritarian school is considered as to live correctly in the light of the rule-book; in a democratic school it is to live abundantly in the light of good human relationships. Perhaps it is this different emphasis on the nature of the good life which results both in the wider outlook and the sound values of the democratic school. The fact that a school of this type is an example of living citizenship also counts. School life becomes a social experience that is full of meaning for all those participating in it.

It is not easy to give a complete impression of the background and emotional climate essential to school democracy; whereas it is very easy to give a false impression or to confuse cause and effect. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the above rather incomplete notes will suffice both to show how much a school gains in social development and creative vigour as it develops as a democratic community, and to explain why it was felt to be necessary to consider purpose and personal relations before dealing with the patterns of democratic machinery that have proved themselves in action in our schools.

Human Relations—Two Authoritative Opinions

'As education becomes more humane, more a matter of the impact of personality on personality than of text-book on student, the personal influence of the Headmaster or Headmistress grows in importance.'

M. L. JACKS, *Total Education*, p. 35. Kegan Paul.

'Behaviour has been shown to be a function not merely of the character of the pupil but of the treatment given by the teacher and the school. Authoritative and dictatorial handling produced aggressiveness towards weaker members along with an absence of responsibility when compulsion was removed. Neglect resulted in discouragement and depression. The fostering of co-operative activity led to joyful release of energy and happy diligence.'

C. M. FLEMING, giving the findings of recent research. *The Social Psychology of Education*, p. 57. Kegan Paul.

CHAPTER II

METHODS AND SCOPE OF SELF-GOVERNMENT

'A free and generous government gives the people a chance to develop.'

LAOTZE.

'Participation in government should permeate every function of the school. It should be so much a part of the school that no one would ever come to school a single day without feeling that he had participated in the government of the school. No one can ever get out from under his government. It should function in the classroom and on the playground. Every pupil who comes to school should do something for the school every time that he comes so that he can feel that it is his school and that it ran better to-day because he came to school instead of being absent.'

DR. KELLY, Associate Professor of Education,
Wayne University, Detroit, Mich.

THIS chapter will be devoted to describing the various methods of drawing the pupil members of a school community into the fullest possible participation in running, organizing, and developing the life of the school.

In order to make it plain precisely what is meant here by self-government, we must emphasize at the outset that there are inevitably three limiting factors to pupil authority as expressed through School Councils, or other such bodies: (1) the final authority in all matters must rest with the head; (2) the expert position of the teachers must be fully respected; and (3) pupil responsibility should be kept within the limits of the capacity of the age-group concerned.

These limitations do not, however, in practice make a farce of self-government as some suggest. The error rather is to suppose that a school community is divided by conflicting interests of pupils and staff, and that no self-government is genuine unless the desires of the pupils can overrule those of the staff. Self-government is not mass rule; nor does a democratic school think in terms of two blocs of interests in the school. The object of self-government is to bring everybody

in; it is a way of releasing and unifying the dynamic of the whole community; a means of drawing everyone out of individualist isolation into co-operation for the common good. Perhaps the best comparison is with the progressive factory. The war proved the valuable contribution of the Joint Production Committees, and other organizations of factory democracy, in stepping up production and generally increasing the efficiency of industry and the well-being of those who work at it. No one would suggest that such democracy is unreal because the managing-director has the power of veto; and because, for instance, the chief engineer has absolute authority of decision in those matters in which he is an expert. It is just the same in a school community. The head and staff have specialist functions, and in their own spheres their right of decision must be absolute; but in addition there is the whole area of common ground—general school activities and organization, the community's problems of behaviour and discipline, and the like—about which all members are concerned and in the consideration of which all sections have a contribution to make, not only in arriving at decisions but in implementing them. It is in handling such matters that School Councils prove their worth.

It should be noted that the machinery of democracy developed in self-governing schools as described below is essentially that of the secondary stage. The preliminary work being done in some primary schools in order to pave the way for full citizen responsibility in the school community will be dealt with in Chapter VII.

School Councils

Of the sixty-two schools visited where pupils were of secondary age, twenty-three have democratically elected School Councils. These councils are variously composed, but all of them have the same general purpose:[1]

1. To draw the pupils more fully into participation running the school.

[1] A description appearing in a school's own magazine is given at the end of this chapter.

2. To represent the pupils' interests, and present the pupils' point of view.
3. To give ready outlet for new ideas.
4. To give the pupils the experience of responsible government.
5. To develop the feeling that the whole school forms a co-operative community.
6. To keep the whole school informed about what is happening or going to happen.

The ways in which School Councils are elected are so varied that it is impossible to give them all here. Sometimes every form elects two representatives and these, with the prefects and staff, form the School Council, the head taking the chair. Another system is for prefects and staff to form the council, and in yet another, the form representatives sit with the staff as the School Council and the prefects have their own independent meeting (although the prefects representing senior forms are, of course, also members of the council). In a few schools there is a Pupils' Council that sometimes sits alone, with the head boy, or girl, or a deputy in the chair, and at other times joins with the whole staff, or representatives of the staff, to form the School Council.

Other schools use the 'year' and the 'house' as the basis of elections. Each year in each house elects representatives. These representatives form the House Councils which sit separately. The seniors on the House Councils together form the Pupils' Council, and the Pupils' Council sits with the staff to form the School Council of which the head is chairman. The size of the councils varies—about forty seems to be a common figure.

Elections are usually held once a year and are most important occasions; but if form representation is the basis of the council, no 'big' election is held, and in the course of a year there is often a good deal of change in personnel.

Some schools graduate representation according to age, giving the first-year pupils no representation—as being too young and new to know how to act—or one representative;

second and third forms one or two representatives, and senior forms two or three. One girls' modern secondary school started by giving first-formers no representatives, but now includes them.

Frequency of meetings also varies a good deal. Some councils meet every week, some every fortnight or every month, and some as required. In one school House Council meetings are held every fortnight, but the School Council only when enough important matters have collected to warrant it or a school event is imminent. The frequency at which council meetings are held and the personality of the chairman seem to make a good deal of difference in the stiffness or ease observable in the meetings. It seems most important that the council should meet sufficiently often for all members to feel at home with each other. Unfamiliarity tends to make staff and pupils vote in blocs; at a later and more constructive stage votes often split freely on both sides.

One or two schools base their elections not on school divisions but on the wards in which the pupils live. One school which does this holds Ward Council meetings and also has a Boys' Representative Council consisting of head, first master, head prefect, the house captains, and representatives of the clubs and societies of the school. The ward and house are linked as each house is made up of two wards. Each ward has a master allotted to it.

School Council meetings are sometimes held in school time, sometimes after school. Many schools compromise; allowing time for a certain number of meetings during sessions and holding others after school. Another method is to shorten each period of the afternoon by ten minutes when a meeting is to be held; starting it in school, but carrying on for as long afterwards as may be necessary. The general experience is that at least *some* meetings should be given the significance of being held in school time. Methods of releasing time for school democracy will be dealt with more fully, however, in the next chapter.

The advice of one head is worth noting at this point, as there is a great difference between school and school in the

liveliness of School Council meetings and the self-confidence of the pupil members. 'When you start you must let the pupils meet on their own for a time,' was his advice, 'otherwise they get overawed by the staff and never find their tongues.' Some schools, however, have not found this difficulty. No doubt it all depends on the relationship of staff and pupils prior to the establishment of a council. Another useful suggestion was: 'Don't be in too much of a hurry to put pupils in the chair at meetings. Let the staff show them how first.' One head encouraged the prefects to practise taking the chair and conducting meetings among themselves in order to get ready for 'public' meetings. Teething troubles, however, are soon over if the young people are given plenty of help and encouragement in undertaking their new responsibilities. The vigour and self-confidence shown at some council meetings was most convincing. Such maturity seems to take between one and two years from the introduction of a council.

All sorts of matters are brought up at council meetings—routine problems of discipline, such as how to cure a wave of noisiness or running in the corridors; the conduct of the next school 'At Home'; the formation of new clubs; whether or not hats (or caps) must be worn; complaints about the way cycles are treated; plans for social service; and so on. Two successful resolutions moved by form representatives at a council meeting were 'that girls playing away matches should have their fares paid' and 'that suggestions passed by council should not be reversed for at least one year'; one that was unanimously lost concerned altering the weekly 'free afternoon' from Wednesday to Friday. In some schools curriculum matters are out of order at council meetings; others permit them.

As a rule, head, staff, and pupil councillors have equal rights to bring matters up, the pupils either acting for themselves or as spokesmen for their forms, or for an individual in the form or house they represent. The agenda is prepared in various ways. One school has an agenda committee of head and representatives from each year. At another school

the agenda is drawn up by a committee of some staff and some pupils.

One long debate listened to was concerned with how the pupils should spend their time during the lunch-hour. A pupil councillor brought the matter up. He complained that the rule that all pupils must stay in the school grounds over the lunch interval, which had been made as a safety measure during the war, was now out of date and should be abolished. Some members of the staff agreed; others were afraid of accidents if 500 children were free to wander about the streets for nearly an hour in the middle of the day. Eventually it was agreed that the fourth, fifth, and sixth forms should be allowed to leave the grounds without permission, but that first, second, and third forms must not. A trial period of a month was also agreed to. It is reported that the legislation proved sound, giving the senior pupils greater freedom, which they respected, and lightening the supervision duties of the staff. It also put an end to breaking bounds at lunch-time which had become a bone of bitter contention between the prefects and other senior boys.

There is general agreement that a School Council, once well established, proves it has a really useful function to perform. It is not just a means of 'playing at democracy'. It keeps the school alert and growing, and sees that the dead wood of outworn rules and faulty methods is cleared away. (Some schools make or repeal *all* rules in council.) It has sometimes been found that a rankling sense of injustice of long standing among a section of the school has been permanently cleared up by five minutes' discussion on the council. For instance, in a co-educational modern school the girls complained that they had no space in which to play because the boys commandeered almost all the available ground. Dissatisfaction over this had gone on for a long time and frequently led to breaches of the playtime peace. A few minutes' discussion on the council produced an equitable division. In another school a small play-reading group was able to meet only on Tuesdays because of the various activities of its members. They met in the library; but a

violin class, run by a master, took place next door. He said he could not hold his class at any other time or place; as indeed he could not. At the School Council meeting the domestic science mistress came to the rescue and offered the play-readers a room in her flat. Everyone went away perfectly satisfied, especially the form representative who had raised the matter.

Many such instances could be given. Liaison between the council and the school, as a whole, is covered by various systems of reporting back. This appears to be a most important point of the whole system. Without it the pupils do not feel that the council is acting on their behalf. It also teaches every member of the school that delays and compromise and careful thought are often necessary before an idea, however good, can be introduced. Perhaps a group of pupils want to start a new society, but there is nowhere for it to meet. The group will be all impatience to get started at once, and will hammer away at their representative to bring the matter up time and time again. The representative has to explain the problems involved and try to help solve them. At length difficulties are overcome and, in great triumph, the society is launched. Such experience is of value to everyone concerned and brings right home the essential give-and-take of a democratic society. Questions, discussions, requests, the spreading of information, the planning of new activities, disciplinary problems, the making and repealing of rules—all these and much else have a place in these council meetings.

Council meetings also help to develop understanding between the school's leading pupils and the staff. They give each group a chance to get to know the general ideas of the other better.

In conclusion, two points must be stressed. Council decisions should be acted upon vigorously or else reasons for delay given; otherwise the pupils will lose faith in their representatives and the council as a whole. One head boy complained, 'Sometimes we decide something, and then nothing happens for weeks, and the chaps get cross with

their representatives—and when it does come off you don't get any kick out of it because it's too late.' An equally important point is that expressed by a head as follows: 'Self-government may become a name and nothing else. Mere discussion without responsibility gets nowhere. My object is to train people to carry out responsible jobs.' Sometimes a staff meeting will reverse a School Council decision. 'If our reasons are good and we explain them, it is understood,' commented a teacher. It was pointed out that such head-on collisions are usually the result of failure to make clear to the pupils *all* the factors involved in the question under discussion. 'The staff's and pupils' points of view should be represented at *all* meetings' was one opinion.

In schools where no council has been tried a feeling is often expressed that a School Council will reduce the status of the staff. In practice, however, this is not found to be the case. The normal staff meeting is freed from a good deal of routine business by the work of the School Council and is able to devote its time to tackling the specialist job of the curriculum and similar matters; while the experience of self-government soon teaches the pupils fully to appreciate how much they owe to the staff. At one school a social club was started after a council discussion, and the special request was made by pupils that they should run it themselves. They made a good job of it. But very soon they were calling upon the staff for help and advice in connexion with various aspects of club life. On occasions written invitations were sent round to the staff. Announcements of the club's activities would sometimes include a reference to the staff in such terms as 'Mr. So-and-so has kindly consented to come along this evening in order to give a talk on ——'. In fact, it is not until a school becomes self-governing that the pupils come to understand clearly the nature of the contribution made by the staff in school life. One head put it like this: 'Our staff used to think they owed their position to their authority; they now know that it really rests on their contribution.' Of the two the second is found to be a much firmer foundation. 'We try to get loyalties pulling the same

way' was a comment which expressed this view rather differently.

Pupil Committees

Pupil committees responsible for various aspects of school life will be referred to elsewhere in this Report. Suffice it to say here that pupil bodies in charge of, say, athletics or drama are usually elected by those concerned, but are sometimes appointed by the School Council.

Prefects

Although all pupils in a democratic school have a greater responsibility in virtue of their citizen status, the prefects are in a special position because they hold a permanent place in the hierarchy of school authority. We must, therefore, now turn to the election (or nomination), function, and powers of the prefects.

The term 'prefect' or 'monitor' is found to cover a number of conceptions. In every case the office carries with it the duties of maintaining discipline and assisting with the day-to-day running of the school; but there is a good deal of difference in the relations of the prefect body to the school community. In some schools the prefects form a privileged sect who have, as it were, been officially presented by the head with a portion of his authority. They are the N.C.O.s of the establishment. They cannot be said in any way to represent the pupils, although there can easily be a feeling among them of 'We own the school!' Prefects of this type are admired by the smaller pupils, feared in proportion to their powers, accepted to the extent that they are the natural leaders of the school community, and sometimes baited and ridiculed a little by their immediate inferiors. They are felt to be *in loco magistrorum* and to owe their position to their status. They cease to be 'one of us'.

The other broad conception is of the prefects as the natural leaders of the school, pure and simple; that is, as the best pupils receiving the community recognition of special status. Their powers are seen by all to arise from the needs of the

community. They are not conceived as a group imposed from the top to keep the masses in order, but as a group of competent members selected from the community to give a lead. A pupil in one very happy school community said their prefects were 'more friendly' than those he had known in a former school.

Between the two conceptions is the usual admixture of the two. Naturally, the prefects of a democratic school community are of the second type rather than the first, because the object of the office is not solely to help the staff, but to give the capable members of the community the opportunity for greater service.

The school community's problem is, 'How can we best pick our best people for prefects?' A variety of methods for doing this are employed, of which the following are a selection:

1. The head in consultation with his staff selects the prefects on the basis of the school records.
2. The head and staff draw up a panel from which a number are elected as prefects by the senior pupils.
3. Staff and senior pupils offer nominations from which the head makes a final selection.
4. The retiring prefects, alone or with the staff, draw up a panel from which the head makes a final choice.
5. A panel is drawn up by the head, staff, and retiring prefects from which the senior pupils elect the prefects for the coming year.
6. The elected form representatives of senior forms automatically take on the duties of prefects.
7. House councillors are elected from whom the senior members become prefects.
8. The prefects are nominated by the seniors from among their number, and elected by the whole school.

In the election of prefects from nominations sometimes senior pupils alone vote, and sometimes senior pupils and staff. In one school every member of the staff has two votes; in another the staff vote in the election of the prefects of

their own houses only. Sometimes, as in (8), the whole school votes. In all but one school a secret ballot is the custom.

In practice the best pupils seem to become prefects by any of these methods; but the more democratic the procedure, the more the prefects seem to value their position and the easier it appears for them to win the respect of the community.

Whatever the method, the head, of course, holds the right of veto, but no case of its ever having been used to block the election of a prefect was heard of.

Only one or two schools have been bold enough to let the pupils elect the prefects without 'vetting' by head, staff, or retiring prefects. The reason given against this was expressed by one head as, 'They would choose the most popular instead of the best.' Schools that do have direct nomination deny this, however. One co-educational school requires the nominator and seconder of a pupil for office to produce statements in writing giving their reasons for the nomination. Some such brake on frivolous nominations seems to be desirable when there is no other check. In this school so far no boy or girl has been elected to a position of responsibility because of popularity or spectacular success unless he (or she) also has shown the necessary qualities of character for leadership. Reasons given on the nomination slips include 'has a sense of public duty', 'conscientious and outspoken', 'willing to help', 'of wide interests', 'he works hard to help his house'. The head of another school also said that the pupils very rarely made a mistake. 'Children are almost unfailing in their knowledge of others' was her view. Another view was, 'If the children make a mistake, they soon learn that they have to suffer the consequences, and that is educational.'

The choice of head pupil is usually carried out by the head in consultation with his staff. In one or two schools, however, the head boy and head girl are elected by the prefects from among their number, or the office goes to the nominee for prefect who receives the highest vote. In some

schools form prefects or sub-prefects are elected as supplementary school officers.

The powers of prefects vary considerably. Some are allowed to punish; others are not. A compromise is the right to recommend for punishment to a member of the staff. But the prefects usually have some definite form of sanctions of which detention in one form or another is most usual. Similarly, some schools allow prefects to run after-school activities on their own responsibility; others insist that a member of the staff shall also be present. It was noticed, however, that the prefect body seems able to carry a high degree of responsibility. No case was heard of in which authority, once given, had to be withdrawn owing to incompetence. One boys' grammar school has an annual 'staff holiday' when the prefects run the school. On one occasion they 'took the school' for ten days.

The way in which the prefects meet and the intervals between their meetings vary according to their functions and school traditions. A possible weakness that was pointed out at some schools was that of not planning methods whereby staff and pupils should be kept in close liaison. An extremely happy and vigorous secondary modern school covers this by the prefects meeting alone on Mondays and with the head and two members of the staff on Thursdays.

In some schools the prefects run a court at which constant offenders are hauled over the coals. This is a form of treatment which is often detested, especially by girls; a more effective system is that in which the prefects interview nuisances in order to discuss their failings with them, and to try to find a way by which the offender will be able to overcome his difficulties. 'We want prefects who are friendly', said one head. 'We all have our troubles and weaknesses, and the prefects' job is to set an example in helping their weaker brethren.'

Talks with prefect bodies brought home the different position that these groups feel that they hold in different schools. Among some there was a good deal more of personal vanity than among others, who instead revealed a much higher

sense of social responsibility. The head boy at one democratic school showed an exceptional development of social outlook. During a long talk he used 'we' throughout, obviously meaning the school as a whole. When asked about problems of discipline he replied, 'We are not so interested in catching culprits as in finding out why they misbehave.' Although this boy was an exceptionally good type, it was found as a general rule that a broadening of understanding of the prefects in their idea of their function in the community follows every extension of democratic development in the school.

Staff Meetings

The staff meeting is an institution of long standing in schools, so there is no need to analyse at length this aspect of school democracy. The survey did reveal, however, some facts relating to staff meetings which throw new light on them, and which are relevant at this point because the quality of pupil participation and co-operation is obviously closely related to that which exists between head and staff.

Three heads complained that, when they first came to their schools, they found that the type of staff meeting that was customary was not democratic at all. It was held rarely, almost always at the decision of the head alone, and was more for promulgating the head's ideas than for a general discussion of problems. Considerable difficulty was experienced in stirring these meetings to democratic life because the members of the staff had been long inured to voicing no opinion until the head had given a lead. It is significant that, when a change had been brought about, a much happier spirit developed among the staff and an enhanced enthusiasm for their work. Thus, not only the holding of staff meetings, but the holding of the *right sort* of meetings is an important democratic issue. A change in the pattern of staff–head formal relations which produces an increased sense of participation can prove most stimulating to the staff. 'I can't get them home at night', one head said of his staff, in a school where head, staff, and pupils are always busy in some exciting

project. It would seem, therefore, that it is quite easy to waste available sources of enthusiasm by allowing the staff meeting to become too formal and perfunctory.

Inquiry into the frequency of staff meetings led to the discovery that in some schools the function of staff meetings is changing. So long as a school follows a more or less stereotyped pattern of life, a meeting once or twice a term suffices, but as soon as a school accepts a fuller responsibility for preparing its pupils for life, a need develops for more frequent consultation both of the formal and informal kind. For example a modern secondary school that used to find meetings at the opening and close of term ample now meets weekly in order that everyone may keep in touch with what is going on and ideas be exchanged. It was stated that there was no comparison between these staff meetings and those held formerly; the old were mechanical and boring; the new are alive and enjoyable.

A third point made was that the system of government, once common, by which the head made his wishes known directly to the members of the staff concerned without any general consultation—never a very efficient method—breaks down completely when the school community becomes more unified, because then an alteration at any point is sure to have considerable repercussions at others. Wide consultation—not necessarily formal so long as it is thorough and frequent—seems to contribute considerably towards happy inter-staff relations, and towards the smooth running of the school in general.

A quite new type of staff meeting also seems to be in process of evolution. Schools that are attempting to co-ordinate subjects into a correlated curriculum are finding that very frequent joint consultation between the staff team running an integrated syllabus is essential. A curriculum project planned to overcome 'bittiness' proves most stimulating to those taking part in it, but they 'have to talk lots about it' because 'a unified syllabus lives and grows—we have to keep up with it'. One head, speaking about these curriculum consultation meetings, said: 'Our new curriculum is working all

right. Staff and pupils love it—it's going ahead like wildfire. But the time needed to get together and talk about it amounts to at least one extra man's work.'

Transition

Most schools that have transferred to a democratic régime have useful advice to offer about the transition stage. The outstanding points are:

1. The whole school should be told why the change is to take place, and as many people as possible should be given a chance to discuss the change and make suggestions.
2. The special position of head and staff should be clearly shown.
3. It should be emphasized that the change will give more responsibilities and wider opportunities to the pupils.
4. It should be clearly shown that the powers of the School Council are only advisory, at the same time as the assurance is given that the advice, if good, *will* be taken.
5. The part which pupils of all ages have to play in the new arrangements should be made plain.
6. The purpose of the school in all its aspects should be restated.
7. There must be time given for the representatives to report back.
8. The pupils must understand why there must be some delay between the formulation of a good idea and its being put into practice.

Purpose

Undoubtedly one of the greatest advantages of self-government is that it gives the whole community a heightened corporate sense as well as increasing the feeling of significance and purpose of every pupil. In fact, the experience of democracy acts as a counteractive to the individualist competitiveness of society as a whole. But in order that the greatest good may be done by this experience, and that the various institutions of the school may be seen in a correct

social perspective, it is most important that the purpose of the school as a whole shall be clearly formulated and understood by all. The head of a school of exceptional friendliness and vitality described the school's purpose in these terms: 'We are trying to develop ourselves and one another into full personalities and useful citizens by building together as full and vital a school life as we can. We also try to learn as much as we can about the greater community outside the school and to play a part in its life whenever we have an opportunity.'

A pupil picked at random in this school, and asked what the objective of the school was, clearly understood it, and with a simple directness described it in her own terms. It is true that any school may make a declaration of its purpose; but it is only the democratic school that can make that purpose a living reality in the minds and hearts of all its members, because only a democratic school is able to convince its members that they have a personal responsibility in shaping and fulfilling the declared purpose.

Three Views on Pupil Self-Government

'The School Council'—from a school magazine

'The School Council is not a sovereign body; it has no control over the government of the school. It is an important publicity organ, in which the views and suggestions of the school are made known to the authorities, who themselves use it as a means of explaining matters of policy to the school. In addition, it is a supervisory, administrative, and advisory body. The Council's advisory functions are on the increase.'

A Senior Pupil's Written Opinion

'As our self-government has developed, the councillors feel less need to fall back on rules for the maintenance of order, and the senior school is governed more and more simply by general common sense expressed largely through officials and councillors. It cannot be over-emphasized that the essential basis of the whole working of self-government

is an atmosphere of co-operation; any feeling of staff versus children would completely vitiate its services.'

From an Assistant Master's Statement

'Every school worthy of the name must be founded on a• faith. To an important extent the children are self-governing. Obviously this is a gradual process; but our aim is men and women who can govern themselves in the truest sense; and our method is the steady increasing of the children's responsibility for the working of the community from their earliest years, so that the seniors each a high degree of real co-operation and understanding with the adults.

'Freedom is not easy; democracy is not easy; love is not easy. In a community like ours . . there are countless problems and small reason ever to feel complacent. . We believe that it is not for teachers to prescribe laws for the human spirit, but to give it a chance to grow.'

CHAPTER III

THE SOCIAL PATTERN

'The perfection of society would be a state in which there should be no impediment to the full and fair development of his moral and intellectual capabilities in every individual.'

ROBERT SOUTHEY

'In any real community each individual feels that he has a place, and in the democratic community he feels that this place gives him the field which at one and the same time stimulates his potentialities and furnishes them with the means whereby they can be actualised.'

H. G. STEAD, *The Education of a Community*

THE senior mistress of a grammar school summed up the general atmosphere of the school in which she worked when she said, 'We are more a club than a school', by which no doubt she meant that the personnel of the school were bound together more by personal ties than by a rigid pattern of organization. Nevertheless, if members of a school are to form an organic community there must be a definite warp and woof of social pattern, or the school may become nothing more than a number of isolated groups and cliques of people whose relationship is based only on overlapping function and physical propinquity. If a school is to be conscious of itself and of its purpose, there must be considerable mingling of its members, so that different activities bring different grouping into being. The efficient school community will demonstrate its ability to stimulate, and mobilize to the full, not only individual effort, but also group activity, and in addition the total energy of the whole community for such a common objective as a well-organized At Home or Christmas Sale. This chapter will consider methods employed to achieve a unified as well as a flexible social pattern within the school.

The Form

The more the democratic spirit permeates a school, the more the form is found to be a social as well as a functional

unit; it is seen not only as a convenient division for teaching purposes with the goal of reaching certain standards of achievement, but also as the most intimate social group in the whole school, a place where a specially close comradeship exists, not only between pupil and pupil, but also between pupil and form teacher. Its function is seen to include looking after the personal well-being of each member in addition to making, as a group, a useful contribution to the life of the school community.

In order to develop social consciousness within the form, regular form meetings are held in many schools; sometimes once a fortnight, sometimes weekly. It is found that such meetings should take place in school hours if they are to have the prestige and social recognition which is essential to their producing valuable results.

The head of a girls' secondary modern school, which has concentrated on the enhancement of form life, makes the point that there should be sufficient officials in a form to give every member the chance of responsibility at some time.

On the morning when a fourth-form meeting was attended in this school, one of the pupils was leaving to join another form. The form captain and deputy made brief speeches of regrets and good wishes, to which the leaver replied, saying how much she regretted having to transfer, but that her future career made it necessary. The little ceremony was all most spontaneous and delightful. There followed brisk business which lasted twenty minutes: a report of the form treasurer, the reading of one or two letters (one from an 'adopted' ship), discussions on a recent form visit, and a statement of future plans. The current section from the form's log-book, kept by the form secretary, was then read. That type of form life obviously provides first-class social training. At another school an equally business-like meeting of 11-year-olds was witnessed.

In order to prevent such form life from becoming too self-centred, it must be associated with the wider world not only of the school as a whole, but also, to a lesser extent, of the neighbourhood—this by visits, surveys, service, and the like.

Grammar schools find it difficult to give time for the latter, but some modern schools are very active in this regard. Links between form and school may be of many kinds: some School Councils are built up from form representation; sometimes Library Committees, Dramatic Committees, &c., are composed of form representatives; service for the school is sometimes organized on a form basis; while the keeping of a form log-book which the head reads and signs seems to be a most valuable incentive to an active form life. Form captains were elected in almost all the schools visited.

Some schools use the form meeting as a means of discussing disciplinary matters and the personal problems of its members. In one grammar school the head boy from time to time visits forms—grouped in 'years'—to discuss general school matters, raise points of behaviour, and hear the views of the form members. In some schools prefects or sub-prefects are permanently seconded to certain forms to help with meetings and other activities.

The Pattern of Social Integration

The mingling of forms of the same year takes place automatically in sets, study groups, games groups, &c. Some schools occasionally call the 'year' together as a group, or attach certain privileges or duties to boys of a certain age. (The opinion, however, was more than once expressed that 'mere seniority should have no special rights'.) One way and another, therefore, very little difficulty is found in linking up and mixing up pupils of the same age-group. A wide association is a matter of course.

The same cannot be said, however, of what might be called vertical social integration. The commonest way of grouping boys of different ages is in the house; but there is a good deal of difference of opinion about the value of house division in a day school. In the boarding-school the house is normally an intimate grouping of forty to fifty, among whom a close sense of intimacy is engendered. In a boarding-school, in fact, the house takes on at least part of the social function of the form in a day-school. But the arbitrary division of

a day-school of 500 or so into three or four houses can very easily become meaningless. One head, who is trying to work out a better method of vertical integration, said that 'Our houses only come into existence on Sports Day or when there's a football match'. 'It is difficult to get a real house loyalty' was another opinion.

Schools have reacted to this difficulty in a number of ways. One method is to give the house sufficient functions for it to become a real part of the school's life. One school holds House Council meetings fortnightly, and carries on school service, and social service, on a house basis. Several schools run a competition for house shields towards which points for work, games, behaviour, and service all count. A boys' school puts on house plays in the Easter Term—three one-act plays, each produced entirely by the house concerned. These are presented to an audience of parents and friends, are not competitive, but serve to reveal talent for the main performance in the Christmas Term. Another school runs house choral societies. By such means house-consciousness may be consistently maintained.

Another method is to relate the house to a neighbourhood division. We have already mentioned the school in which boys from any two of the wards of the neighbourhood are grouped into a house. Each ward has a master in charge—this produces a vertical grouping of about fifty with a member of the staff as group leader, adviser, and friend. The area division (one school divides arbitrarily by the points of the compass) has the advantage that members of the house live close to each other, so that association out of school is facilitated, but often leads to difficulties of unbalanced proportions, and there are always outsiders who have to be grafted on. A boys' grammar school tried having a large number of small houses. This made inter-house games difficult but produced a more real social unit. Evacuation broke up this experiment and the system has only just been reinstated. It is worth noting that a School Council, when discussing the house system in the school, voted against its continuance.

Some schools dispense with houses and run clubs, service corps, and other such associations on a basis designed to group pupils of different ages together. To run a society through a committee of form representatives often proves remarkably successful. A dramatic society run on this basis, with the talented seniors being *ex-officio* members of the committee, seems to have many advantages. The whole school knows what is going on by the reporting back of the form representatives; and its help can be quickly mobilized behind a production. Choral societies, school orchestras, and music generally, play a highly important part in some schools, while some schools run Hobbies Afternoons once a week, where pupils choose what activities they will follow from a large number of possibilities. In fact there are many possible ways of extending associations between pupils of different ages. The agreement is in the principle—that the atomization of school society must be avoided by careful planning to produce its opposite.

The Assembly

However complete the horizontal and vertical social integration of the school may be, it is found that a full social consciousness and community spirit cannot be attained without a well-designed Assembly conducted with dignity and ceremony. Schools that had to dispense with an Assembly during the war remark on the disintegrating effect upon the community that this had. One school, instead of holding a series of short daily Assemblies, holds two long ones (45 minutes) every week in order to assure that opportunity is given to develop 'total group-consciousness'. On other days only a brief act of worship takes place.

Many schools of outstanding community development stressed the importance of the *completeness* of the Assembly. If the Assembly is really to weld the community together in an act of dedication to its highest purpose, it must be a demonstration of the wholeness of the life, functioning, and purpose of the school community. In some schools the Assembly is the linchpin of the school life; future activities

are announced and discussed; reports of activities read; members thanked for useful service, or congratulated on effort or success; visitors introduced—in fact nothing comes amiss that can help to make the gathering both enjoyable and meaningful. In one school the Assembly is also a folk moot at which matters are raised for general discussion; not from the floor, but by previous notice to the head who, at the conclusion of prayers, invites the pupil or member of the staff to come on to the platform to say what he wants to. A boarding school holds its Assembly in the evening. 'We like to tie up the day's loose ends, go to bed friends with each other, and start the new day afresh', said the head. Anyone who has attended a well-conducted Assembly—and some witnessed were most impressive—must be brought to realize the great social value this gathering can have.

The Principle of Accessibility

A feature most marked in all schools where the community development is above average is the care given to making head, staff, and pupils fully accessible to each other. 'My function', said one head, 'is to deal with human beings. If I am to run this school properly, I have to leave my office work until the evening.' Within an hour, four members of the staff, two parents, and half a dozen pupils dropped in to see her; naturally and without ceremony, for a word of advice, or to clear up some point, or to fetch something. 'It's like this always', she explained.

At a boys' school, where a similar atmosphere of mutual friendliness and helpfulness prevailed, a large electric globe has been placed above the head's door. Below it is a clear notice: 'If the light is on I'm busy; if it's not, walk in without knocking.'

It would seem that, just as a good Assembly heightens the awareness of a school to its functions and purpose, so the accessibility of the staff, and especially of the head, is a great help towards the establishment of a social atmosphere and attitude of friendliness-with-purpose which is one of the most convincing aspects of school democracy. 'Most heads

are much too detached', said one of them. 'It was only when I learnt *not* to be that I really began to enjoy my job.' Such enjoyment is infectious. Democratic schools are happy schools. It goes without saying that too much 'office work' falling on heads and teachers is an obstruction to good social development.

Staff–Pupil Co-operation

There is a great difference between a teacher who is *in charge* of an activity and one who is *sharing* it. In some schools visited the feeling with regard to school activities was that the children 'ought to' have them and that it was the 'duty' of the staff to look after them; in others activities were run only if there was enthusiasm for them, either from the staff or pupils; nor would fresh activities be launched without the approval of the School Council. Activities founded in this way lead to a happy sense of sharing and co-operation between staff and pupils.

A very high standard of co-operation was also found when a school had established a reputation in a certain field. Thus, one school was well known for its musical attainments and never had any difficulty in bringing staff and pupils keenly and actively together in the production of a school concert; another had a dramatic tradition and even succeeded in putting on Shaw under 'impossible' conditions of evacuation —to the delight of the village to which the school was sent.

Any willingly shared participation of staff and pupils for some common end results in an enrichment of community life. Some schools first caught the full implications of this after running a Harvest Camp, School Sale, or some other large-scale activity. In fact, the social fabric becomes a whole when pupils and staff cease to be 'we' and 'they' and become 'us'. Some really remarkable achievements were recorded. One joint effort produced £150 for charity; another £600.

Magazines

In many schools the magazine is a combined operation carried out by a staff–pupil committee; but the productivity

of this arrangement—and the liveliness of the magazine—seem to depend considerably on just how the team is made up. Any attempt of the staff to control the magazine too closely in order to produce, to quote one head, 'a show-piece instead of an organ of the school' seems to kill pupil enthusiasm. The most vigorous productions—though not necessarily the most finished—seem to result when the staff side of the partnership provides guidance rather than control. Many arrangements are obviously planned thus. One successful magazine, published termly, is produced by an all-pupil committee with one teacher in association with it in order to maintain continuity. Another magazine is run by an editorial board of five, appointed by the School Council, but working with the English master. Another still is free from all staff supervision apart from a friendly censorship exercised by a member of the staff. Some magazines are, however, entirely pupil-produced. 'I believe in letting them learn from their own mistakes', was a head's comment on this.

Some excellent form magazines—produced by pupils with help from the form teacher—were also examined. In one instance, a second-year form printed an edition of 40 copies, sold them, and gave the profit to charity. Such productions are a source of great satisfaction to their editors and staff.

In some schools the Wall Newspaper is a common forum for staff and pupils. One such paper—mainly the result of the enthusiasm of a single pupil—offers an interesting proof of the social consciousness that school democracy develops. The editor makes great play on the well-being of the school, and never misses an opportunity for collecting different views from both staff and pupils on every controversial issue that arises.

An example of the social value of school democracy was given by one pupil magazine. It was started during the war when the official school magazine ceased publication. Early copies of this magazine show a rather silly tendency to dig at the staff. Shortly after this magazine appeared, however, self-government was instituted. Later numbers of the pupil magazine show no traces of the former urge to challenge

authority at all costs; instead they are full of the school's activities and suggestions for improvements; often with staff and pupil opinions side by side. Comparison of different numbers of the magazine gives an interesting—and convincing—proof of how school democracy helps to make the pupil body at one with the staff.

Politics in the School

A mark that a school community is not yet quite sure of itself is the presence of fear that a clash of ideas may produce unfriendliness. Consequently, many schools that are already well advanced towards community in other respects are a little afraid of politics. In bolder schools, however, nothing is barred, and they seem to gain rather than lose by the courageous approach to the truth that people's opinions differ on most things; and by their realizing that such differences are not a bar to, but an aspect of, virile community life. A number of schools ran most successful mock elections; whereas others did not do so for fear of arousing bad feeling.

One worry in this regard is fear of the effect upon the pupils that their discovery of ideological differences among the staff may have. The head of a school where a mock election had been held remarked as a comment upon this: 'You don't suppose they don't know about the differences, anyway, do you? Much better to bring it all out into the open, then people can learn the lesson of how to disagree and still be friends.'

A certain timidity was also observed in the selection of newspapers. For example, one school took in only *The Times*, *Telegraph*, *Mail*, *Express*, and *Graphic*; another included the *News Chronicle*, *Herald*, and *Daily Worker* in its list. 'Our job is to teach them to search out the truth for themselves,' was the comment of a member of the staff in the latter school.

An opinion expressed by one staff was that, if they deliberately shut out any of the aspects of life that a child would be brought into contact with outside, then the child would sense the omission and, to that extent, lose confidence

in the school. 'If our values are right we haven't anything to be afraid of,' said one head, 'and if they aren't, we can only find out by putting ourselves to the test.'

It would seem, therefore, that one of the objectives of a democratic school is to pattern a society for itself that is not only pleasant and purposeful, but also frank and courageous.

Time for Association

Schools that have gradually evolved a democratic system that suits them report an increasing conviction that, if democracy is worth including, it is worth giving time to. The effective social functioning of a school, in fact, needs an allotment of time just as much as the instructional and physical sides of school life. But, with a heavily burdened time-table, this is not easy to arrange. However, some schools are trying schemes designed to overcome this difficulty.

A quite common plan is to run to a time-table following a cycle of six or seven days instead of a week. One school visited is organized on the basis of a ten-day cycle. A modern school balances the length of morning and afternoon sessions of work and runs to a cycle of eleven sessions, taking Friday afternoons off regularly for social purposes, and other mornings or afternoons when necessary. By this means, any breaks do not upset the balance of the time-table. One or two schools have reduced the number of working periods per day; thus freeing time either for private study or activities of one sort or another during the latter part of the afternoon. Whether the reduction in total instructional time over the course of a year affects academic standards remains to be seen; but the opinion of the schools concerned is that the development of the social side, and the reduction in the number of teaching periods, will result in a more consistent application and a higher general level of alertness and flexibility of mind so that no loss will be experienced. 'Better a five-period day at full pressure than a seven-period one in second gear,' was one way in which this idea was expressed. The need to ease the tension of incessant study in the grammar schools is very commonly felt. Many teachers agree

with the Spens Report that 'it is a grave mistake to fill the time-table with periods of formal instruction' (p. 89).

It was often stressed that a healthy social framework requires that every member and every group of the school shall understand its place and its contribution. Individual or group must feel significant. Some heads put down a good deal of internal trouble in schools to the reactions of individuals and groups that feel left out. In this connexion, it was suggested that too much 'sixth-form adulation' may result in leaders and led becoming detached from each other. 'The sixth form may be the flower, but it's not the root,' said one grammar school head. Pressure of time is one factor tending to break up the school society into isolated groups. This is especially a source of weakness when the overall pressure upon the time of the staff and other leading personnel prevents the brief informal periods of personal discussion that can do so much to keep human relations good and organization smooth. This was advanced as another reason for shortening the daily period of formal study.

Personal Contentment

During the survey, the opinion was a good many times expressed that the happiness of pupils and staff was the best criterion of the total success of the school. It is necessary to go a little farther into this as one or two schools were interviewed where the head stressed the need to 'get them on' as though this were an essentially different goal from that of happiness.

What, then, is the source of the personal happiness of all participants which is such a pleasing feature of school democracy? It is not easy to analyse. We can, however, start by saying what is not responsible. As stated in Chapter I, personal happiness is not furthered by the school's setting out to give everyone a good time in the narrower sense; sincere endeavour is outstanding in these schools. Nor does the best sort of happy atmosphere exist because the life of the school is free and easy, if by that is meant 'slack'; because slackness produces frustration rather than happiness, and the demo-

cratic school is remarkably free from frustration. Nor is personal contentment alone due to the fact that the kindly social pattern of authority reduces the total strain; the democratic school community makes bigger demands upon its members than the authoritarian school. The outstanding degree of personal contentment to be found in the democratic schools is rather the result of the inner satisfaction derived from a sense of complete functioning. For a child to be happy he must be developing satisfactorily in all his several parts; he must be conscious of achievement in attaining a better grasp of how to live; in gaining a widening understanding of life and a surer adjustment to the total environment around him through the acquisition of skill and knowledge and the practice of living as a complete person. Such experience releases the child's personality, increases self-confidence, removes compulsion to revolt against what is restrictive, oppressive, and unjust, and leaves him on good terms with himself and others. The result is a deep sense of personal contentment and a spontaneous willingness to give himself enthusiastically to the business of living and learning.

The adult members of a democratic school community appear to draw the satisfaction upon which their contentment is based from an enhanced feeling of personal value and effectiveness. They seem to find a creative joy in their work that is not experienced by staffs called on merely to carry out their tasks efficiently without being encouraged to participate in the planning and running of the school as a whole.

It is this personal fulfilment and contentment of both staff and pupils that seems to contribute considerably to the pleasant emotional climate. A visitor, after experiencing for a day the combination of vitality with courtesy in the personal relations to be found in the experienced school communities, put his feelings as an extension of Wells's famous epigram. He said: 'I have seen the future of social relationships; and it works.'

Briefly, then, personal contentment appears to be a natural consequence of a good social atmosphere and a well-

co-ordinated community. Individual and community both feel effective; and both are happy as a result.

The Spirit of Democracy

It must here be said yet again that to attempt an objective account of the methods and ideas of the democratic school leaves behind a sense of impotence and inadequacy because the *experience* of democracy in school is so much more than the *means* towards that end. A school that has a pervading spirit of democracy has something which cannot easily be set down; it is more joyous in its ways, happier in its personal relationships, clearer and more determined in purpose, and at the same time gayer and freer in its whole way of life, than a school lacking this spirit. The last two chapters have set out some of the methods used successfully by schools as a means of assisting their democratic way of life; but it is possible to give a school—especially a small school—a very fine democratic spirit with hardly any formal machinery, just as it is also possible to have all the machinery but yet miss the spirit. Let it be said again, even at the risk of irritating by repetition, that each is the complement of the other. The spirit, if it exists without the machinery, may depend too much on the presence of an outstanding personality of great breadth of vision and generosity of heart, and will only live in the school so long as the influence of that personality remains; the machinery, if it exists without the spirit, will give an outlet to certain ideas and personalities which otherwise would remain submerged, but it will fail to release the energy of the whole community in a positive and transforming mode of life that is both highly personal and highly creative.

Both spirit and machinery are therefore needed. All the ways and means outlined above have been proved in use; but when all has been studied about method, after visiting schools at various stages of community self-realization, the conviction is left that the highest success is achieved by those who succeeded in wedding spirit with method. And here again one is brought back to the importance of personality,

because a fusion of spirit with method can only be fully achieved when at least some of the leading personalities of the community are living examples of that fusion. The virtue of a good school democracy is that it perpetuates the spirit of democracy, using such machinery as is found to serve that end, and constantly renewing among its members the essential qualities of personality upon which democracy depends.

Sample School Organizations

The two preceding chapters give a fairly comprehensive but also, perhaps, rather confusing picture of the varied patterns of social fabric to be found in democratic school communities. We feel, therefore, that it may help if we include here examples of school constitutions, at their present state of development, as worked out in two schools visited. These are given, of course, *not* as models, but as good average samples:

I

Prefects. Nominations are made by fifth and sixth forms voting in secret ballot. The nominations are arranged to exceed the number of prefects required and the staff make a final selection. They meet as required.

Head Pupil. Elected by prefects plus staff.

School Council. Meets fortnightly. Consists of prefects, two representatives from each form, and representatives of the staff. Is free to cover whole field of school life except curriculum. The agenda is prepared by a School Council Committee composed of staff and prefects.

Form Meeting. Held weekly to discuss own affairs and the agenda of the next School Council. Keeps minutes.

Staff Meetings. Held regularly. Matters settled by vote, with head retaining right of veto.

Staff and Prefects Tea. A business meeting held twice a year.

Societies, Games, &c. Run by elected officers.

Information. The whole school is kept fully informed of all activities through the Assembly and the reporting back of the form representatives on the School Council.

Magazine. Run by co-editors; one member of the staff and one pupil. The pupil editor is elected.

It will be observed that the above organization is based upon the form; as contrast the second example will be of a school that builds its school democracy around the house.

II

House Meetings. Pupils and staff are grouped in three houses. Meetings are held fortnightly, at the conclusion of a shortened afternoon. All members of the House attend. House and school matters are discussed. The chair is taken alternately by a pupil and by one of the house staff. The P.T. master and mistress are not attached to houses.

House and School Councils. Each house holds elections annually in September. First-year pupils have no representation; second and third years elect two representatives each (one boy and one girl). The fourth, fifth, and sixth years each elect two boys and two girls. Each 'year' nominates, seconds, and elects its own representatives. A nomination must be accompanied by a written statement in support of the candidate. In addition, the fifth and sixth years, voting together, elect one additional boy and girl from their total membership. These representatives together form the House Council which meets separately from the House Meeting when required.

The representatives of the fifth and sixth years thus total 5 boys and 5 girls. The fifth and sixth years and the members of the staff attached to the house elect 3 boys and 3 girls from these as School Councillors. The School Council consists of the 18 (6 from each house) pupil representatives sitting with all the staff, the head acting as chairman. It is called at the request of the pupil councillors or staff, the head boy being responsible for the agenda.

Prefects. The School Councillors are automatically prefects also. They elect the head boy and head girl from among themselves.

Staff Meetings. At the opening of term, and as required at request of head or staff. Sometimes the staff will meet shortly before a council meeting if an item on the agenda warrants it. The pupil councillors may also meet on their own. The final decision is reached at the School Council meeting. The head retains the right of veto but, in practice, does not need to use it.

Form Meetings. Held fortnightly to discuss form or general school business. The value of these meetings seems to depend a good deal on the form teachers. Some say 'we can't find much to do', others 'we never have enough time to get through everything'. Issues finally appearing on the council agenda can sometimes be traced back to a form meeting. If something big or controversial is afoot, form and house meetings will both devote time to it.

Societies, Games, &c. Run by elected pupil officers, sometimes with staff associated; sometimes not.

Information. Announcements at Assembly and reporting back to house meetings.

Magazine. Run by staff and pupil committee.

It should be noticed that the above samples have been given, for the sake of simplicity, without reference to Parents Associations or other links with society outside the school.

CHAPTER IV

DISCIPLINE AND AUTHORITY

'Children are to be won to liberal studies by exhortation and rational motives, and on no account to be forced thereto by whipping.'

PLUTARCH

'We are learning some of the conditions in which reactivity[1] declines. Friendly, unaffected social relations are the most indispensable condition.'

G. W. ALLPORT, Professor of Psychology, Harvard University, in *Occupational Psychology*, April 1946

IT is clear that there are two distinct types of discipline and two completely different conceptions of leadership operating in our schools. One disciplinary system is based on the belief that discipline *as such* is good for young people; that it moulds their untutored wills, and curbs their animal tendency to wild and noisy behaviour. This is the discipline of 'power over'; to be imposed by the few in official positions on the many who are not. With this idea of discipline goes the conception of a leader as one who directs and instructs, who 'tells what to do'.

The second type of discipline is what may best be described as social discipline. This is built on the conception of the school as a co-operating community in which generally accepted standards of behaviour are needed in the interests of everyone and must be insisted upon *because they are to the general advantage*. Discipline is seen not as something which the staff dispenses and the pupils take; nor as a system by which young spirits may be tamed; but just as what is sensible and necessary if a group of people are to get on happily together. Its object, therefore, is not to restrict but to set free; not to curb the energies of the young, but to provide a social framework within which they may be fully and usefully expended.

The idea of authority that accompanies this attitude to discipline is also riveted in the conception of a vigorous

[1] Reactivity = resentment of authority.

community life. The function of authority is seen as correctly to interpret the needs of the community, whether those of the whole, those of groups within the community, or of the individual members, so that the total purpose of the community may be fulfilled as completely as possible in all its aspects. In fact, authority's job is seen as not to 'do the bossing' but to lead, co-ordinate, guide, interpret, make articulate, and serve as an example and a stimulus.

It cannot be too strongly stated that the survey has revealed not merely a difference in *methods* of discipline within our schools, but a difference of *approach* so complete that it is confusing to use the same word to describe both types. The rest of this chapter will be devoted to an attempt to describe the pattern of discipline that is found in what we have called the democratic school communities.

The Authority of Function

In any school community there are those who have authority as a permanent right in view of their special status, i.e. the head and staff. In addition, there are those whose authority rests on election or appointment for a period—prefects, games captains, librarians, &c. In many schools the authority of pupils is not only regarded as different in *degree* but also different in *character* from that of the staff. The democratic school appears to make no such distinction. This does not in effect reduce the authority of head and staff—indeed it seems to enhance it—but it does relate authority to function and avoid the conception of authority as an absolute and isolated power, owned by some and not by others. The democratic view of authority, whereas it fully respects the position of the staff, adds to the respect and prestige accorded to those who are elected to positions of responsibility. For instance, we find in one case that the pupil chairman of the School Council, after consultation with staff and head, draws up the Agenda for the Council. In one school the head boy reported that he had had to raise an objection when a member of the staff had 'ticked-off' a prefect in public. He said that, as he had to arrange the prefects' duties, it was quite impossible

to do his job properly if complaints were not brought to *him* in the first place. He also pointed out that, if a prefect were scolded in public, it had a demoralizing effect upon the whole prefect body, and reduced the prestige in which they were held by members of the school. He concluded by saying that his object had not been to save a prefect who was guilty of negligence, but to see that the matter was dealt with in a way that would increase and not decrease the value of the prefects. Although some teachers might consider such an attitude presumptuous, it follows logically from the community approach to discipline. It is only by linking authority to function that social recognition will accrue—as it should—to a position of responsibility. Incidentally, just because in the above instance the matter was raised, instead of being left to rankle, a new understanding between staff and prefects was arrived at which proved of great help to both. In the less exalted positions—pupil librarian, bell-boy, games cupboard tidier, and the rest—the same principle should apply. Each should be given the authority that is necessary to enable him to carry out his duties efficiently.

An additional effect of this conception of authority is that all members of the community feel themselves equally bound by rules that apply to the community as a whole. In order to protect a stretch of grass, one school imposed a 1*d.* fine for walking on it. Several members of the staff were among those apprehended by the prefects and had to pay up! A similar example is the school at which the staff pay fines for retaining library books too long, like anybody else. As a head pointed out, it is hard for a young person to get his values straight if what is of common application does not apply to all.

It was rather disturbing to find in some schools visited that pupils who were asked what they would like changed at once mentioned some privilege they felt to be unjust. But in fully democratic communities there was hardly any of this rankling sense of injustice. As one boy on being asked this question put it: 'But we *do* the changing.'

The recognition of authority as a feature of function and responsibility seems to lead to sounder relationships all round

and a greater degree of pulling together. For the young there is always a temptation to flaunt an isolated and imposed authority; the authority of function is much more willingly accepted and respected in its own right. It also removes any need for the staff to 'pose as perfect', as one young woman teacher explained. There is something rather delightful about a head taking an intelligence test along with the whole school and coming out third, and another accepting a boy's challenge to a game of chess and being beaten, without either of them losing any status by it. A games master described how he was often challenged to a singles match at tennis by one of the sixth-formers, and how he was caught 'on the hop' by one of them early in the season and beaten 6–0. He said that, far from suffering by this fall from grace, it enabled him to make the point of the dire results that follow getting out of practice, and to be on better terms than ever with the sixth-formers, using them as sparring partners to get back his form. In contrast, teachers in authoritarian schools seem afraid to admit any frailty in case it should weaken their position, which produces a reciprocation in eagerness on the part of the pupils to score a point in 'catching the teacher out'. Thus, the functional type of authority seems to ease tension between staff and pupils, while it is not only as efficient, but more efficient, because it does not arouse antagonism.

Social Discipline

What are the views on sanctions in the democratic school? There is much variety of opinion, but four beliefs were common to most schools visited:

1. A lack of confidence in set forms of punishment.
2. A belief in building up social sense rather than conditioning by fear.
3. The conviction that a child must be taught to accept responsibility for his (or her) actions.
4. A preference for group co-operation rather than individualist competition as a means of stimulating effort.

Views on corporal punishment, lines, and stereotyped penalties of other kinds varied from 'such punishment is useless' to 'we sometimes impose punishment, but not often'. Detention is fairly common and sometimes courts or tribunals are set up to deal with petty offences. The feeling about these is that children tend to be too harsh in sentencing each other and that there should always be a countercheck on the court's findings. However, courts of pupils set up to *condemn* as distinct from courts set up to *help* were strongly disapproved of by some schools. One head recommends that punishment should *always* be constructive. For example, his way of dealing with persistent unpunctuality, when it occurs, is to make the laggard report to him personally ten minutes early every day for a week in order to practise being to time.

The way a Court of Guidance works is by calling a persistent offender before the prefects—or a committee of prefects and staff—and discussing his failings with him as difficulties that he has to overcome. 'Why did you do it?' and 'How can we help you not to do it again?' appear to be the correct basis for the discussion. Several principals make a similar approach to troublesome children. The advantage of this method is that it accepts that the culprit has a personal point of view and saves him from feeling either ostracized or heroic because he is in trouble. Of course 'why did you do it'? should not be pressed, especially in serious misdemeanours, because, in fact, the child may not know what were the motives prompting him.

The first action of one head, when some rule is persistently broken, is to find out why. 'On one occasion there was a great deal of climbing on the roof to get back lost balls: such climbing was forbidden for reasons of safety. The boys were assured that the lost balls would be recovered and returned to them if they approached the groundsman or a prefect, but they still persisted in climbing up. Inquiry showed that at one time the groundsman's ladder had been kept handy near the gym, but he had taken to locking it away and only collecting the balls periodically. This meant that the owners of balls, unless they were near at the time the groundsman

cleared the roofs, would not get their property back. Also, some boys used to climb up after school and would then go off with all the balls they could find. These circumstances made it necessary for owners to climb after their balls as soon as they were lost, and soon a boy who dared not came to be considered as 'rather a sissy' The restoration of the ladder to its old position immediately cleared up the trouble, whereas detention and other punishments had failed to do so. Running in the corridors was also cured by analysing the causes of it and getting rid of them. Whenever it becomes necessary to carry out a research into a 'crime wave', this head holds a preliminary meeting with the prefects to talk over how best to approach the problem. His view is 'There's always a reason for misbehaviour other than personal naughtiness and we should find *what* is to blame in the situation before we blame the person'.

Stars and black marks in some form are used in some schools, not only to count as a personal gain or loss, but as part of a house competition for a challenge shield. This system appears to achieve good results; the main difficulty is getting a sufficiently even standard of award amongst members of the staff.

In no school visited was there anything comparable to the principle 'If a boy gets sent to me I cane him' found often enough even ten years ago. One head emphasized that it was unjust to mete out the same punishment in all cases because his staff varied so much in methods and power of discipline. 'What I do,' he said, 'if a boy is sent to me, is to give him something useful to occupy him until the period is over, then it is understood that the teacher comes to me and the three of us talk it over.'

The head of a co-educational secondary school keeps a book hanging outside her study. If a pupil is a nuisance in form, the teacher sends the child for the book. The lesson, time, date, and nature of offence are entered in the book and both teacher and pupil sign it. This is found to settle the child down satisfactorily. Later the head sends for the pupil and teacher and the matter is discussed as a mutual

problem, the approach to the child being 'How can we help you'?

The right of the child to appeal against treatment by prefect or teacher is conceded in some schools. The principle of conducting these appeals is that no one party shall be heard without the others. This rule makes unjustified appeals very rare.

Very few of the visited schools still use corporal punishment. Most of them condemned it as a relic of the past that should not be necessary in any school. A debate on corporal punishment took place in a girls' school during a visit. Two opinions expressed were 'It makes the culprit more rebellious' and 'Boys who have been caned show off and think they are heroes'.

After a burst of noisiness in one co-educational school the principal told the school at Assembly that, on the following day, the school would run to authoritarian discipline; then they could see what it was like and would be able to decide whether or not they preferred it to community self-discipline. Head, staff, and prefects carefully planned the whole day. The pupils were regimented everywhere, absolute silence in school was insisted upon, and lessons were conducted without any of the usual moving about for project activities and discussion circles. Rather to the surprise of the staff, all the pupils entered into the spirit of the thing and the day went through without a hitch The next day the head asked for a vote on whether they should 'go on like yesterday, or behave sensibly with freedom'. The school chose the latter; and that was the end of the bout of noisiness.

To sum up the above we might usefully quote a senior master. 'In my day' he said, 'a teacher would often shout at us, "If I say so, it's right". But in this school we prefer the slogan "If it's sensible, it's right" '

Self-Discipline

The object of social discipline is to develop self-respect, self-confidence, and self-discipline. Several people interviewed made the point that to impose discipline is to deny

the child the chance of ever finding out what discipline really is.

This, of course, links up closely with the social pattern. It is only by experiencing responsibility and authority that children can come fully to appreciate that freedom and discipline are complementary. Authoritarian discipline tends to confirm in the young person's mind the infantile conception of liberty as licence; social discipline brings it home that liberty entails making personal sacrifices in the common interest; it means 'giving up things' as the personal price that has to be paid for a society in which decent behaviour and friendliness between people are possible.

Many features of school democracy combine to help develop self-discipline. For one thing co-operation replaces competition in as many fields of life as possible. Some schools not only get on without marks, prizes, or orders of any sort, but reach an unusually high standard of academic attainment without using these incentives. One girls' grammar school that believes in 'no competition' has a record of winning six open scholarships in one year! But these schools stress that every child is 'in competition with itself'. Such an approach stimulates self-discipline.

The fact that there is no kudos to be gained in fighting an authority that is based on social discipline militates against laziness, rudeness, and noisiness, and directs a child's energy constantly in a positive direction. The struggle to overcome obstacles in order to achieve positive success develops self-confidence and instils a habit of determination. Apathy is also found less frequently in democratic schools—indeed in some no trace of it was to be found—no doubt because all are consciously playing a part and feel that they matter. This creates incentive and acts as an encouragement. Apathy is acquiescence without purpose; to get rid of it or reduce it is, therefore, to increase the incidence of self-discipline in a school. The active practice of self-government, in fact, teaches young people to govern themselves.

Self-government also exposes the impotence of grousing. The grouser may get a reputation as a staff-baiter in an

authoritarian school; under democracy he finds himself told quite sharply by his fellows to raise the matter in Form or School Council and to 'snap out of it!' Pupils of this type, therefore, also begin to look around for social recognition in more purposeful ways; to accept their share of responsibility for the wrongs that they grouse about; and to put their backs into life a little instead of idling and grousing by turns. In fact, social discipline appears to develop self-discipline in two main ways: it makes a stimulating challenge to the positive personalities of the school community; and it exposes the shams and compensations of the negative personalities and therefore helps to draw them also into creative activity through which their power of self-discipline will gradually get built up.

Rules or No Rules?

In the matter of school rules a similar diversity of practice within unity of principle was found to that prevailing in disciplinary techniques as a whole. The unity is the approach, summed up by one teacher as 'a rule is only of any use if you can't get on without it'; the diversity is in the extent to which this principle is applied—as a written constitution, or a tradition of behaviour, or a combination of both.

Some schools avoid written rules altogether. One tells its boys 'There are only three rules here: Be courteous, be co-operative, and be sensible.' A girls' modern school, where there are 'no marks, no competition, and no cheating', is simpler still. Its one rule is 'Love your neighbour as yourself'.

But other schools believe that all rules should be written and hung up in several parts of the school. They maintain that this helps newcomers and enables the children to 'know where they stand'. Any new rule or amendment to an old one is first brought before the council, then, if passed and ratified by the head, it is promulgated after Assembly and entered on the rule boards. A woman teacher expressed it as her view that written rules were a good idea so long as they were constantly under review by the School Council.

One school that posts up lists of rules sums up with: 'A breach of common sense is to be considered a breach of these rules.'

Another expressed condition was: 'A rule must benefit everyone concerned.' Failing to record rules, it is stated, frequently leads to confusion. The importance of keeping minutes at staff meetings and council meetings was stressed, not only because it sets an example of correct behaviour, but because difficulties soon arise if there are no minutes kept. The opinion that rules should be on view where everyone can refer to them at need is extended, in some schools, to include much other information. This idea is that everything that *can* be in writing and displayed is better so than not, including the names of all those in official positions; not only that the information shall be available, but also as a proper part of social recognition for work undertaken on behalf of the community. To set new members of the staff right about the ways of the school, a grammar school issues a brochure of general information to all new-comers. No school visited actually distributes a 'Pupils' Handbook', but one or two have thought about doing so.

Approach to Non-co-operators

The question 'What do you do with your misfits?' was asked at a number of schools. The general opinion was that antisocial behaviour should be tackled by trying to tempt the offender to build up his prestige through socially useful action instead of by fighting authority. At one school, if a child is found in trouble or has 'lost face', the head gives her a job to do so that she can regain her shaken confidence.

'The first thing to do,' one head suggested, 'is to start by looking upon a non-co-operator not as a nuisance and a sinner but as a failure of the community.' The next step, it seems, is to discuss the boy's[1] problem of behaviour with him in a friendly way in order to convince him that no one is against him personally; and finally plenty of opportunity for

[1] Here, as in many other places, the masculine is used to cover both sexes.

a socially useful outlet must be put in his way. One head maintained that such an approach, if patiently kept up, would win any child over who was not handicapped by a really bad home background. Most schools put down persistent nuisances either to bad, broken, or incompetent homes or to the child's inability to cope with the work of the school. 'C' streams often seem to give trouble for this reason. But one or two schools deny that the less intelligent boys are especially inclined to be antisocial so long as their form teachers like working with them and are able to convey to them that they have useful parts to play in the school. Some very pleasant 'C' groups were visited which gave support to this opinion.

Stream Division

The pros and cons of dividing schools into forms graded on an I.Q. basis gave rise to a good deal of discussion in conversations with heads and staffs. The value of dividing for subjects is not in question, but a number of teachers seem to feel that labelling forms A, B, C, D, and sometimes E, is socially unsound because it makes the lower groupings feel inferior *as people*. Briefly, this view is that whereas, in real life, people are often *working* side by side with their intellectual equals, they *live* in mixed communities with which they should have learnt how to co-operate effectively. To be prepared for life, it is argued, young people should not spend their school time either always with the brightest ones, or always with the poorly endowed intellectually. If a boy or girl is to get a true idea of his actual intellectual status in society, he should be attached to a form that is, as nearly as possible, society in miniature. The young person who is bottom of an A form, or top of a D form is being given quite a wrong idea about his position in society as a whole. 'Avoid *form* orders; they cannot possibly be just or accurate' was one comment relevant to this problem.

The opposing opinion is that it is better for the intellectually similar to be grouped together for all form and subject periods, but that the lower groups should be given

a useful place in the school community, should have specially selected form teachers attached to them, and should have their prestige built up as much as possible.

Several schools take pains not only to avoid streaming on I.Q. basis, but also to select names for the forms which give no implications of grading. Naming the form after its teacher is one way of doing this. The head of a grammar school that has rejected stream division said: 'We don't want to give the impression here that intellect is the only thing that matters, or even that it is the most important thing.'

In general it would seem that the C and D pupils do not give especial trouble as individuals or as groups so long as they feel they are *valued* for their contribution and not disliked or pushed aside. Their reaction to feeling unwanted or useless is aggression. If the lower I.Q. pupils are giving trouble, it serves as a warning that they have not been assimilated socially by the school community.

The practice of herding the C's and D's into large forms and giving them to the youngest or newest members of the staff was universally condemned as a denial of everything a school should stand for. 'It breaks their hearts and the teacher's heart' was the summing up of one young teacher who, in a previous school—her first after finishing training—had found her fresh enthusiasms were expected to stand the strain of 45 D's nearly all day and every day for terms on end.

Inconsistency of Discipline

Several schools complained that there was not sufficient consistency in disciplinary methods between school and school. It was generally agreed that most primary schools were forced to be more rigid than they should be because of the size of forms, but what was a more serious difficulty was that a child transferred from one secondary school to another might find a completely alien environment in the new school. More than one head told of the unhappiness of pupils who found themselves in the unfamiliar atmosphere of rigid discipline after a move.

Discipline and the Emotional Climate

The survey made it abundantly clear that a good emotional climate depends very largely upon a friendly pattern of discipline, and the correct attitude to authority that it produces. The young people in some of the schools visited showed a happy and self-confident fearlessness, an honest frankness of speech and a keenness to talk, or to do, which was most refreshing. They seemed to have the gift of being active without being obstreperous. The atmosphere was busy and friendly. No attempt was made to keep the pupils silent at lunch time, at break, or on other occasions, and there was often plenty of noisy chatter; but there was very little of the hooligan shouting and purposeless pulling each other about which are so noticeable in the playground of rigid schools on the brief occasions when discipline is relaxed. The experience of self-government, and the consciousness of partnership with the staff, seemed to impart an unusual degree of confidence and dignity. It was almost as though, since they found themselves fully accepted as individuals, the pupils felt it important not to let themselves or their community down. Of course, this is not so marked among the young pupils, whose only especial characteristic is that they seem more fresh and fearless than usual; but even at fourth-form level a heightened self-awareness and dignity are quite definitely observable.

CHAPTER V

PUPIL CHOICE

'Character, in matters great and small, consists in a man steadfastly pursuing the things of which he feels himself capable.'

GOETHE

'Youth should have an opportunity to ask that the schools heed their needs and to tell what some of these needs are.'

W. AIKIN, *The Story of the Eight Year Study* (vol. i)

NOT every problem that has to be solved at school is social. All the time decisions have to be made in order that every pupil shall as an individual draw the greatest possible benefit from school life. As these problems are usually associated more or less directly with the curriculum, it is argued in some schools that such matters are too complicated for the child, because, in dealing with such a problem as whether or not a certain study course shall be followed, the child concerned will usually think in terms of the fairly immediate present and therefore overlook what is ultimately to be gained. Some teachers believe, therefore, that a child's course of study should be primarily a matter for teachers and parents to decide upon.

Other teachers, however, are equally sure that a maximum amount of pupil choice is an essential element in training for democracy. These point out that one of the most undeveloped powers in the adult of our times is the capacity to weigh up a situation and make a definite decision about the best course to follow in any difficult set of circumstances. This they put down in part to lack of training in making personal decisions. These teachers stress that some choice as to how they shall spend their time should be permitted even to the youngest children, and that the degree of self-determination should be extended as the child becomes older.

A third point of view was that a degree of choice in what activities or studies are to be followed should always be left

to the child's own decision, but, where the special studies and career of the child are concerned, decisions should be arrived at by joint consultation between pupil, teacher, and parents. The importance of taking the pupil's views into consideration in all cases was urged, not only as an elementary democratic right of the individual to have a say in what concerns him, but also because the child will be much more likely to tackle studies with enthusiasm if he has had a voice in selecting them.

In practice, of course, there can be no absolute choice. Each school can offer only a limited number of courses and activities. It was pointed out, however, that that does not matter; the essential thing being that the right of the child shall be conceded to make or to help make a choice in so far as choice *is* available. A few teachers express the view, however, that such choice would not develop a responsible attitude but the reverse; because the child is encouraged to chop and change to suit the whim of the moment and so to escape the need for facing difficulties or giving out a consistent effort. But in no school where the policy is one of giving pupils a maximum amount of choice was such a view expressed. On the contrary, the fact that a pupil has decided for himself to tackle a subject seems to put him on his metal to make a success of it. 'All the same, we should encourage them to experiment', one teacher added as a supplement to this view. 'We must make a distinction between study courses that have to be followed steadily because of an examination, or a career at the end of it, and those that are designed to satisfy the needs and interests of the child.' Another's vote of confidence in pupil choice was: 'They are always looking for something they can get their teeth into. There can never be any doubt about that.'

Thus, it is not surprising that, in the schools visited, a wide difference in the extent of pupil choice was observed. At the one extreme we might instance a grammar school, where courses are rigid and pupils fitted to them primarily by staff decision, with games and athletics offering very little choice to the pupils; and at the other a modern school in

which every child's school course is almost completely a matter of personal decision after a chat with form-mistress and head, and every subject—many are presented partly in project form—allows for the different approaches and aptitudes of the children, by offering a considerable choice of activities within the subject itself. But some grammar schools permit considerable pupil choice of studies.

Choice of Studies

In the infants' schools a good deal of choice in study activities seems to be taken for granted. At this stage even the more serious elements of instruction lend themselves to personal choice. At one school visited a senior form was divided into four groups, under leaders, for simple reading, each group using a book chosen from the form's stock, (unfortunately rather small); while next door an Anglo-Saxon village was being made as a history-geography project, with every child contributing what it wanted to. The pride of the children in their cardboard cut-outs was immense.

Few junior schools up to the present have found themselves able to offer wide choice because of the sense of urgency to prepare for the grammar school entrance test, but a considerable amount of choice within the subject is sometimes made possible. An interesting contrast was observed in a junior school during the period when art was being taught throughout the school. Of three forms visited, in two the children were working independently, and in the third the class was copying a design. The added absorption, and sense of achievement in their work, of the two forms working on their own (with plenty of interest and encouragement from the teacher of course) was most marked. Another junior school was asked how it would like to spend a Wednesday afternoon. The final decision was to study a farm. With A. G. Street's *Down on the Farm* and a Penguin book on farming as background for the course, the form got busy; each member learning about some aspect of farm work. The year was divided into seasons for special study, and each child given its choice. Study of the various animals on the

farm, implements, and crops was allotted in a similar way. 'It has taught *me* how a tractor works', was the comment of the form teacher.

The term's work culminated in a visit to a farm, where the farmer was both amused and amazed by the knowledge of the young Solomons who plied him with questions. According to the teacher's report, enthusiasm and perseverance were outstanding throughout the entire course of the project.

The same school uses puppets as a means of educating mind and emotions simultaneously. The children pick the play they want, choose which parts they like, and then master these parts as a pre-condition to operating the puppets in the theatre. Some elect to stage-manage or repair puppets. It will be seen that in this type of activity the educational value of the activity *depends upon* the children being free to choose, so that they may have the puppet play which will be most satisfying to them and perform the parts which enable them to project their problems through the drama and fantasy of the puppet show. At the same time the experience of choice provides training for democratic citizenship. This example shows that, far from choice being forced and unnatural in form work, it may well be the basis of it. In support of this view, a teacher who has had experience of 'D' streams in both junior and modern secondary schools said that choice of activities produced a readier effort and a higher degree of concentration than when the form and content of a lesson were entirely selected by the teacher. This experience suggests that choice is not only possible among children of higher intelligences, but may actually be of the most value among the less well-endowed, even though it has to be simplified to meet their capacity.

A degree of choice within subjects is a common feature of progressive modern secondary schools. But even under the relatively flexible curriculum possible in a modern school conflict between the pupils' interests and the need to train for a certain career may develop. The head of a girls' modern school believes that the pupils will adjust themselves sensibly

to such a stituation if it is put squarely to them and discussed with them. This school follows interesting courses in all subjects with plenty of projects, visits, and individual work, but also sets out to coach any girls for the school certificate if they wish or need to take the examination. Parents and pupil are consulted before an examination course is undertaken, but the ultimate choice is left to the child. The head is careful to point out before the final decision is made that a lot of hard work on material that will be sometimes both dull and difficult will have to be put in if the pupil decides to tackle the examination. When, thus faced with the total situation, a girl decides to go ahead, it is found that she will conscientiously pursue the goal she has set herself and usually attains it. A single year of specialization is usually found to be sufficient to reach school certificate standard. 'Our ordinary course teaches them to think for themselves' was the history mistress's explanation of why such a brief period of special study suffices.

An independent school, at which all pupils take the school certificate, is developing subject teaching in a way that gives plenty of choice. In the fourth year, for instance, every pupil has a reading target to cover of three books per term. Any three may be chosen from a wide selection of books kept in a section of the library. The books include technical books, scientific works, biography, travel books, adventure stories, thrillers, and classics. The fourth-formers let their English tutor know which books they will read and, after completing each book, they are asked to write a frank opinion of it together with a brief synopsis of the life and works of the author. Both the choices and the criticisms frequently cause surprise. It was observed by the teacher concerned that the young people enjoy this part of their work and do it thoroughly. An arrangement is made whereby, if a pupil finds he cannot get on with one of the books of his choice, he may substitute another after giving his reasons for the change to his form teacher.

In grammar schools the high pressure on the time-table prevents much choice being possible, although the Dalton

Plan enables a good deal of flexibility to be retained. As a rule, however, the demands of matriculation and career together result, in practice, in pre-selection of the subjects most suitable to the abilities of the candidate. It was commonly agreed, however, that concurrence of the pupil in such a choice is most important because a child *told* to take a certain subject will not put much heart into it, whereas a course arrived at after consultation with the child, parents, and teachers is as a rule conscientiously followed, unless the child's abilities are such that the examination syllabus is really beyond his or her capacity. Of course, in the sixth form, a wider range of choice is both possible and normal. A teacher at a grammar school was much in favour of pupil choice as a principle in arranging studies. In his view whether subjects are imposed or a child selects them usually produces the same common-sense result; but the fact that he has been consulted makes the pupil more willing to co-operate and improves relations between him and his teachers.

When Personalities Clash

One or two teachers raised the problem of how the effects of a temperamental clash between a pupil and a teacher could be offset. It was felt that, as it had now been established that good human relationships were needed for productive working of any type, some machinery should exist to enable a child to express himself if he found himself unable to co-operate with a teacher.

The feeling in one school at which this point was raised was that, if form relations were good, a pupil would be prepared to go to his form teacher with any trouble of that sort, and that no other machinery was necessary. One head believed that, if good records were kept, it was possible to spot temperamental clashes through them and tactfully to put things right without hurting any feelings. A woman teacher condemned this as weakness: 'We must learn to face the whole truth about human beings,' she said. 'No teacher need feel ashamed about a clash of temperament. It often just happens. We should be prepared to admit it and make

readjustments.' 'Personality problems work out if community feeling is high', was another view. 'It's the teacher getting on the defensive that can make things awkward. If there's a good social feeling, they don't get driven to that.' A school where the general spirit of comradeship is obvious from the moment one enters believes that 'plenty of honest staff-room discussions' is the best way to discover and correct personality maladjustments. In this regard also it was agreed that the correct approach was not to be that of personal criticism and laying blame, but of working out a solution so as to benefit all parties to it.

Choice of Athletic Activities

In some schools visited the approach to games and athletics was found to be rather rigidly orthodox, and opportunities were limited either by tradition—which caused especial stress to be laid on achievement in a particular range of activities—or through lack of facilities. But in other schools the avowed objective of physical education as a whole is to teach the pupils to develop and enjoy their physical capacities. This logically results in as wide a range of activities as possible being offered to the pupils, coupled with as much choice as there can be. For example, the boys of a co-educational grammar school have at their disposal during all the winter months: football, hockey, basket-ball, and athletics. There are regular gym periods, but during outdoor games the only restricting factor upon pupil choice is that boys who are fit must take part in some physical activity. This organization of games and athletics contrasts sharply with the more usual arrangement by which each main activity has certain set months devoted to it, as when the whole school plays rugby football in the autumn term and hockey after Christmas—but there is no hockey before Christmas nor football afterwards. Of course the ground facilities available limit the possibility of duplicating principal activities, but the school visited contrived to arrange its pitches so that football and hockey could be kept going simultaneously. It was of interest to note that fears were

expressed, in schools with the orthodox arrangements, that to provide choice would mean that some boys would turn from one activity to another so frequently that individuals would not reach a good standard in any game, nor would good school teams ever be built up. The schools practising variety, however, do not find this to be the case. It is true that some boys are by nature experimentalists, and will try a number of activities before they settle down to develop one to a good standard, whereas others tend to use most of the available time playing their favourite game and, to begin with, are loath to miss an opportunity for doing so. But not only does the experimentalist tend to make one or two firm choices in course of time, but also the keen footballer or cricketer will sooner or later want to try his skill at hockey or tennis. Indeed, the tradition of 'having a crack at it' soon develops in schools where a varied choice is available with the result that nobody minds looking slightly ridiculous trying out a new activity—often he has at the back of him the knowledge of ability elsewhere. Nor does the standard of the school games suffer. Rather is the reverse the case. Sometimes in the spring term at the co-educational school mentioned above the first hockey XI has won a hockey match in mid-week against an all-hockey school, and a soccer match on the Saturday against an all-soccer school, with six or seven boys sharing in both successes. One boy was simultaneously first XI goal-keeper (football) and first XI outside-right (hockey). Such combinations are not uncommon. There can be little doubt that for a boy to acquire general physical confidence is more satisfying to him, and better training, than merely to master one highly specialized ability, and it is certainly likely to stand him in better stead in after-life. Another boy from this school played both football and hockey for his college in his first year up. He was also a good swimmer and tennis player. More convincing than such examples of athletic versatility were the cases quoted of boys who had come to the school in their 4th year with low games ability and had then blossomed rapidly in the freer atmosphere produced by plenty of choice.

It might be supposed that the development of general ability in athletic activities is not *necessarily* tied up with pupil choice. And indeed it is not. But the two *do* seem to be closely linked. Boys who shun games because they do not shine will, it is found, choose to begin with some activity where they will at least be spared the risk of looking ridiculous—they may select running training for instance. After a while, however, they will try something else, and frequently end up competent performers in a number of activities; whereas if they had been forced to take part in some game which brought them to failure and ridicule, they might never have had enough heart to get anywhere with anything.

It is found that the introduction of choice brings in almost all the so-called slackers to active and willing participation. Specialization is not discouraged by any means. Quite the reverse. But a background of general ability is considered to be the best basis for special training.

This aspect of pupil choice has been treated at some length, because, on the physical side of things, pupil choice can be tried out without running any risks of jeopardizing examination results or career. It would certainly seem that young people are more willing freely to put out effort to acquire new skills than some people suppose, and that the more this tendency is allowed natural growth, and the less it is subjected to force and compulsion, the better the final result is likely to be. Just how far that principle applies equally to the classroom cannot be accurately assessed at present. But a number of teachers are convinced that it does apply.

The Choice in Clubs and Societies

It has been pointed out earlier in this Report that some schools plan out-of-school activities from the top, whereas others prefer to let them grow from the bottom. In either case a considerable degree of pupil choice is possible. Sometimes a child will be faced with the difficult decision of a straight choice between two activities, in both of which he

or she has a keen interest. A case was reported in a boys' school of a competent young actor who was also a musician and wished both to act in the end-of-term production and to play in the orchestra that was to provide incidental music. The boy was so torn between the two that he would have welcomed a direct instruction to do one or the other from someone in authority. This particular school, however, tries to avoid absolute direction of this type. The form teacher had a chat with him and asked him to decide in which activity he was most needed, and to choose that one. The boy finally elected to act, which was the correct decision, as he was more easily replaceable in the orchestra. After the play, the head, in a few words to the parents, thanked the cast and orchestra and mentioned the dilemma of the boy concerned, and the choice he had made. There was a little burst of applause, as the boy's performance had been excellent.

In such situations the right to choose obviously adds to the pupil's difficulties and not the reverse. But such an experience of having to make a difficult decision is undoubtedly of value in training the complete democratic personality.

Some schools offer a wide range of crafts and hobbies and allot an afternoon regularly for them. Choice is free, but each pupil is asked to give first, second, and third preferences in order to prevent a popular teacher or activity being overwhelmed. One school following this plan includes 'Observer Group' among the activities. This group is the refuge of the Don't Knows—its members just pass from room to room under supervision and watch the other groups. No child stays in Observer Group for long. Interest is aroused by watching the various activities, so that lookers-on tend to become participants. To enable every child to have its chance at every activity, a time limit is set for the continuous membership of any group, although a child is free to go back to the same group after a break. The children are encouraged to spend a week in Observer Group before starting a fresh activity. This gives them the chance to have a look round and prevents Observer Group from being looked upon as

'a dump for the duds'. Periodically Observer Group is asked to make a report on Hobbies Afternoon.

A somewhat similar plan is followed by the approved school that was visited. The boys choose their afternoon activities. There is gardening, farming, pottery, engineering, bootmaking, and several other activities, including reading. Boys who elect to read have a quiet and attractive room with easy chairs set at their disposal. For the boys who feel no especial urge towards any creative activity there is a Commando Training Course for them to work off their energy upon. The boys' choice is carefully respected and good achievement given credit. 'By respecting them we teach them to respect themselves', was the head's opinion. Boys are allowed to change their activities frequently, but do not have to do so. During a tour that covered all activities the only boys not both busily active and obviously enjoying their pursuits were a group resting between runs over the Commando Course. If choice can be so usefully applied in reclaiming for responsible membership of society young people who have got themselves into serious trouble, it would seem axiomatic that it has its part to play in training more fortunate young people as competent citizens.

The Dignity of Choice

A teacher who had experienced both autocratic and democratic styles of school government, remarked: 'the children here are more confident and dignified'. She certainly did not mean that her pupils were staid and quiet. They were obviously inclined to be vigorous and noisy, and yet her point was clear enough; the young people of the school had a sort of frank self-assurance in their bearing which may properly be called dignity. In the building of such personalities the right to choose and the right to be consulted undoubtedly play a part. The child is a member of a group that is self-determining in its general affairs and, as an individual, is also treated as a person whose right to self-determination must be respected. Just because these young people find themselves to be fully acknowledged as individuals, they are

relatively free from inhibitions and full of robust energy, yet feel no need to be excessively assertive or aggressive. It would seem, then, that we should seek to extend the right of choice—always coupling it with the need to choose responsibly—if we wish to develop self-assured citizens fully prepared for the choices and decisions that the adult in a democratic society is frequently called upon to make.

CHAPTER VI

PARENTS AND THE SCHOOL

'We must encourage the interest of the whole community in the education of its children.'

M. L. JACKS, *Total Education*

WHEREAS every school stated it as a desire and intention to establish close touch with the parents, a wide difference in the interpretation of the wish was noticed. In some schools it is thought sufficient that staff and parents should meet occasionally at rather formal teas and 'At Homes'; at other schools the principle of 'the ever-open door' is not only stated but followed, so that a parent will drop in to see the head, or to make an inquiry from one of the staff, as naturally as calling on a neighbour.

So far as organized co-operation is concerned, some schools have Parents' Associations attached to the school whose function is little beyond providing social evenings for the parents; others have so convinced the parents that the school is really 'theirs' that vigorous parent co-operation in school activities is the rule rather than the exception. At these schools the opinion of the parents on all matters that are of mutual concern is asked and respected.

In no other part of the inquiry were opinions found to be so divided. Almost side by side there were two areas in which one Chief Education Officer believed the development of full parent–teacher co-operation to be essential to the future of education, whereas the other officer was convinced that to let the parents get any nearer than the necessary formal contact was 'just asking for trouble'. Opinions between school and school, between one member of the staff and another, were equally diverse. Perhaps, then, before describing various aspects of parent–school relationships, it would be useful to give a selection of opinions on this subject:

Should Parents play a part?

'The teacher's is a specialist job. You can't have parents interfering.' (An Education Officer.)

'We never dream of running a school 'do' without bringing the parents in.' (Headmaster of boys' grammar school.)

'We like to see the parents sometimes, but not to hear too much from them.' (Headmaster of a boarding school.)

'If I didn't have two or three mothers drop into my study during the course of the day, I'd think something was going wrong.' (Headmistress of a modern secondary school.)

'Parents' Associations might bring politics into the school.' (Headmaster of boys' modern secondary school.)

'I'd hate to have parents coming into my classroom.' (Assistant master in modern secondary school.)

'The parents are welcome at any time.' (Principal of a boys' approved school.)

'A Parent–Teacher Association is essential to running this school properly.' (Principal of junior technical school.)

'A parent is one of us.' (Headmistress, junior and infants' school.)

'A Parents' Association here would be just a competition about the children's ailments.' (Headmistress of a special school for debilitated children.)

'My Parents' Club absolutely makes this place.' (Matron of a nursery.)

'We hear too much of the querulous parents as it is.' (Chief assistant of junior school.)

'The headmaster tells us we are to look on the school as ours. We are all very keen.' (Secretary of a Parents' Association.)

'You should keep parents well away from each other.' (Headmaster of an experimental school.)

'We don't need a Parents' Association; parents co-operate without it.' (Headmistress of girls' grammar school.)

'A Parents' Association would mean additional work for the staff.' (Staff-room comment at an infants' school.)

'Contact with parents is necessary, but not a formal Association.' (Headmaster of boys' grammar school.)

'We are pledged to promote by every means the well-being of the school.' (Secretary of Parent–Teacher Association.)

So much for opinions. But the only question we have to ask ourselves in this Report is not what the difficulties or advantages of close liaison with the parents may be, but whether it has a part to play in the life of a democratic school community. About this there can be no doubt. Whichever may be cause and which effect, every day school that was outstanding for its community development, the quality of its personal relationships, and for the capacity of the children to co-operate and accept responsibility, was also outstanding in its eagerness to get together with the parents. The rest of the chapter, therefore, will be devoted to summarizing the various means that schools are using to develop closer relationships with the parents.

Bringing the Parents in

The most common development is that by which parents, staff, and pupils are brought together not especially for the purpose of building up common understanding by discussion and mutual help, but on certain social occasions. This might be exemplified by a typical primary school that runs annually a Sports Day, Open Day, and School Concert. The parents, of course, visit the head or staff if they require to, but this also is rather formal. The lengths to which such formality can go was revealed by a member of the staff at another junior school who complained that the head never allowed a member of the staff to talk to a parent without his being present. There was no rule about this, but parents were always taken to the head first and he always accompanied the parents when they desired to meet anyone on the staff.

At the second stage of development, certain functions are arranged, in addition to formal occasions, for the specific purpose of letting parents meet members of the staff most concerned with their children. Form teas or 'year' teas are the usual means of bringing staff and parents together. The general opinion of staffs is that these functions are most valuable and often help them considerably with their charges.

The good average attendance shows that parents also appreciate them. Such meetings do not, however, of themselves bring the parents into participation in the life of the school as a whole. Everything is on an individualist basis and is limited by what parents, children of a particular age-range, and the staff instructing them have in common. Parents and staff gain much in understanding on these occasions, but they do not get any real feeling of participating in a common objective.

Another partial development is that in which parents are occasionally brought in to share school activities—perhaps one or two will assist with the school choral society, or help with the dramatic productions. A few schools have a fathers' cricket match.

A school at this stage may or may not have a Parents' Association. A few parents will be on intimate terms with the staff, but the majority will feel outsiders and be rather 'distant' when they meet a member of the staff. There will still be a good deal of formality about parents visiting the school on ordinary working days, with the result that they will not usually come unless they are asked to do so, or unless their child is in some sort of trouble.

The final stage of development is that at which parents come along to the school at any time, all the active and socially-minded parents are on easy friendly terms with all the staff, and a vigorous Parent–Teacher Association exists to bring parents into active participation in the life of the school as a whole. It was suggested by one teacher that, when the school was very formal, parents would refer to it by its full title or the name of the head; when relations were friendlier, it became 'Tommy's school', or 'Mary's school' as the case might be; finally it was just 'the school' in the same way as we say 'the club' or 'the cinema'. That does, in a sentence, show how the parents' feelings can gradually warm towards their child's school as they are permitted a bigger share in its life.

Of course, as in other places in this Report, stages of development have been set out as broad generalizations suggesting separate states, whereas there is no such clear demar-

cation in practice. The *process* can be observed, but one step always merges with the other; and in some cases development of one aspect will be far ahead of others. For instance, a very friendly spirit between teachers and parents may be reached without any formal organization, if the principle of the 'open door' is applied so sincerely that parents who visit the school casually are made to feel at home and encouraged to lend a hand in anything that is going on.

Before describing Parents' Associations and Parent–Teacher Associations in some detail, one point of possible confusion must be cleared up. Earlier in this Report we have indicated that respect for function is a proper aspect of school —as indeed of any—democracy. This applies as much in staff–parent as in staff–pupil relationships. The teacher must be captain of his own ship. There is little fear of pupil interference with the specialist work of the staff because teachers feel they can control that; but there is a very common fear that, if parents are encouraged to participate, they will use their position to interfere with the teaching side of things; will pry and criticize, and make life unbearable. It should therefore be stated not only that this is extremely unlikely to happen, judged by results, but that it is an essential element of true democracy that it should *not* happen. To feel pried upon or secretly criticized is a feature of totalitarianism, not of democracy.

Interference is to be distinguished from the making of suggestions. One Parents' Association asked if biology could be included in the syllabus as they felt it ought to be. That may be taken as a proper contribution from the parents. The lack of laboratories and equipment was explained to them, but the head promised to try to fit in a rather more advanced nature study course in her next time-table pending the hoped-for extension of premises. On the other hand, personal criticism of one of the staff about the way she taught arithmetic, which one member of a primary school Parents' Association wanted to make at a meeting, because a rumour had got around that the scholarship results were bad because of failures in arithmetic, was properly declared to be out of

order by the chairman. This isolated grouse, however, gave the head a chance of discounting the rumour by saying that the marks of the test were not published, so the complainer could not know; and that, in any case, her school's results were above average; two statements which satisfactorily met the charge, and cut short the whispering campaign of a few malcontents.

A clear understanding of what is the special position of the teacher is necessary in order to remove the risk of unpleasant interference—for it has to be accepted that the querulous interfering type of parent does exist! Thus, a point of carping personal criticism, if raised, is certainly not proceeded with. The opinion of established P.A.s and P.T.A.s is that the average grouser is not only at loggerheads with the staff, but with the parents too! In fact a P.A. or P.T.A. was shown to be one of the best ways of coping with the noisy nuisance of a parent. When fear of organizing the parents exists, it usually turns out that it is based on the erroneous idea that all or a majority of parents are potential interferers; but the truth appears to be quite the reverse. Indeed, the head of a primary school states that she had a good deal of 'parent trouble' until the P.T.A. was founded. 'Now', she says, 'the parents themselves soon deal with the awkward ones.'

That was, perhaps, rather a long digression, but it is necessary to refer to the source of this wide fear of parental interference which is to be found among teachers, and to show how needless it really is. Only in one school had a P.A. been dropped after foundation owing to unpleasant developments; probably because of a badly elected committee. In all others the experience has been that fears melted away as soon as the Association was founded and started its activities; and there was more than one report of an association that had vigorously taken up the cudgels on behalf of the school and had won improvements and concessions thereby.

The Parents' Association

Of the eighty schools visited only eleven had Parents' Associations, but a number of others expressed their inten-

tion of founding Associations as soon as possible,[1] and the general impression was that a fairly rapid development of school–parent co-operation was in prospect. In one or two cases P.A.s had lapsed owing to the war. Of these eleven schools, three were boys' schools, two were girls' schools, and the rest co-educational. (Incidentally, the analysis of the results of the survey shows that co-educational schools and girls' schools are in general more prepared for democratic development than boys' schools.)

The extent to which the P.A. joins in school life seems to depend largely on the attitude of the head and staff and their willingness to offer opportunities for co-operative action. The fact that staff do not serve on the P.A. committee (apart from, in some cases, liaison through one member of the staff) results in the members of the P.A. often being in ignorance of what is going on in the way of school activities. P.A.s consequently sometimes tend to follow an independent existence; running social or educational meetings, often helping the school by gifts or contributions, but rarely reaching the stage when they are looked upon as a regular source of help in all school functions. One head complained that the P.A. at his school was 'too absorbed with the social side'.

However, within the limits of their constitution, several of the associations are vigorous and effective. A visit was paid to one social evening held at a school to which 225 parents and friends came. The same association had just run a series of educational lectures, some on aspects of the new Education Act and some given by members of the staff (a popular one was on science) at which attendance averaged 100. The P.A. at an infants' school holds monthly lectures at which normally there is 100 per cent. attendance.

A weakness of the P.A. as distinct from the Parent–Teacher Association is that it depends too much for its

[1] Since this was written, there has been a rapid increase in the number of Parent and Parent–Teacher Associations. A further development is the federation of the associations in certain areas. For example, Blackpool has at present (May 1947) 80 per cent. of its schools associated in 'The Blackpool Federation of Parent-Teacher Associations'.

vitality upon its officers, whereas a P.T.A. catches some of the vitality of the school itself. This is no doubt one reason why the vitality of P.A.s varies so much; and why some of them either collapsed, or practically disappeared, during the war. No case was found of a P.T.A. failing once it had been founded.

The successful P.A.s seem to work to a regular sequence of activities—perhaps a monthly lecture or a bi-monthly meeting. One very successful P.A. holds two meetings a week—one social and one educational—throughout the winter. Without some such framework the P.A. can rapidly degenerate into a vestigial remnant of itself. In one or two cases membership of the P.A. seems to mean little more than the payment of an annual subscription—usually 1*s.*—with a slender chance that a social evening will be arranged 'some time'. No doubt such inactivity is partly due to the aftermath of war, and will soon be replaced by fuller functioning.

Parent–Teacher Associations

P.T.A.s were studied in nine schools: two boys' schools, four girls', and three co-educational. The conscious purpose of the P.T.A. is broader because it is clearly associated with the whole life of the school; and, therefore, with education as a whole.

For instance, a P.T.A. at a girls' secondary school gives as its objectives:

1. To serve the best educational interests of the child by bridging the gulf between the home and the school.
2. To keep parents informed of modern trends in education.
3. To help to create and to keep alive a public opinion which recognizes the responsibility of every citizen for the education of the nation's children.

Another P.T.A. states as its purpose 'To promote by every means the well-being of the school' Such declarations of purpose obviously provide a much more solid basis for an organization than the relatively restricted—though worth-

while—objective of the P.A., which often sees little farther than 'It's nice for the parents to meet and get to know each other'. It is not suggested that a P.A. *cannot* get beyond this stage, but it was clear that the P.T.A., *in general*, is a more robust organization and no doubt its fuller purpose partly accounts for this. Three of the P.T.A.s have written constitutions including clearly stated objectives. In contrast P.A.s were vague about why they existed and what they were trying to do. Of course, a P.A. or P.T.A. will sometimes operate under quite another name such as Parents' Guild or Home and School Council. For simplicity we are here using a single terminology.

The committees of the P.T.A.s are formed by various admixtures of staff and parents, sometimes with the head as president, a parent as chairman, and a teacher as vice-chairman; at others the head takes the chair. A grammar school finds 2 staff and 6 parents a satisfactory arrangement; a primary school has 6 parents (3 fathers) and 6 staff (3 from the junior side and 3 from the infants). A junior technical school has 4 staff and 6 parents (2 to represent each 'year'). Another arrangement is 4 parents and 3 staff, and yet another 10 parents and 2 staff, with the head in the chair.

The head of a primary school insists that staff and parents should share the official positions on the committee as well as the committee work. She takes the chair, a father is vice-chairman, a parent is secretary, and a member of the staff treasurer. One reason given for the head's holding the chair is 'It's vital to have a sound chairman, and the parents do not usually know whom to nominate'. Another head said: 'I'm waiting for a good parent chairman to show up.' A further point of view was that the head, or a good chairman amongst the staff, should always be either chairman or vice-chairman as 'a year's bad chairing would kill any Association'.

Some P.T.A.s meet three or four times per term; others once or twice 'as well as committee meetings'. One Association runs one social and one non-social meeting every term; another, one social and two non-social. Discussions are usually fitted in as part of an evening's activities. Sometimes

the meetings are merged with school activities—for instance, the Association may run the school's Christmas parties. All staff are, of course, considered members of the Association and sometimes senior pupils are invited to come to P.T.A. affairs. The Association at a co-educational school tried the experiment of inviting senior pupils and all parents to a film and lecture on sex-education. It was a most successful evening and much appreciated. At one co-educational school the pupils provide the entertainment for P.T.A. social evenings.

Some Associations always extend invitations to non-members as well as members. The member parents see it as their duty to lead the others.

Very good attendances at educational meetings were reported. A technical school, which uses the P.T.A. not only to bring parents and staff together but also parents and local employers, finds that an imaginative approach to future careers for their children proves most attractive to parents. At one meeting, which representatives from various factories attended in order to give the parents an outline of conditions and prospects, 200 out of a total of 350 parents were present.

Other successful activities include film shows, lectures by educationalists, talks on their subject by members of the staff, and brains trusts. One infants' school P.A. runs a 'mothers' keep fit class' which attracts a small but enthusiastic group of 15 or so every week.

Co-operation with the school in both P.A.s and P.T.A.s takes a number of forms: help with concerts, parties, dramatics, organization of sales of work and bring-and-buy sales to help the school fund, and so forth. At one infants' school the fathers make and paint the toys; a grammar school can always depend on the P.T.A. for the catering at functions. In fact, openings for valuable co-operation are occurring all the time. The head of a girls' secondary school says the parents and members of the P.T.A. are the 'missionaries' that awaken an interest in education in the parent group as a whole. She believes that a good P.T.A. can do a lot towards developing community feeling in a neighbourhood.

Reciprocally, parents report that the existence of the

P.T.A. gives them an added interest in life, and establishes a common purpose between them and their children which often helps to solve clashes of temperament and make home life happier and more purposeful.

Starting an Association

There was a broad common agreement on the best procedure for starting a P.T.A. In brief, the principles are: (1) Discuss the project first, (2) agree about the Association's purpose, and (3) make sure that a really representative committee is elected.

One school 'got started' as follows: The head called a staff meeting and the pros and cons of a P.T.A. were thoroughly discussed and its functions and limitations considered. Several days' warning of the meeting was given so that the staff could talk it over among themselves. When the staff had decided to try a P.T.A., a meeting of the parents was arranged *with an outside chairman* at which the head explained what a P.T.A. was, and there were questions and discussion. The only vote taken at this meeting was on the question of whether or not a P.T.A. should be formed. A staff-meeting met to elect its representatives for the committee, and a second parents' meeting was called to choose officers and parent committee members. On this occasion the head was in the chair, as it had been stated at the first meeting that the head would be chairman at least until the Association was well launched. The parents' meeting was divided arbitrarily into four groups, according to the area in which the parents lived. Each group then elected its representatives. Finally the vice-chairman and secretary were elected from the parents' representatives, and the treasurer from the staff members.

The purpose of grouping the parents by areas is (1) because parents living near to each other are likely to know something of each other, and (2) the risk of a bloc committee springing itself on the Association by prearrangement is avoided.

Another school followed a similar procedure but held 'year' meetings of the parents separately and then a final

meeting of all parents interested at which each 'year' elected its representatives on to the committee.

To what extent should a P.A. or P.T.A. be allowed to make suggestions regarding the running of the school as a whole? In practice it seems possible to establish the principle 'nothing barred' without any danger of unpleasant interference. The golden rule seems to be that any principle of education is a legitimate subject for P.T.A. discussion, and also any general matters, but that personalities and personal criticism are out of order. 'Should homework be abolished?' was discussed at one P.T.A. meeting. This is, strictly speaking, a curriculum matter, but the discussion was valued by both sides. The parents of a girls' school raised, through the P.T.A., the question of the school uniform which had deteriorated in quality and was proving most difficult to maintain at a respectable standard. Schools that have not tried a P.T.A. see in such discussions a threat to their peace of mind. But in practice it is found that the reverse is the case. Because such matters can be brought up at P.T.A. meetings, the vague gossiping and grousing of parents, that is a constant irritation at some schools, tends to disappear. One head always asks parents who turn up with a vague complaint about how things are done whether they belong to the P.T.A. Usually they do not, and she advises them to do so, so that the matter can be generally discussed. If they belong, she asks them whether they think their feelings are general enough to warrant a P.T.A. discussion on the matter. This, she maintains, soon separates the people who have a genuine complaint from those who 'just want an excuse for a grouse'. She finds that the cantankerous parents usually retreat rapidly when she suggests they should bring their complaints before the P.T.A. (Of course, this head is always ready to discuss privately purely personal troubles affecting child or parents.)

In fact, the P.T.A. can do a lot towards establishing happy forthright relationships between head, parents, and staff. 'The P.T.A. makes my life much pleasanter even though it takes up some of my time' was the summing up of a head.

In conclusion it must be made plain that, though a P.A. and P.T.A. would obviously not exist together in the same school, many of the means to good relationships that have been the subject of this chapter can. For instance, the head, as well as meeting the parent body formally in the P.T.A., may also meet individual parents every day. Nor does the existence of a P.T.A. prevent the holding of the very useful form and 'year' meetings organized to give parents a chance to talk over their children's progress with the teachers. The few schools in which vigorous P.T.A.s exist together with 'the open door', and also with some means by which teaching staff and parents may meet each other to discuss the children, have probably achieved the ideal arrangement.

That may sound as if a great deal of time will be taken up by the parents, but the view that time given to personal contacts is never wasted is probably correct. The argument was also advanced that any means of increasing the co-operation between parents and school produces dividends in results because friction is reduced, and the time often wasted by misunderstanding between parents and school about intentions and purposes is saved for creative use.

CHAPTER VII

PRIMARY STAGE DEMOCRACY

'Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.'

Proverbs xxii. 6

On the properly trained small child:

'He will be able to play his part as a member of a small society. He will know what is fair to others as well as to himself and be ready to assume some responsibility for what affects the welfare of his school or his class; he will perform his part in group activities, and render help to his fellows when they need it; and he will have acquired some of that grace of manner, sympathy with others, and readiness to exchange ideas, which contribute so much to the happiness of a community.'

Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers, p. 88, 1937 edition

As we have noted already, it is inevitable that a Report dealing with the democratic way of life in schools should have to give the greater part of its space to developments at the secondary stage, because it is only as the child gains independent critical capacity, and a fair standard of self-reliance, that a wide and varied school democracy becomes possible. But this does not mean that nothing can be done during the years when children are more obviously dependent upon adults. On the contrary, if secondary stage democracy is to be as effective and meaningful as it can be, the preliminary work of nursery, infants, and junior schools is of the highest importance. In relation to this, two views expressed by modern secondary school teachers are relevant. One was the opinion that non-co-operators were often already confirmed in their anti-social approach by the time they reached their secondary school at 11 plus; and the other, that valuable months were lost with every group of new entrants because they had to adjust themselves not only to a new school—quite task enough for them—but also to a pattern of relationships and a type of discipline that were

unfamiliar to them. As the head boy of a delightfully happy and vigorous modern school put it: 'The first-formers are difficult for a few weeks. They've been used to the cane and strictness and they don't know how to fit in.'

This chapter will, then, be devoted to the consideration of the means by which children of primary school age can learn the essential preliminaries of how to share, participate, and co-operate; how to establish happy and fruitful relationships with head and staff; and how to reach a satisfactory adjustment with authority as a whole.

Head–Staff Relationships

If anything, head–staff relationships are even more important at the primary than at the secondary stage. Small children are intensely aware of 'atmosphere', and the degree of harmony or friction existing between those in authority. The effect upon children of disharmony between their parents has been pretty thoroughly investigated; to what extent a 'broken' school is also a bad influence has still to be explored; but it would seem certain that good team-work and happy relationships between head and staff are a source of happiness, inspiration, and encouragement to young children; and that their absence is seriously detrimental to social and emotional growth.

In a number of primary schools visited excellent relationships between head and staff were found to exist. A useful contribution towards building and maintaining understanding is the practice of holding a daily informal staff meeting at tea-time or over a cup of coffee after lunch. A member of one staff jocularly described the regular after-lunch session as 'the school's mind working'; and that is precisely what these meetings do amount to. Constant fruitful ideas and valuable small adjustments are the outcome. In addition, a sense of co-operation and participation is developed, together with a high standard of real friendliness. For one thing, such frequent meetings result in 'everybody knowing everything about everything' which enables problems to be seen from all angles and to be settled in a way that brings general

consent. At one such meeting the problem in hand—that of consistency of discipline during school dinners—was tackled with friendly efficiency. It was agreed, after a chat, that, as well as there being a few simple rules of conduct for the children (which already existed), there should also be rules for the guidance of the staff to cover the methods of running the lunch. The whole discussion arose because a child had replied to a correction of a member of the staff with the defence, 'Oh, Miss Blank told us to do it this way.' There was nothing acrimonious about the discussion at all; it was full, friendly, and effective. In fact it was in its way a model of democratic discussion. The outcome was that three members of the staff were deputed to reduce the deviations of method to a common practice.

A talk with a new-comer to the staff of one of these primary schools served to reveal a contrast between the authoritarian and democratic styles of authority. Her way of expressing it was: 'Everything is so happy here, and everyone seems to matter. In my last school the head was so detached that we hardly ever had a staff meeting.'

Pupil Participation

Primary school children should not, of course, be expected to shoulder the responsibility of self-government of the type possible at the secondary stage. For example, to ask one small child to keep other small children in order is either to impose a strain which renders the child miserable, or to arouse his impulse to dominate which may easily result in loss of popularity and a breach of good relationships with the other children. Young children are, however, quite capable of accepting simple group responsibilities and of performing social work as individuals, so long as tasks are changed fairly frequently and periods free from responsibility allowed for.

One infants school states its aims to be to teach the children 'to share with others, to work with others, and to think of others'. The creation of small official positions that go around fairly rapidly helps to demonstrate to the children

how this aim is to be put into practice. In some schools such positions are unnamed, but one nursery and infants school makes a great success of this social training by giving important-sounding names to all duties, and by displaying prominently the names of all those who are performing them at the time. The 'Mothers' are in charge of tables; the 'Milkmen' collect money for the form mistress and pour out the milk; and the 'In-timers' scout round to shepherd stragglers into assembly.

At infant and junior level it is also possible to give the children a good deal of experience of self-determination. Sometimes a choice is offered in every lesson (this is possible with very young children at the play-way stage) and later on, when there has to be some formal instruction, a certain amount of choice is still possible. One method is to allow the children to decide what they will contribute towards a project, which puppets they will help to dress, &c., and another method, that can be supplementary to the first, is to set aside periods regularly for 'choosing-time', when the children follow their special interests with no restriction upon them except that they must not interfere with the freedom of the others. Choosing-time proves to be valuable social education not only for itself, but because, if any form complains that another form is making too much noise, the noisy form holds a discussion about what it is best to do.

Occasions when pupils and staff work together for a common objective provide exceptionally good experience of participation and co-operation. Periodic pageants, At Homes, and the like, give an opportunity for every form, and every person, of the entire school community to make specific contributions. On such occasions a well-printed programme builds up prestige all round. One school published a programme on which was printed the name of *every* member of the school as all members were responsible for a share in the preparations for the production of the pageant. The children were very proud of their programmes and the parents almost equally so. As a follow-up the head saw that not only was the press report pinned to the notice-board afterwards, but

a selection of the original photographs also. Incidentally the obvious difference in clarity between the glossy prints and the pictures in the paper led to questions about the difference, and a talk on the process of printing, together with the display of the actual block used by the local paper. Quickness to seize upon every opportunity to make educational points out of the general life of the school is characteristic of these lively primary schools. The head of the school that ran the pageant also gave a good instance of the way the head can unify the work of a school without appearing to interfere. Each form had its special task, apart from individual contributions, and on two occasions, on days arranged with the staff, the head went the rounds of the forms for a report on development. This proved to have a most stimulating effect, especially on the apathetic children. The morning following each tour the head gave a general survey of progress after assembly.

Apart from action associated with the major events of the school year, small children can be given a sense of partnership and personal value by having as their responsibility any of the small duties and services for which every school has many openings.

Learning to be Articulate

The vocabulary of a young child is small and reasoning power limited, but it by no means follows that it is too early at the primary stage to encourage a certain amount of public speaking. (Schools of Drama have shown what heights of oratory even a small child can reach.) One junior school encourages verbal self-expression—often primarily a matter of overcoming shyness—by giving a few minutes to 'News' after assembly. It is found that one or two quite young children have sufficient self-confidence and verbal capacity to set a good example, and more and more are drawn in as familiarity with the procedure overcomes diffidence. Care is taken not to force a child to speak from the platform—by imposing a rigid rota system—before it is ready to do so. Nevertheless, the aim is to give all a turn so far as possible.

Once a child has had a real success as 'Announcer' he or she usually becomes very keen; on the other hand, a child who is made to feel ridiculous by being put up to speak prematurely is very seriously discouraged by the failure. The best system appears to be to have a 'News' system both in Form Meetings and at assembly so that the children can graduate from the one to the other as their capacity develops.

The World Elsewhere

It is important that the horizons of children at the primary stage should constantly be broadened so that they come more and more to see that they have a place and a part to play outside the orbits of home and school. The best way to break down the initial conception of an impersonal and incomprehensible vastness that small children have about what lies beyond the intimate and the familiar appears to be by establishing personal contacts between the school and the locality. Children are keenly interested in the familiar figures of the everyday world and a visit and short talk—more in the nature of an informal chat—from such people serve to reduce the children's timidity about the unknown, and prepares the way for simple studies of how the town is clothed, fed, and the rest. One head makes a special effort to see that the children get on friendly terms with the police. 'At one time', he said, 'the appearance of the policeman meant that there was trouble brewing, but now the children run up to any policeman who comes and ask what he has come for, without any show of fear.' The school issues a badge to 'Policeman's Friends', who are pupils pledged to help the policeman by sensible behaviour in the streets. The head points out the good effects of making the authority of the law seem friendly. His view is that fear of the police does not prevent misbehaviour, but promotes it. A policeman gave his own idea of this view: 'I've seen a child knocked down', he said, 'because it has run away in terror when a policeman stepped up to help it across a busy street.'

Another method of making primary children feel that they belong to the locality is to commemorate the famous men

and events of the neighbourhood. A few words after assembly, or a reading, or a visit, bring a little colour and romance even to a drab and congested area. One head stresses the need to impart as early as possible the consciousness of having a part to play in the wider community: 'An idea should be given', he says, 'of a social order in which there is a place for every individual, and where each position carries both privileges and responsibilities. *Ordinary tasks should be regarded as service to the community.*'

Parents and the School

The chapter on Parents' Associations and Parent–Teacher Associations covers this side of the primary school stage. It will suffice here, therefore, to mention the moral value of a real team spirit between staff and parents. Consistency of values and objectives between home and school is vital if the child is to develop that confidence in life without which no child can become a complete and happy person or a vigorous and effective citizen. Constant reference was made by teachers in all types of schools to the importance of providing for the child as much consistency of social atmosphere as possible, so that there shall be no violent breaks either between home and school, or school and school. Indeed, there would appear to be a serious rift in our educational system at this point. As one teacher put it, 'What's the good of training the children to behave without punishments here when we know that two out of three secondary schools in this area are still run on the old rigid lines?' A similar complaint was expressed by the secondary schools who have to take in children rendered either cowed or rebellious by authoritarian discipline in their junior schools.

It all points yet again to the fact that the fabric of democracy, so far as discipline and personal relations in general are concerned, must be woven throughout as one piece. Carefully planned training for democracy at the primary stage is not only of value in itself, but is the essential preliminary to the most fruitful possible results at the later stages of a democratic education.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SCHOOL AND SOCIETY

'Happy men are full of the present.'

CARLYLE

'One of the outstanding problems of the hour is lack of awareness in social affairs, which in one way is nothing but the lack of a comprehensive, sociological orientation.

KARL MANNHEIM, *Diagnosis of Our Time*

A BROADENING of personal and communal horizon is a leading characteristic of democracy in action. We sought, therefore, not only to study the relations, associations, and organizations that grow up within the school, and between school and parents, but we also wished to find to what extent the school as a community can reach beyond its own immediate orbit to become a conscious participant in the life of the locality, the nation, and the world.

We soon came to appreciate that one of the inevitable effects of unifying the school as a co-ordinated organism and of seeking and stating the purpose of its existence *is* to bring the school as a community into conscious association with the greater communities of region, country, and world. There is in the democratic school community, in fact, a yearning, a stretching out, a seeking to apprehend and participate. The object of this chapter is to show the means used to link the social unit with the social whole in a meaningful interrelatedness.

The School and Other Schools

Until quite recently each school remained in isolation from every other except for regular bouts of competitive games and athletics. That is still far too much the case, but a certain amount of mixing up for other purposes is beginning to take place.

Within the limits of the survey a number of instances of schools getting together were found. In one area regular

discussion meetings are held at one or other of the grammar schools to which the senior pupils of other schools are invited. Subjects are chosen by a committee of senior pupils and apparently no restriction is imposed. 'Co-education' and 'Nationalization' have been among the subjects discussed.

There were also examples of mock parliaments being held as events to which all local fifth and sixth forms were invited. One of these, held at a co-educational grammar school, was correctly conducted down to the last point of procedure. The Speaker was a member of the staff, otherwise the whole debate was conducted by the pupils.

In another area the practice has developed of holding an annual two-day conference of the sixth forms from a group of grammar schools. The time is devoted partly to debates or discussions and partly to lectures.

On the social and recreational side schools frequently combine for parties, dances, visits, &c. One old-established boys' public school was visited at which, for the first time in its history, a dance was held last winter to which a girls' school was invited. One school organizes day visits to other schools for senior pupils.

There is as yet, however, very little mixing between different types of schools.

So far as the staff are concerned there is a good deal of isolationism, the only common meeting-ground as a rule being the local meetings of the Teachers' Associations. In one area, however, the Head Teachers' Association ran a series of talks and discussions on educational matters which proved so successful that it is clear the time is ripe to break down the barriers between school and school. There are, it should be added, some excellent county associations for teachers. It is at the neighbourhood level that the isolation of staff from staff is most marked.

The School and the Locality

At its most vigorous this is a two-way process. The school sends out its parties to study the way the locality is run, to visit factories, hospitals, &c., and from the locality people

'on the job' come to talk to the pupils; the pupils also make a contribution of public service, and in return the locality tries to meet the school's requests, if only for a chance to visit or observe.

Perhaps the complete process may best be followed by an example. A co-educational modern school decided to carry out some research into what the children of the locality were reading. Before the survey commenced, the Chief Librarian came to the school and talked about his work and what the Library Committee was trying to do. The research was then undertaken. Finally the results were neatly tabulated and submitted to the Chief Librarian who promised to bear them in mind when ordering more books.

The same school carried out a housing survey of the neighbourhood which was most revealing. The results of this were passed on to the council. An interesting point in connexion with this survey was that the pupils did not hesitate to give details of their own homes, even when bad. The purpose of public service seemed to outweigh any feelings of domestic reticence.

A girls' grammar school not only encourages service but trains for it in a Service Corps. Among the instruction given is that on 'Local Government', 'First Aid', and 'Electrical Repairs' Every member of the corps gives an average of ten hours a month to local service—in clubs and nurseries, on farms, shopping for the disabled; a cot is maintained at the local hospital, and so on. The members of the corps, however, are finding that they have to reorient their activities a good deal to fit in with the needs of peace. A boys' modern school has found a useful peace-time job in running 'safety patrols' in the crowded streets.

Visits are a common means of broadening the experience of the pupils. Some schools carry these out in a rather haphazard way according to the whims of teachers or of pupils. A better way seems to be to plan and co-ordinate the visits. One school arranges for different forms to cover different aspects of the locality—for example, one group will visit a factory while another visits a building of historic interest.

The experiences are shared as much as possible by careful reports of each visit being given after assembly. The object of planned visits is to give every pupil the feel of the bustle and content of local life.

Careers are sometimes used to tie up a series of visits and lectures. One school has kept a check on the results of such a plan. The head is sure that a number of children have been helped to sort out what they really want to do by reviewing the possibilities after a series of visits and talks.

A vigorous Old Pupils' Association helps to establish close links between the school and the locality. As one head put it, 'We get favours everywhere because we've got an old pupil or two in most places.' There certainly could be no closer liaison than for an old pupil to show a party over the factory where he worked and then follow up the visit by calling at the school for 'any questions'.

In some areas a close relationship between school and society proves most difficult to build up because the locality lacks neighbourhood feeling, either because it is a dormitory area, or because it is part of a sprawling recent development, or for other reasons. A determined lead on the part of the school can, however, help here. One school, for instance, has set out to become the cultural centre of its locality. A modern school in a congested town area believes one of its functions to be to provide adult education through the P.T.A. in order to help offset the 'citizen apathy' in its locality.

A type of school that is up against a more difficult community problem is the day school of which a large number of pupils and staff live away from the immediate neighbourhood. A boys' day school that built up a very high standard of community life during evacuation (an experience incidentally that converted 90 per cent. of the boys who were evacuated to a preference for boarding-school life) now finds itself up against a big community problem because of its scattered 'feed' The boys who live in the locality are drawn into the community life of the area, which is well provided with centres and clubs; the rest tend to hurry home after school, and the result is that the whole school has 'the four o'clock

habit' which is proving an obstacle to building up a full community life within the school itself. The clash of communities—between school communities and clubs, &c.—was remarked on in several schools. The general opinion was that a wide choice of activities was wholly desirable for young people, but that too many claims on their community allegiance—one member of a staff called it 'body-snatching'—impedes the growth of character, responsibility, and citizenship.

A fuller study of school–neighbourhood interrelations is given in the next chapter.

The School and National Life

Relating the school life to national life involves a national extension of the sort of activities outlined in the foregoing paragraphs. A co-educational modern school covered in the course of a year visits to 'London's Ancient Buildings', The House of Commons, Madame Tussaud's, South Kensington Science Museum, The National Gallery, The British Museum, 'The Messiah' at the Albert Hall, and a visit to a London theatre. Parents are often invited to such visits. Sometimes this school organizes the visits on school-days; at others a cycle trip is taken over the week-end. This school is fairly close to London, but a school in the west country runs visits to London 'at least three times a year'. Here, again, good reporting back, so that the whole school can get some sense of sharing in the adventure, is important. A group of school reporters is sometimes elected for this purpose either for an extended period of office or on a weekly basis with all having a turn. Visits to ports, mines, film studios, and other places of national significance also help to give children a bird's-eye view of what constitutes the life of the nation. Visits of lecturers from the wider field also assist to extend the child's interests and loyalties beyond the merely personal or parochial.

A school film society can make its contribution by showing series on special aspects of national life. But the point so strongly stressed by some heads should be remembered—

whatever the visit or film, it must be brought into the pattern of the school life. 'We hang everything on a peg', one head said. At this school the activities of the school for a whole week will be centred upon something 'in the news'. The view is that by such means children can be brought to feel the country is 'their country' as well as the school 'their school'. An inquiry about the effects upon class work of the amount of time given to visits, lectures, films, project weeks, reporting back, and the rest, provoked the reply: 'Our children beat the standard products hands down; they've got ideas and initiative. All the employers want them.'

Elementary economics, civics, and current affairs periods in school are also used to develop an understanding both of national and international life.

The School and the World

The final extension is to an apprehension of 'world citizenship'. Affiliation to the C.E.W.C. was found in several schools. But in addition a number of methods of broadening contacts are employed.

One school has had visits from 'almost every nation' at one time or another. These foreign visitors are treated with ceremonial respect by the school, and are always invited to speak to the whole school at assembly. If the speaker arouses points of interest these are looked into and reports made. Many schools organize holiday trips abroad, or exchanges of pupils. Some are 'looking after' distressed European families.

Some schools have developed a most elaborate system of pen-friends, including the 'adoption' of ships. At one school any pupil who has relations abroad is encouraged to hand on facts and views that come from them. A school that has staged a number of exhibitions is planning one as a 'World Tour' which will be partly composed of curios lent by the children.

In order to 'bring the world nearer' and develop awareness, a junior technical school runs a current affairs class once a week with its third-form boys. There are four houses in the

school, and for a period of a month the third-form boys in each house carry out research into one of four sections of current affairs: 'Local Affairs', 'Home Affairs', 'Commonwealth Affairs', or 'Foreign Affairs' At the end of the month each group transfers its attention to another section. Each week every boy prepares a subject of his own choice from the section on which his group is working. The current affairs period is devoted to brief talks by one boy from each of the various sections on his selected subject. Sometimes the boys who are to speak are chosen at random, at others a selection is made from the subjects that have been prepared on the basis of interest or topicality. The master-in-charge winds up the period either by co-ordinating the various reports or by promoting discussion on the material. Each section keeps a log-book in which the month's developments in the various fields are recorded. In order to provide some material for the boys to work on, *The Times*, *Manchester Guardian*, *Weekly Times*, *Economist*, *Spectator*, *New Statesman*, and *Hansard* are taken regularly. A very close liaison with the industry of a large area is also maintained. A course in elementary economics adds to the boys' understanding. The whole scheme obviously works extremely well.

The use of newspapers and periodicals to broaden interest in world affairs is found in other schools. A girls' grammar school arranges for each form to have its own paper or papers. The sixth form takes the *Spectator* and *New Statesman*, the fifth form the *Manchester Guardian*, and so on, with the *Children's Newspaper* for the juniors. All the senior forms also take the K.-H. *News Letter*. The idea is that the pupils shall read different points of view and discuss them with each other. Several schools make a point of occasionally comparing and discussing the contents of different papers in form so that the children may learn that they have to play a part in arriving at the truth of things. The head of a boys' modern school makes a special purpose of discounting the effects of propaganda. Slogans are considered and tested for veracity. The head believes that every citizen of a democracy must be trained to discriminate while at school between demagogy—

whether as political pressure talk or specious advertisements —and the dissemination of truth.

Questioning of senior forms and prefect groups showed that all these methods do produce results. Some pupils seem unaffected by them and remain self-absorbed and local-minded, but a considerable number were obviously gaining a confident grip of things and genuinely feeling themselves to be citizens of the world and participants in the thought and action of mankind. One group was asked about racial discrimination. They thought it 'just silly'. What was the difference between black men and white men? 'Nothing, the colour 's just protection against the sun', came an immediate answer from a sixth-form boy. The question 'What do you think of the Soviet Union's foreign policy?' provoked a most ardent discussion—the liveliest that was encountered. It was noticeable that somebody would usually be quick to say 'That's just an opinion' if a speaker failed to substantiate a statement.

One or two teachers stressed the need to be honest. 'We have no half-baked discussions here', one said. His view was that you must give your pupils (he was talking of fifth and sixth form boys) *all* the facts and let them judge. 'If you don't they'll find out and lose confidence in you.' The inquiry was made whether this nothing-barred attitude to discussion might not lead to charges of propaganda directed against the school. The reply was that there must be no indoctrination of the pupils, but that if the initiative for a discussion came from them it was the duty of the staff to speak their minds. In some discussions held, the staff had taken up different points of view as vigorously as the pupils. 'That does good. Teachers and pupils learn by it', was the opinion.

The Background of Knowledge

Teaching a young person to discourse and discriminate, and to understand what is going on in the world around him, naturally leads on to a consideration of how the impact of democracy in a school affects the curriculum in its narrowest sense of subject teaching. Two approaches are discernible.

One is that a certain number of periods must be set aside for teaching subjects as such, and that this is necessary in order to reach the accepted standard; the other is that subject teaching can and should be tied in with the general training for life that the democratic school aims to impart. Organizationally this second idea has not advanced very far yet except in a few schools, but even grammar schools (normally, of course, more tied because of the matriculation syllabus) are beginning to think in terms of weaving subjects together to form an integrated pattern of learning. One or two schools are synthesizing the two approaches by running an examination time-table for each child (with subject-choice as flexible as possible) and supplementing this with background courses in other subjects, so that the whole will make a coherent pattern of knowledge. The idea is growing out of the experience of running schools democratically that learning must be unified as well as social purpose if schools are to produce whole and adequately equipped citizens for a democracy. The head of a boys' grammar school is busy launching a time-table that is not only integrated within itself but will interlock with the whole pattern and purpose of the school community. Because of examination restrictions a good deal of this grammar school experimentation is at present limited to the first two years.

From the point of view of the survey an interesting aspect of these developments was that they seem to have grown out of the democratic environment and purpose of the schools. Some schools of a more authoritarian mould were visited that are not only not doing anything about reforming their time-tables, but seem almost completely unaware of any need to do so. This contrast also showed in the attitude to the child. The head of a minor public school gave it as his view that 'Every minute must be used to teach unwilling little creatures'; in contrast, the head of a modern school stated: 'Arouse the children's interest, and they'll lap up anything you give them.' 'What about the children of low I.Q.?' was asked. 'The same applies to them so long as you realize their small capacity.'

The point about interest ties in with the new conception of the time-table in so far as many teachers maintained that to build a broad background of knowledge and to stimulate an alert awareness are the only possible means of sustaining interest in the more solid and uninviting pieces of learning that have to be mastered if the child is to advance beyond the elementary stage. As Adler put it: 'The best way to teach subjects is in coherence with the rest of life': a point of view which appears to be rapidly gaining ground.

Finally the whole subject of school and society may be summed up by the view of a senior mistress who organizes the more ambitious surveys and social projects in her school. 'You must do *real* things, establish *real* contacts, and produce *real* results that the child can appreciate and that are given full social recognition. A mere show of service and social activity are worse than useless.'

The General Secretary of U.N.E.S.C.O. on World-Mindedness

'A purely national point of view is inadequate to present conditions: it is necessary to have an international as well as a national point of view, a world consciousness into which our set of national feelings and ideas (though these still remain of the utmost importance) can be fitted.'

(Julian Huxley, *On Living in a Revolution*, p. 187. Chatto & Windus.)

CHAPTER IX

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AND THE SCHOOL

'For a spur of diligence, we have a natural thirst after knowledge engrafted in us.'

HOOKER

'Without opportunity to engage in the common life, young people find it meaningless.'

(*Reorganizing Secondary Education*, p. 204. Published for the Commission on Secondary School Curriculum by D. Appleton, Century Co., New York)

The Neighbourhood and its School

IN the previous chapter an attempt was made to show how a school that has become a community seeks to extend its associations in order that it shall not be isolated as a social organism, but exist in close relations with the larger social units of neighbourhood, country, and world. It was not possible, however, in a chapter dealing with total associations to give adequate space to the most intimate of social relationships—those that can exist between the school and its immediate locality. The purpose of this chapter is to cover this field of democratic opportunity rather more fully.

'*Our*' *School*

One of the American exchange teachers remarked, after a few weeks in this country, 'In my home town, everybody talks about "our school" and "our children"; in England the parents and the schools don't seem to know where they belong.' As the 'home town' in question is one of America's largest cities, we are not observing in this comparison the effects of different geographical conditions but a contrast of attitudes and origins. Sir Fred Clarke has often drawn attention to the fact that the Poor Law beginnings of our public educational system have resulted in a long habit of dissociation between the public and its schools; in America the association between school and populace, in contrast, has always been one of respect and affection. To refer again to an

exchange teacher: while speaking at a public meeting she was explaining that during the course of a long rail trip across America you would notice time and time again that the schools were the largest and most handsome buildings of the small townships through which the train passed. 'They're biggest in our hearts, too', she added as a corollary. America, in fact, is noticeably ahead of us in this matter of the public's attitude to the schools. A similar attitude, however, is developing in some circles in this country—shown in its fullest form as a feeling of affection on the part of the neighbourhood towards its schools, and a reciprocal feeling of regard and respect of the school towards the neighbourhood. Such a relationship does not, of course, come of itself; it grows from active association, but it should be noted that the general warmth of relationships is often built up from the initial example of a few people who are determined to bring to life in their locality the often frigid and formal contact between school, home, sources of employment, and the neighbourhood as a whole.

However, warmth of feeling, although most desirable, is not itself sufficient. Just as the right 'atmosphere' for school democracy needs the stiffening of organization, so that it may become a growing force for good in the school community, so does feeling need life-forms in creative function in the wider field of school and locality. In part this is met by Parent–Teacher Associations, Old Pupils' Associations, &c., as we have shown in Chapters V and VII, but it needs to go much farther than this. Some schools visited are so consciously a part of their neighbourhood that the activities growing from this awareness give rise to as definite and living a content of what in one case was called 'school thinking' as, shall we say, games. We will now turn to the consideration of the process by which 'the school' becomes 'our school' for any neighbourhood.

The Contribution of the Neighbourhood

The part the locality has to play in friendly and productive interrelations between itself and its schools is best exem-

plified by an experiment carried on in a small provincial town during the war by an evacuated modern (then senior elementary) school. The original intention was to familiarize the boys with the way the town worked; and not only with the official local government, but also with the banking, food distribution, occupational, recreational, cultural, religious, and social life of the town. Leading local men and women were first approached to see if they were prepared to speak to the boys. The response was immediate, and, during a quite brief period, eighty representatives of the life of the town gave lectures to the senior boys of the school on their own occupations—the Town Clerk, a bank manager, an electrical engineer, a police sergeant, several tradesmen and other employers of labour, the chief librarian, a master baker, and others. Bit by bit the panorama of the town's activities opened up before the boys as people who were actively engaged upon them told the story of their daily lives, their problems, their failures and successes, their hopes for the future. The interest of the boys was intense: here, they felt, was no dry text-book stuff; this was real life, in which they would themselves soon be playing their part, perhaps in one of the very occupations about which they were hearing. Every lecture was followed by a barrage of questions, and often the give and take of a vigorous discussion developed. These afternoons when, so to speak, the town came to the school proved most satisfying to both parties. They brought the town closer to the boys who were its guests; and gradually built up a whole community of friends of the school in the town itself. During the survey the suggestion was made at one or two schools, where relationships with the neighbourhood were rather poorly developed, that a lecture series of this type should be tried. In every case the reply was, in effect, that 'people wouldn't want to be bothered' This, however, seems to be a serious underestimate of the social consciousness and interest in education of our citizens, and appears to be based on a diffident assumption of the schools rather than upon reality. The experience of this evacuated school was that no one ever refused an invitation to talk to

the boys but, on the contrary, everyone approached was delighted to do so, and often the speaker took the pains to prepare his address or the notes of it well beforehand and submit them to the head for his comments.

Another school recounted how it rather timidly asked a local cinema manager if he would suggest somebody to give a talk to the school's cinema club. The manager replied that he would do so himself and gave a lecture on the development of the cinema which enchanted everybody. He had been through it all himself and punctuated his lecture with innumerable anecdotes of critical situations in early days, as well as of the difficulties that sometimes crop up behind the scenes to-day about which the audience knows nothing. There is, therefore, reason to believe that co-operation is not lacking, but rather that schools are slow to make approaches.

To return to the modern school's experiment, it was not long before the friendliness for the school began to extend farther. Invitations for interesting visits began to arrive, and sometimes gifts, and finally developments got under weigh which almost reached consummation in a Friends of the School Committee being formed upon which parents, visitors, employers, and teachers would all have had a place; a body, in fact, representative of the whole local community. Before these developments could reach fruition, however, the school returned to London.

The value of well-established relations between local industry and the school has been mentioned elsewhere in this Report. At this point, however, it is appropriate to refer to the social and educational worth of such relationships, as distinct from the utilitarian aspect of finding suitable posts for the boys. If total awareness is something worth while to aim at for our citizens, it follows that talks at the school from men in industry and visits from the school to the factories are of great educational value. One of Britain's best-known tennis coaches—and himself formerly a member of our Davis Cup team—is prone to say of a player whose interest in tennis does not extend beyond the acquisition of skill in the game, 'He's one of the beasts that perish; the sort that

doesn't know how a tennis ball is made.' The remark gives a proper importance to the cultural value of a broad background of general knowledge and understanding of the productions upon which civilization depends. It is useful for boys and girls to be as familiar as possible with the occupational opportunities that lie before them; it is also good for them to see in action the nerves and sinews of the modern world.

One or two heads pointed out that the Juvenile Advisory Committees were themselves concerned with showing youth what occupational openings the locality offered, and that care must be taken to see that schools and J.A.C. work together, and also that managers, personnel officers, and others who are invited to the school do not take advantage of their visits to canvass recruits. They added, however, that neither friction nor canvassing was likely to occur. One head, who believes that a liberal education for modern life is incomplete without a knowledge of industry and factory life, likes to mix up visits from members of factory staffs with others from men who are engaged on the machines, so that his pupils can really 'get the feel of it'.

Various methods are employed to test the amount children learn from such lectures and visits, and to enable as many of the school as possible to benefit from the experience of a few. Some schools set formal essays on the material; in others each pupil keeps his own record book in which accounts of visits and talks are written up in any way he fancies. Yet another system is for a group record book to be kept, for which pupils are responsible in turn. If either of the last two methods is used, it appears to be important that the books should be frequently read by someone in authority, not only for supervision but—much more important—so that good work may be noted and praised, and so that every pupil may have an added incentive to work well, and feel that the quality of his production is a matter of consequence. As has been stated elsewhere, lectures and visits and records of them can be knit into the school's community life as a whole if good work is read out after assembly and reports of visits

are given by the participants to the rest of the school. To keep the standard of the latter up, one school insists that all Reports, whether read or given verbatim, shall first be produced in writing and shown to the form teacher.

Functions of the Governing Body

The above paragraphs indicate how the locality's contribution to school–neighbourhood relationships at their broadest can become intimate and friendly. It follows that the relations with the school of parents, managers, governors, members of the Local Education Committee and its officers can be even closer. The view was more than once put forward, however, that these various bodies, all closely concerned with the schools, tend to remain aloof from each other too much, as though there were no overlap in function, and as though nothing were to be gained by fusion or interconnexion. However, one school reported that its best friend was a parent who was also one of the governors and in addition a local councillor who served on the Education Committee; while an independent school has found that an ideal arrangement for a governing body is a fifty-fifty composition of parents and leading local personalities. Such cases suggest that more interconnexion might benefit the schools.

The opinion was also given that a sufficient number of citizens were not drawn in as governors and managers, so that people on boards were often too overworked to have much time or energy left to take an active personal interest in any particular school. It would certainly seem that both schools and locality would gain if more people were given an opportunity of making a contribution through service on management or governing bodies. When it was suggested to the head of a modern school that few people would welcome such added responsibility, he replied: 'You have that idea because they always ask the busy ones. I know a score of good people who are interested in education, and have time for it, who would be only too glad to serve.'

The general feeling appears to be that the relations between schools and governing bodies are inclined to be too formal,

and that, whereas they should really be very close and friendly relations, they are sometimes rather cold, artificial, and non-productive. Perhaps the experience of the evacuated school described above points the way forward. If the governing body of a school were fully representative of the community, this should help to establish the close links between school and neighbourhood that one would wish to see developed in a democratic society.

The Contribution of School to Neighbourhood

As soon as a school has become a co-operating community internally and has thrown out feelers into its neighbourhood, and started to form contacts, it is natural that, as well as making 'the neighbourhood our classroom', the desire to make a contribution to the life of the locality should develop, or be readily aroused by a discussion on the subject. The query 'What can we do to help?' has in several schools resulted in setting up Service Groups, Pioneer Corps, or otherwise-named organized bodies of pupils and staff who put social service at the front of their activities. One of these corps devote two hours per week to training for service and citizenship. Although service squads that came into existence during the war were often founded on clubs rather than schools, there was nevertheless a good deal of this sort of activity in the schools themselves, and the number of schools anxious to make a worthwhile contribution of service appears to be on the increase as it becomes more widely appreciated that schools should provide a varied social experience as well as a good standard of instruction.

But here some schools find themselves in difficulties. The special tasks of the war period—many of which were very suitable for service groups—now no longer exist, or have been absorbed, like paper-collecting, into the normal routine of local government services. School service groups must, therefore, look for other openings, but in doing so have to avoid *making* work for themselves. As one teacher pointed out, 'Phoney service is a betrayal of the whole purpose.' At present, in consequence, the precise nature of regular outlets

for school service cannot easily be listed. The whole field is one of experimentation. What follows, therefore, is an account of tendencies and current ideas as much as of proved practice.

A mistress who has been working for years on school social service expressed the view that every school should offer its members practical outlets for the social altruism of young people, and that there were institutions in great need of the sort of help schoolchildren would be proud and happy to give, but that there was no easy way of bringing the two together. Her opinion was that a school should first get to know its neighbourhood and then start to satisfy some of the many needs that the general exploration would certainly reveal. Working along these lines, the school is drawing up a list of people in need of practical help and has already started to undertake certain duties, including keeping the dolls at a nursery in repair and helping a widow handicapped by bad sight with the mending for her two young sons.

From one or two experiences it has been noted that a little help is doubly appreciated by needy people. They are glad to have the assistance but, even more, they are grateful for the association with the school and with the young people, to whose visits they look forward keenly. It is also found that the young people respond at once to being appreciated. Impersonal tasks get to seem rather a 'bore' to young people, but once they have known the personal satisfaction of doing good to a needy person or family, their service comes to be a most significant part of their lives, and is found to have both a mellowing and maturing effect upon their personalities. A note of caution was stressed, however, about undertaking such very personal service as it might easily lead to children being put upon. The opinion was given by some people that, for this reason, direct personal service of this kind was best avoided, so far as the schools are concerned. However, contacts with needy *families* seem possible without this risk. At one school each house prepares Christmas parcels for two needy families every year.

A good deal of service to institutions is already being

undertaken. One school shares its one-act plays and concerts with the neighbourhood, and at Christmas puts on shows for the local hospital and an orphans' home or anywhere else where there is a real need. Another school reports that it has recently redecorated the common room at an old folks' institution, and yet another organizes an Old Folks' Party at Christmas through its Charities Committee composed of form representatives. Some schools focus their service by adopting a children's hospital, or a club, or an institution. A public school has successfully undertaken the Physical Training at a local club, as well as running a 'Keep Fit' class for boys from the city in the school gymnasium. Another example of such service is a boys' grammar school that makes toys for the local Crippled Children's Hospital. Helping with road and park patrols and food-raising are other outlets through which young people have been enabled to make a valuable contribution. Some schools have formally taken over responsibility for such essential work as keeping weather records. A master at one of these schools reported that the boys were keen on the work and benefited from the sense of usefulness that it gave to them. Such service will clearly result in the locality's coming to life for the members of the school, and in the school's acquiring prestige in the locality. The head of a girls' modern school, to whom a complaint from another school that they were considered of no account was voiced, at once replied, 'They can soon put that right for themselves if they want to.' The truth appears to be that the school's activity in the locality and the locality's feeling for its schools are reciprocal; but the initiative often has to be taken by the school. In fact, in all cases where a high development of mutual relations was noticed the initiative had come from the school, and often in the first instance from one or two members of the staff only.

Three practical points should be mentioned. One head stressed that service must not be 'just one more thing that they have to cram into their lives', but that there must be time for it. 'You can't expect *both* home work *and* service', was her view. A second caution was, 'Don't foist the service

idea on the school; talk about it first', which is really a particular aspect of one of the principles of school democracy that has already been enunciated—that discussion should precede all innovation. (As Pericles put it: 'Acts are foredoomed to failure when undertaken undiscussed.') The third point was that no distinction should be made between service to the school and service to the neighbourhood, as it is important to convey the idea that *all* service helps the community. "All good work is community service,' said this head, 'and it is a mistake to make it seem that the community is separate from the school.'

The Living Text-book

Surveys based on the locality complete the unification of school with neighbourhood in a most satisfactory way, because, on one side a local survey can overlap into social service, and, on the other, interlock with the curriculum. Some such surveys have already been mentioned, but a particularly good example is provided by a health project undertaken by one of the visited schools (girls' secondary modern, late senior elementary). The project as a whole covered the entire field of health, from the study of the lives of men and women who made the great medical discoveries to practice in first aid; but a close study was also made of the local health services as an important part of the whole project. The local hospital and nearby nursery were visited and housing conditions explored; the work of the local public health committee was investigated; and a health visitor, doctor, the chairman of the health committee, and others were invited to the school to talk to the girls about the health work of the neighbourhood, and to answer questions. It is worth commenting that this project was so popular that attendance at school of those taking part kept at well above normal as the project advanced, while a marked improvement in appearance and cleanliness was observed among the slacker element in the group.

It would seem, therefore, that the survey is as valuable for social training in its broadest sense as for more limited educa-

tional purposes; it has an all-round function in developing school democracy.

A Place in Society

Chapter X of this Report deals with the effects upon personality development of the democratic way of life in schools, but one point should be made here, as it was mentioned several times in connexion with service and surveys. It is suggested that, owing to the large units and depersonalized influences of modern society, a large number of children, especially those rather poorly endowed, find it extremely difficult to grasp that they really *matter* in society. They feel useless, dissociated, and impotent; they feel that 'the adventure of mankind' is not for them. For such youngsters participation in local surveys and social service often proves a salvation. Their experiences gradually bring home to them that there is a place and part for everyone, and that, in spite of superficial experiences to the contrary, people—and therefore themselves—still matter enormously. The result is an enhancement of self-confidence, a release of personality, and a noticeable increase in self-respect and zest for school life. Such things should not be overlooked in assessing the benefits of integrating education with social experience, and the life of the school with that of the neighbourhood.

CHAPTER X

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY

A man should *be* upright, not be *kept* upright.'

MARCUS AURELIUS

'Social virtue is learnt by social life.'

SIR RICHARD LIVINGSTONE, *Education for a World Adrift.*

WHAT sort of young people does the democratic school produce? Seeking the answer to that question proved one of the most exciting and satisfying parts of the whole survey. The fully democratic school community goes far beyond producing scholars or 'Trainees for earning a living'; it produces people; and, moreover, personalities so confident in their bearing, spontaneous in their enjoyment of life, and friendly and courteous that, in the best schools, one was moved to feel not only that here was first-class education for life but even the secret of how to overcome the apathy of the age, and its uncertainty about values and a philosophy of life.

The more courageous the school is in developing a democratic community life, the fuller the release of personality proves to be. Just because everyone has maximum opportunity to participate in the life of the school as an active contributor in running its various activities, a fearlessness of character is developed that contrasts sharply with the timidity and lack of motivation found in large sections of more authoritarian establishments. In the atmosphere of living democracy everyone feels himself to be significant and nearly everyone is prepared to 'have a go'. The young people are happy because they feel they are sharing in something that is worth while and purposeful and are free from the warping effects of a sense of isolation and not being wanted. The result is not 'uppishness' or 'showing off'—which arise, it would appear, not from a sense of significance but as compensation for the lack of it—but a spontaneous and friendly alertness in bearing and approach to life.

It is difficult to analyse precisely the results upon personality of the experience of creative democratic life in school, because the whole is something much more than the sum of the parts. Although any school visitor, once he has experienced the results upon personality of democracy in school life, will know in five minutes whether or not they are present in a school, they are rather intangible qualities. But for clarity's sake some attempt at analysis must be made, even though with the warning that only an incomplete impression can be given by this means.

Self-reliance and Self-respect

Every child in a democratic school is conscious that he can alter the course of affairs. His contribution is encouraged and the machinery for making it fully effective exists. This removes even from the timid the sense of inferiority and helplessness that can have such a dwarfing effect upon character. The child also knows that the whole field of school activity is open to him. If he does not shine at games or work he need not despair of making his mark in the school society. A democratic school community always has a place warm and recognition ready for solid worth of any sort, even if it is nothing more than the useful unspectacular service of a rather dull and clumsy member. Because the whole atmosphere of the school is positive and stimulating, members of this type, who would hold back in a less flexible and inviting environment, are coaxed into action. Everyone, therefore, gets his chance of building self-esteem and self-assurance by making a valued social contribution, and this brings with it a quiet and happy self-reliance.

This quality of the individual, which, if not general, is at least the rule rather than the exception in a democratic school, finds expression in many ways. In discussions the pupils proved most frank and outspoken. They seemed to have come to terms with themselves and life in a remarkable way and to speak naturally of their strengths and weaknesses instead of being shy about them. To hear a fourth form boy say 'I like most lessons except French, but I'm not much

good at anything except manual training so I think I'd like to go in for that' as simply as if he were directing you to the station is almost startling after the usual tongue-tied bashfulness. Or from a more senior boy: 'I like Maths. but not Physics. It's laziness really because I find Maths. easy. Now I've got to swat Physics extra hard all next term.' In another school the question 'How could geography be made more interesting?' produced a whole spate of answers from a third-form group. In reply to the question 'What would you suggest to improve your local town?' a group of senior pupils gave a host of answers. Among them: 'There aren't enough things to do in winter,' and 'There ought to be one big club instead of lots of little ones, then they could run their own gym. and workshops.' 'And a roller-skating rink', added another. 'There's mostly only the pictures or dancing in the evening.' Did they not like pictures and dancing? 'Oh yes! But not all the time.' It turned out this group averaged a visit to the pictures once a fortnight, as compared with twice a week as a common average for an urban area.

There is, in fact, coupled with self-reliance a marked general capacity for objectivity that appears to arise not only from the practice of discussion but also from the feeling that the experience of life is something to be weighed up and acted upon, not just to be passively accepted. This, in turn, leads to the young people being more articulate and this reacts back to increase self-reliance still further.

Self-respect seems to have the same origin as self-reliance. Each child is encouraged to try all things and to hold fast to that which he finds good. The achievement that results is its own stimulus to further effort in any activity, and also to attempt mastery of fresh fields of endeavour. As success is built on success the child develops an ever bolder approach to life. A failure here is compensated by an achievement there and gradually assurance increases, and with it self-respect. There are, as has been said, exceptions to this; children perhaps whose home environment is so unstable that their confidence is given no chance to develop; but the increased incidence of these qualities seems to go up as the

school develops as a democratic community. The answer of a fourth-form boy to the question 'Who can tell me how this school is run?' is quite typical: 'We all could, Sir, but Smith is the form representative, so he'd better.' The democratic school has its stars and appreciates them like any other school, but every member shines with his own light according to his capacity. There is no eclipsing of the small by the great.

Responsibility

Participation develops responsibility. A sense of responsibility does not, of course, spring fully to life the moment a school is established on a democratic basis. It is a gradual growth. But as the pupils come to appreciate their position as contributors so responsibility develops. For instance, destructiveness and carelessness with school property markedly decrease. One school, which has been working as a fully developed democratic community for five years, and for longer still under a system of self-government, has had no case of deliberate destructiveness 'for years'; another, which set up its system of self-government only four years ago, tells of a 'marked improvement, and a vast change in the general attitude of the school as a whole'. That appears to be the common experience. Under democracy the pupils feel not only that the school is 'our show' but also 'ours to look after' When a social sense develops, hooliganism comes to be looked down on by the community as a whole; destructiveness ceases to be considered tough and is regarded as just 'silly'

But the sense of responsibility, of course, reaches far beyond purely negative advantage. Individuals and groups become more dependable. Pupils need less supervision. For instance, the fourth, fifth, and sixth forms at a co-educational grammar school carry on their own club on Saturday nights. The pupils have the run of the entire building without any supervision. At the end of each session the member in charge locks up and puts the key through the head's letter-box. The club has been running for over a year without a hitch, and

with no complaints from parents, local inhabitants, or staff. At another school of a similar type one of the fourth forms gave up a half-term holiday in order to redecorate their form room at their own expense. They put this through quickly and successfully with no more supervision than an occasional visit from the form mistress.

Again, such behaviour does not occur only in democratically run schools, but it appears to be of much more frequent and general incidence in them. Almost daily an individual or group will give proof of the enhanced sense of responsibility in the school.

Co-operation and Initiative

Closely coupled with responsibility are co-operation and initiative. In a democratic school community, all the more vigorous personalities are playing a part in some activity which they have had a hand in creating or starting. Their approach is much more creative and alert than that of their opposite numbers in schools where activities are planned from above and of which the pupils are just members—even if members of the committee. A good contrast is provided by the production of school magazines, mentioned in Chapter III. Thus if the magazine is a traditional burden of the English staff, with pupils merely co-opted, material is often slowly gathered, the pupils' share of the work unwillingly done, and the final result at times is heavy and uninteresting. But if the pupils start a magazine or wall-newspaper of their own, or if there is a well-formed staff–pupil committee, it is found that they will put much more effort and enthusiasm into the magazine's production.

By opening the door wide to initiative, in fact, democracy also trains in co-operation and responsibility. The pupils find that to launch a venture successfully they will need the help of others and will also have to depend upon the responsible behaviour of others. Gradually co-operation and responsibility come to be both expected and respected by the community as a whole. At a boys' modern school one form ran an 'Exhibition of War Weapons' in order to raise

money for the Red Cross. At its conclusion the holster of a revolver lent by one of the staff was found to be missing. Not the member of the staff but the 'organizer' took the matter up, ticked off the school at assembly after asking the head's permission to do so, and threatened to cancel the 'Exhibition of Model Aeroplanes', due the following week, if the holster was not recovered. The holster, found in a corner behind a wastepaper-box, was brought to the organizer before the close of the day. A small incident perhaps, but to hear a youngster passionately scolding the whole school because something has gone wrong with his exhibition, rather than handing the matter over to the head to deal with, is something not frequently found. Where it can happen, every individual will tend to grow in a sense of personal responsibility.

The pupils also come to learn democratic responsibility in the narrower sense. In a girls' grammar school a rather 'silly' third form elected the form buffoon as their representative. During the Christmas term each 'year' had a day's outing in London, the details of which were arranged by the form teachers and the form representatives—whose job it was to collect ideas from the forms. When the outing came off, 3 C found that none of the ideas they had suggested had been included. They complained loudly. The form mistress called a special form meeting the day after the outing and invited the form representatives of 3 A and 3 B to attend. It came out that 3 C's representative had not put forward any of the suggestions that had been given to her. There were immediate demands that she should resign. The form mistress told the members of 3 C firmly that they had elected their representative for the year and that they would have to stand by their decision. They then asked that a deputy should be elected to help her. This was conceded. They thereupon chose the best leader in the group as deputy. Such experience will bring home to less intelligent youngsters the importance of taking care whom you elect to represent you, in a way that no mere sermonizing on the matter can hope to do.

It is also found that a sense of responsibility developed within the school extends to a greater or lesser extent to society as a whole. The interest of the pupils of a democratic school in local and national affairs is noticed to be exceptionally high. You will find many of the seniors active in elections and eloquent on public matters in general. One boys' grammar school claims that it had three seniors taking a part in the General and Local elections for every one from the 'autocratic' grammar school in the neighbourhood. Some may complain that schoolboys should not 'waste their time' on politics; but, at any rate, if homework at times suffers, we may feel assured that such boys will not as adults be among the 30 to 50 per cent. of the people who are so apathetic about democracy that they do not register their votes at elections.

Critical Intelligence

The members of a democratic school find out by direct experience that truth has many facets, or, at least, that the struggles of mere mortals to reveal it expose only a little here and a little there, and never quite the whole. The discussions in form meetings, council meetings, committee meetings, and in Brains' Trusts and the like, which inevitably find their way into the life of the democratic school, steadily bring home that the rights and wrongs of an issue are never all on the surface, and are rarely seen completely by one individual at the same time. Sometimes members of the staff will take up different standpoints: this at once gets rid among the pupils of the fatal misapprehension that truth is something possessed in its entirety by those in authority. In such an environment of discussion and problem-solving critical intelligence takes root; and in time even weakly and dependent minds are prepared to put a point of view, or at least gain sufficient confidence to formulate one, even if they do not mention it except privately to their friends—by no means all the formative debating is done in official assemblies!

Contacts with the larger world beyond the school develop critical intelligence further. The views of a series of speakers

must clash at some points, and if a good reporter is chosen to summarize the speeches and point out the conflicts, either at assembly or in the columns of a wall-newspaper, the lesson that truth is the prize of an alert mind which has been trained to balance pros and cons is yet further emphasized.

Finally, several schools make a special point of training the pupils to rely on the printed word not for itself but only if the source is one of integrity. The quite common practice of reading accounts of the same incident or crisis from different newspapers, mentioned earlier in this book, reveals to the young people: (1) that something has happened about which the truth is available if you can find it, and (2) that all newspapers have a bias one way or another. One bold history teacher applies a similar method to the teaching of her subject. She finds that it is sufficient to read the accounts of battles in which English and French have been engaged, first from English and then from French history books, to bring home at once that history, though not 'all bunk' as Henry Ford suggested, is at any rate 'all biased'; even if the bias is only the personal one of giving more space to one aspect than another.

It might be supposed that to treat young minds in this way would be to drive them into cynical despair, but the contrary seems to be the case. Lessons become more exciting if you are an explorer seeking for the hidden treasure of truth than if you are nothing but a receptacle for ready-made facts. What does produce cynicism, it is suggested, is for the child to be given all material as though it were absolute and final truth and then to find, fairly late in adolescence, that his or her absolute trust in the printed word has been misplaced.

Training critical intelligence is obviously only possible in a school society rid of personal absolutism. Critical intelligence cannot be taught apart from experience; it is caught from an intelligently sceptical approach to information, which is the accepted intellectual attitude of the school society. Pupils from democratic schools will be unlikely to fall victims to propaganda. Nor will they give way to the despairing 'I really do not know what to believe', which is often the

way of escape from problems of the products of an absolutist education. The whole of life for the pupils of democratic schools will be a continued adventure of finding out; a task which they will consider as much their personal responsibility as it is that of the reporters and writers who supply them with various views as the raw material for critical assessment.

Courtesy

It is commonly supposed that a school with self-government and social discipline must needs be 'a bit of a bear garden'. It was interesting to discover, therefore, that, apart from a few schools that confuse democracy with slackness, the standard of courteous friendliness was quite delightful in the well-developed democratic school communities. There is no subservience, but a friendly, mannerly relationship based equally on self-respect and mutual respect.

It is only if young people themselves experience authority and responsibility that they can appreciate its difficulties and really feel a bond of sympathy with the staff and their problems. This is why school democracy does not make discipline harder for the staff but the reverse. Once the feeling of working together for a common objective has sunk home, the old fight to 'score off the teachers' gives way to the give and take of people on the job together.

This natural courtesy of a democratic community is well illustrated when a pupil, formerly subject to an authoritarian régime, comes late to the school. A mistress recounts how a 'great lump of a third-former', finding none of the old sanctions to obstruct her when she was transferred to the school, very soon began to throw her weight about in every sense. This culminated in direct insolence in form. The mistress made no attempts to hurl thunderbolts from Olympus; she just said, 'I wonder why you're rude to me, Nora? I'm not to you. At least, if I am, please tell me and I'll apologize.' 'She's new, Miss, she'll learn soon', said a member of the form in support, and the battle was over and won. That may sound like 'weakness', but its results are far more

effective than 'strength'. That rather extreme example shows the natural commonsensical relationships that democracy develops.

The permanent social lesson gained by the individual from such a social environment is to treat authority, whether you wield it or are subject to it, as a necessary and sensible arrangement. The psychologists tell us that a false attitude to authority is at the bottom of a great deal of trouble in society as a whole to-day. Whether that trouble is cleared up or stays to harass our society depends, it would seem, upon our schools rather than upon our police force.

Remedial Effects

We do not have to go far for proof that democracy is curative of anti-social tendencies. Apart from earlier work, Anton Makarenko in the Soviet Union after the last war, and such experiments as the Barns Settlement and the Cotswold School at Ashton Keynes in this country, have abundantly shown that a boy who is 'difficult', or who has got on the wrong side of the law, is helped back to sturdy and self-confident citizenship by life in an establishment where democracy and an emphasis on personal responsibility are features of the training (the two are of course complementary). Nevertheless, the present survey has something to add in that the material collected makes it plain that the boy or girl of an anti-social type who is drifting towards the revolt of delinquency can be helped by the experience of living in a democratic school society at least as much as the child who has been subjected to the shock of arrest and conviction. Recent delinquency figures add point to this.

One boarding-school runs a market garden where the boys may work instead of playing games if they prefer it. The whole thing is run by a committee of boys with a member of the staff in the chair. They plan their outlay, their crops, their programme of work, and the marketing of the produce. It is reported that many boys who can find no ready outlet in the orthodox work and play of the school find self-confidence and self-esteem by taking a part in the market-gardening

enterprise, so that their anti-social tendencies are smoothed away, and all their energies and enthusiasms are reoriented in a socially useful direction. It is also observed that once the gardening has rescued such misfits from their non-co-operative isolation, there is a carry-over from it into general school life, where they start tackling their work in a more determined manner and even acquire sufficient confidence to try themselves out in activities that they formerly shunned because their unsuccess made them feel ridiculous.

This instance is a useful proof of the value of social participation to isolates and misfits; but, in a democratic school, every activity, to a greater or lesser extent, is remedial in the same way. As soon as a non-co-operator really feels that he is valued and wanted in a socially useful group, he will begin to give up compensating his sense of inadequacy by anti-social behaviour. One boy improved 'out of all recognition' as a result of being chosen to sing in his house concert; another after being asked to lecture to the cycling club on 'Looking after a Bicycle'. The variety of a democratic school community gives everyone his chance for useful self-expression and, if form or house are run socially, the master or mistress is able to do a good deal towards putting opportunity in the way of these young people, who often need only the assurance of success to reorient their whole personality.

A word must also be added on a dangerous misconception that is growing in some quarters that a person is immutably fixed so far as character is concerned at quite an early age. Dr. Hutchins of Chicago University, as quoted on page 79 of *Democratic Education* by Benjamin Fine (published by Thomas J. Cromwell, New York), maintains, 'The objective of general education will not be the formation of character since little can be done about character at that age level.' It is true that Dr. Hutchins is talking of university students, but our democratic schools prove almost daily that this whole conception is wrong. A consciousness of social significance and utility can have a transforming effect upon a young person's character. By good fortune a misfit may 'strike lucky' in any environment and escape from the fetters of his self-

centred isolation into the more abundant life of self-realization through living socially, but in a democratic school community during every hour of every day the door to the fuller life is wide open, so that only the rare exception fails to find the way through.

Understanding of Democratic Machinery

It has been one of the anomalies of our educational system in the past that most people reached maturity without any knowledge of how to take the chair, move an amendment, or of all the other technical procedures upon which democracy depends. When this point was being discussed at one school the head said, 'When I was appointed, what I was most afraid of was that I might have to take the chair at a meeting. I didn't know how to.' No doubt a very large number of people feel like that. Nor is it to be wondered at. But a young person leaving a democratic school is as familiar with the procedure at a meeting as with that at a football or hockey match. That is as it should be. The proportion of careerists in organizations of all sorts would be fewer to-day if ability to take the chair had not until very recently been so rare that anyone capable of undertaking the task was assured of a quick run to a position of power. Admittedly things are improving in this regard, but the ideal for democracy is that every voter should be capable of competent committee work. That ideal would be achieved if all our children had the experience of democracy in their schools.

As a check on this point, the question was often asked about positions held in after-life by old school councillors. No statistical comparison was possible; but several heads shared the opinion which one expressed as 'Our boys seem to step straight into leading positions in the organizations they join'. This would indicate that there is still a serious shortage of people confident enough to hold office. So long as that shortage remains, the efficiency of democracy will continue to be exploited by the number of careerists who bustle through to positions of authority by mastering the technique of running a meeting. At this point also the fact

that democracy in school life is both educational and socially valuable is made plain.

Too Optimistic a Picture?

It may seem that this section exaggerates the importance of the experience of democratic community life at school as a factor in the formation of personality and character. Certainly even the best democratic schools are not without their failures, whereas many excellent young people come from autocratic schools. But nevertheless, although it would be impossible to make any statement of scientific accuracy without elaborate experiments involving test groups, the investigators have been so impressed by the difference in the general level of personality between democratic and authoritarian schools that they are quite convinced that there is no environment so suitable to the growth of happy, confident, socially minded, co-operative citizens as that of a fully developed democratic school community.

If Erich Fromm is right when he says, on page 222 of *Fear of Freedom*, 'Positive freedom consists in the spontaneous activity of the total integrated personality', and if it is right to be free, then the democratic schools are right, for they produce a degree of spontaneity in action and integration of personality that is unknown elsewhere.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

'If there is one conclusion to which human experience unmistakably points, it is that democratic ends demand democratic methods for their realization.'

JOHN DEWEY, *Freedom and Culture.*

The School in Society

In the struggle for educational advance two distinct features may be observed. The first has been the fight since 1839 for an extension of free education as such to cover the whole community; the second has been the endeavour to broaden the function of education itself to provide a comprehensive preparation for abundant living. Briefly, the first aimed to extend the machinery for inculcating knowledge; the second stressed the need to develop as fully as possible the capacity of individuals for living happily and effectively.

Until recently, the second part of the struggle received very little official recognition, but the persistent work of progressive educationists and teachers had its reward in 1943 when the White Paper on Educational Reconstruction directed attention away from the narrow utilitarian goal of mastering the three Rs, preparing for a job, or gaining the matriculation certificate, towards the broader purpose of training for life and for citizenship. As the Advisory Council for Secondary Education in Scotland puts it (Cmd. 7005, p. 10): 'The secondary school should provide a rich social environment where adolescence grows in character and understanding through the interplay of personalities rather than by the imparting of knowledge.'

Nor can the school, intent to fulfil its obligations to its pupils, be satisfied to restrict activities and associations to those that can exist within the confines of the school itself; through contacts beyond the school it must seek to develop the fullest possible awareness in the child of the life of the neighbourhood, country, and world. In short, the goal of development for a school now is to offer the atmosphere and

opportunities of a fully developed democratic school community which is not only integrated in purpose and social pattern within itself but is also in a close and active relationship with society and the purposes of society as a whole.

The Present Situation

Inevitably the change to the new way of things throughout the whole educational system cannot take place overnight. The educational system in general is deeply conditioned in the old autocratic ways and the old utilitarian purposes. Teachers, schools, and administrative machinery, tuned to serve the former objectives, tend to turn only sluggishly at first to the service of the new, although there are many outstanding exceptions to this. To give the making of citizens first priority rather than the production of examinees and trainees is liable to seem a rash and uncertain change to teachers who have focused all their attention through many years of effort on the annual struggle of their senior pupils with the examination papers, or upon the attainment of certain narrowly vocational skills. It is also inevitable that the school that is tied together by a hierarchy of privilege, with the head as the apex and the new pupils at the base, will carry within itself its own vested interests that oppose an extension of democracy. Even the parents, remembering the difficult years of slump and unemployment, can easily confuse the proper development of their children as citizens and personalities with the material advantages of an exclusive concentration upon examination success or training for a job.

In fact, the fuller educational ideas and ideals, although now widely accepted and officially approved of, are subject to a variety of obstructions that only a vigorous rethinking and reorientation can clear away. However, growth is taking place, and long before the White Paper was published schools were in existence that were exploring the possibilities of making themselves democratic communities in which responsibility and authority were shared as widely as possible, with a view to breaking down barriers between staff and pupils, and giving the pupils experience in managing

their own affairs. The present survey has sufficed to show that such schools are sufficiently numerous, and mature in experience, for the underlying principles of school democracy to be clear. This part of the Report, therefore, will be devoted to stating as clearly and concisely as possible our conclusions about the essential means of weaving a social content of living democracy into the fabric of our educational system.

1. The primary purpose of education in a democracy should be considered to be the development of personality, the training of character, and the making of citizens. In planning the life of our schools these objectives must be given at least equal consideration with any utilitarian purposes; the ideal being to unify the two so that training for examinations or vocation is seen as one aspect of developing the whole personality for full functioning in a democratic community. That is to say, each child should (*a*) be given a full chance to develop himself as an individual personality so that he may be capable of enjoying life through the exercise of his own capacities and will be alive to the realities and possibilities of the world around him; (*b*) should know how to play his part as an active member of his community both socially and politically; (*c*) should be equipped to make a contribution in the occupational sphere suited to his interests and aptitudes; and (*d*) should know how to be in effective communication with his fellow men and his culture by his own articulateness and creative capacity, by a developed objective intelligence, and by an awakened appreciation of art, drama, films, music, and the written and spoken word. The above goals have been accepted in theory for many years (H. G. Stead constantly stressed this fourfold purpose of education) but have not been generally followed in practice in spite of much valuable pioneer work. The time has come to bridge the gulf between theory and practice in the educational system as a whole.

2. The proper background for school democracy depends upon a general awareness within the school community of the school's place in society and a clear understanding of its

objectives and social purpose, which should not only be passively understood but should be demonstrated by the pattern of life of the school and restated frequently in terms of the school's day-to-day life. It also depends upon sound personal relationships existing between head, staff, and pupils. Without these fundamentals a true community spirit cannot exist. *Each* member of the school should be aware of the social as well as the educational purpose of the school, and must understand his part in both. Once the school is conscious of its purpose a team spirit will grow embracing all members. A consciousness of mutual responsibility will bring with it a mutual respect. Each will have with the others the friendly relations that naturally grow between those who are together 'on the job'. As one aspect of such relations, the function of each in the community must be understood and socially recognized, and the authority of individuals should be shown to be a part of their function, and, therefore, a part of their service to the community, and not an isolated power which some have arbitrarily and others have not. In such a school society it follows that rules and actions should not be imposed, which is to disregard human relations and the principle of co-operation, but result from as wide a consultation as each particular case may render appropriate. Teamwork is the key to the whole. To what extent this spirit pervades the school will very largely depend upon the relationship the head builds up between himself and his staff and pupils, because relations existing at the top will tend to be reproduced at other levels. Nor should any be left out of the community. The domestic and other staffs should be given full community recognition and feel themselves to be as much members of the school team as anyone else.

3. In order that this community spirit may live and grow and permeate the whole life of the school, and in order that the school's objectives in terms of its purpose may be achieved, it is necessary to establish such democratic machinery within the school as suits the school in question. This may be of any convenient pattern as long as the following conditions are fulfilled:

(*a*) Every member of the school must be given a sense of participation in the affairs of the school, and an opportunity for having his views and ideas considered.

(*b*) All those concerned must be consulted in matters affecting them, and any decisions made should be made only after an opportunity for discussion has been given. Thus, matters affecting the whole staff should be discussed with the whole staff; matters affecting the general life of the school should be discussed also with the pupils' representatives through assembly, form meetings, house meetings, council meetings, or whatever organization exists or is set up; and matters affecting individuals should be discussed with them. Discussion and preparation should, in fact, always precede action except when emergency conditions render this impossible.

(*c*) The function and authority of every member of the school community in a position of leadership, from the humblest position—such as chalk monitor—to that of form master or head, should be clearly understood and respected. A clash of authority on any issue indicates lack of such clarity and understanding.

(*d*) Every pupil in the school should have an opportunity of holding responsibility from time to time so that each may learn both how to lead and how to co-operate.

(*e*) As many as possible of the positions of pupil authority (prefects, &c.) should be filled by elections, in some of which both staff and pupils should take a part.

(*f*) Any activity that brings staff and pupils together in common endeavour should be encouraged. The teacher as friend, guide, and partner should be the basis of staff–pupil relationship.

(*g*) Rules and discipline should be based on the social needs of the school community, and exist so far as possible by the consent of the governed (see below).

(*h*) Information about present and future happenings should be spread throughout the school by means of

school reporters, form representatives, wall-newspapers, log-books, or any other convenient means. The more every member of the school is 'in the know' about the life of the school as a whole, the greater will be the dynamic, and the closer the cohesion, of the school community.

(*i*) As well as informal consultation, staff, form, and council meetings should be held sufficiently frequently to preserve continuity and a sense of enduring purpose.

4. Whatever democratic machinery is used it is also necessary to see that the social integration of the school is sound. Not only should pupils of the same age-range mix, but there should also be ample opportunity for children of different ages to join up for shared activities. Each individual should be a member of his own small social group, and of other groups, and, in addition, the social groups should themselves be interrelated by the warp and woof of contact and function. Thus, a child—in addition to being a member of his form in which he will be associated with the staff (particularly his form teacher) and with pupils of his own age—may work with the staff and another group of pupils as a member of the School Council, may be one of the personnel of the dramatic society, in which he will be associated with pupils of various ages, and with those members of the staff who make dramatics their special interest, and may have further group affiliations still as a member of a craft club and one of the school elevens. But this varied group experience is in itself not complete unless form, School Council, staff, dramatic society, craft club, and school eleven are aware of their interrelations and the contribution that each makes to the whole.

The existence of a warmly personal and friendly social group as the basis of such social co-ordination is absolutely essential. In the day-school the form appears to be the natural social unit, and, in the boarding-school, the house. But tutorial groupings may be the best social unit in some

types of school, especially when a high proportion of specialists on the staff militates against the form and form-teacher seeing much of each other. What is important is that every pupil shall be a member of an intimate group, under the care of a teacher, to whom every member of the group can look for help and guidance in his personal problems.

5. Unless an adequate substitute exists form life must be built up so that the form becomes much more than an age or an ability group sharing the same room and time-table. The health of the day-school community as a whole will depend largely upon the health of the form as its social unit.

The following are important:

(*a*) The form teacher should have plenty of time with the form.

(*b*) Really adequate time must be set aside for regular form meetings.

(*c*) The form should be a unit for activities other than lessons.

(*d*) As well as being complete in itself the form should, through form representatives, or through certain of its functions, have close ties with the larger community of the school as a whole.

(*e*) Form teachers should be selected whose human capacities will enable them to act as friends and guides to their charges.

(*f*) If it is not possible to develop the form as a social unit, pupils should be grouped under teacher-advisers so that every pupil has a member of the staff to whom he can always turn for help and advice. Such groups should not exceed thirty in number.

6. The development of independence of mind and the capacity of verbal expression should be fostered not only through discussions in council or in form but also through general discussions on controversial topics, debates, mock parliaments, and the like. There is nothing to be feared from bringing controversy into discussions, political or otherwise; but rather a great deal to be gained. The status of the staff

is in no way imperilled by the pupils hearing them debate against each other.

7. Where choice is possible, pupils should be allowed to elect which study courses they will follow. The choice in important matters should be made in consultation with teachers and parents. The essential point is to concede to the child the right to be at least an equal partner in the making of decisions which affect his or her work or career. The purpose of pupil choice is to train the child in making decisions by which he will stand, not to encourage irresponsible picking and choosing. Choice within subjects should be given when possible, and also a choice of athletic, social, and cultural activities.

8. Close relationships must be established between the school and the parents, so that the parents have a sense of participation in the life of the school. The establishment of Parent-and-Teacher Associations appears to be the best way of building up the co-operation of the parents in the life of the school. Such associations should not be only parents' clubs. They should be encouraged to play their part actively in the life of the school, and should have links with the governing body, and should work with the teachers in building up better conditions in the schools, and arousing a responsible interest in education in the locality.

9. The school should also encourage the closer participation in the life of the school of governors, old pupils, and friends of the school. The principle of the 'open door' seems to lead to the most satisfactory relationships between parents, contacts, friends, &c., and the school. The 'open door' does not, of course, imply intrusion into school periods.

10. In order that they may be at the disposal of pupils and parents for personal interviews when required, those in authority must, in fact, be accessible. Heads and staffs should be freed from the ties of unnecessary secretarial work.

11. The authorities must recognize the vitally important position of the head in building a good school community, and also the importance of good understanding and teamwork between head and staff. The head should always be

present at the appointment of new staff and be fully consulted about staff changes, and indeed about any matters affecting his school. Shifting of teaching personnel about from school to school should be avoided as much as possible. When a school was looked upon primarily as a 'teaching shop', transfer of teachers from one school to another did not appear to imply a great loss to pupils or teachers; but the conception of the school as a community completely reverses this position. The objective should be to build up a good staff team in every school and then to leave it alone. Casual shifting of personnel must affect school democracy most adversely.

12. The teaching body as a whole in every locality should have the means to work with the educational administration in a consultative capacity. Some local authorities still refuse to set up consultative bodies of local teachers for the purpose of exchanging ideas. In such cases the result may easily be that the Chief Education Officer assumes almost dictatorial powers, because the wishes of the council and the views of the teachers can only pass to and fro through his office. The result must be frustration among teachers, loss of satisfaction in their work, and a consequent loss in every school affected. Democracy, in fact, is indivisible, and to infringe democratic rights at any point is to weaken its creative capacity at every point.

13. In the locality itself there should also be as much cross-fertilization as possible between one democratic body and another. Not only should teachers from every type of school mix at the meetings of teachers' associations, and at discussion groups, but joint meetings between the National Association of Head Teachers, the National Union of Teachers, and other organizations should be arranged. A council of local Parent–Teacher and Parents' Associations should also be formed to work alongside the teachers' organizations. (A joint committee might well run a series of educational lectures and discussion meetings during the winter months.) Although such activity may seem to be quite outside the scope of this Report, it is in reality, of

course, very much within it. As was pointed out above, democracy within the school cannot be complete unless it is linked in every practicable way with the working of adult democracy in the vicinity. Meetings of subject teachers in an area should also be held in order to discuss and co-ordinate policy and method throughout the schools as lack of consistency impedes the development of a child's self-confidence.

14. By visits, lectures, service, joint school activities, surveys, and the like, the school should aim to establish close links with the neighbourhood in which it exists. Appropriate methods should also be used to develop awareness of the life of the nation and the world.

15. Every pupil leaving school should be well versed, through participation in meetings or councils, in the simple functioning of democratic machinery, and should know how to take the chair, propose a motion, move an amendment, &c. In addition he, or she, should be familiar with the procedure at general and local elections and understand the functions and responsibilities of the Returning Officer. Visits to sessions of Parliament, local councils, and law courts should also have been made at least by a proportion of all senior pupils.

16. The school assembly should be more than a corporate act of worship and a platform for notices. It should also be an act of community self-consciousness at which activities are reviewed and future plans announced—and perhaps even discussed. Through a well-planned assembly the sense of community, shared purpose, and common values within the school can constantly be reinforced.

17. Full social recognition must be given to all members of the school community who hold positions of responsibility or perform service to the school. A child or young person will value very highly a public commendation at assembly, or mention in the school magazine, or some other such social acknowledgement; while the tradition of acknowledging useful service acts as a stimulus to every member of the community to increase his or her contribution. Whenever a child undertakes a post of responsibility, or is elected to do so, the

whole school should know about it at once. In addition, a permanent written record should be kept in a prominent position of the names of all members of the school holding positions of responsibility. The state of affairs when a teacher orders a pupil off the school grounds only to learn that he is the leader of the 'Paper Squad' inspecting the grounds before going home clearly reveals a breakdown in the school's system of public recognition of public service. Schools should consider preparing a hand-book for new members of the staff so that they may have available the purpose, rules, and governing principles of the school, and other material that will help them in settling down.

18. A school community should build up its system of discipline on self-discipline and social responsibility. This entails the discussion of problems of discipline with the pupils so that rules may be formulated by general consent in order to meet the general need. It also means that the approach to non-co-operators must be to discuss their problems with them rather than to suppress bad behaviour by force and fear. Pupil courts, however, cannot be recommended: social intimidation is as much a source of fear and suppression as punishment. Social discipline is the pattern of behaviour arrived at by a community of people in order to facilitate the life of that society and the individuals within it. It is essentially freedom-making, not freedom-checking. In fact, social discipline is the self-discipline of the community and provides the background for developing individual self-discipline. It is binding upon the community as a whole because it has been accepted by the community as just and necessary. Such a system of discipline not only removes the glamour of breaking rules and flaunting the authority of the staff, but reduces or removes any need for the discipline of force or fear. The only sanction of such a system is that the young people must be prepared to accept the consequences of their own actions. Thus, to cane a boy for irresponsibly failing to turn up to play in a football match, for which he has been picked, can do nothing but spoil the relationships between the boy, the head, and the team. But

to talk the matter over with the boy and then to drop him from the side to the position of first reserve for a fortnight to enable him to prove his capacity to be punctual and reliable, explaining why this is being done, and discussing the justice of it with him, opens the way for the individual to make amends for his actions out of his own good sense without any ties between him and the school being broken. The closer a school can run to a pattern of functional discipline of this type the easier it will be to develop good community feeling and the fewer will be the occurrences of selfish or anti-social behaviour.

19. Every pupil should have the right of appeal to the head, but such appeal should follow a recognized procedure and should include discussion of the issues involved with all parties concerned.

20. Primary schools should give all the preliminary training they can in sharing, co-operation, making a choice between alternatives, and carrying simple responsibilities, with the deliberate intention of preparing the children for entry into a democratic secondary school at the age of transfer.

21. Every effort must be made to establish continuity of atmosphere between nursery, infants, primary, and secondary schools so that a child may pass through a developing social experience in which the same type of personal relationships and the same methods of discipline exist. To-day a child may experience a kindly informality in infants school only to be precipitated into a rigid regimentation at the junior stage, and may later be subject to two or three quite different social atmospheres at the secondary stage, owing to changing schools. Variety is wholly desirable between school and school, but not discrepancy between values and human relationships. Teachers' organizations, the educational press, the inspectorate, and the principals of training colleges should co-operate in order to establish, not uniformity of pattern and method, but conformity of principle and emotional climate throughout all types of school. Schools can only express and serve the best values of our culture and civiliza-

tion—which it is now hoped to make a common heritage for our children—if all schools are equally imbued with these values, and revere them assiduously and convincingly in the practice of their day-to-day way of life.

22. Definite time should be allotted from the school week for carrying out essential democratic activities such as form meetings and council meetings. To scramble democracy into odd corners is to evaluate it precisely as does the apathetic adult citizen of to-day who does not go to vote because he has planned to paint the scullery on polling-day.

Special Characteristics of School Democracy

It is necessary to understand clearly that the practice of school democracy is essentially different from that of adult society. At no level does democracy depend upon a particular pattern of machinery; it is therefore quite unrealistic to set out to mimic in the school the forms of democracy found in adult society. It is unwise to start with *any* model too much in mind, except perhaps that of another school, whose circumstances are similar, which has developed a system that has proved itself in action. All sorts of factors will go to decide what is the best pattern of democracy for a particular school; the type of school, its location, the presence or absence of neighbourhood spirit in the locality, the average age of the staff, the proportion of senior pupils, and so on. During the survey a teacher was interviewed who, having helped to establish pupil participation in one school, had been asked to work out a similar plan for submission to the head and staff of her new school. She soon discovered that the constitution that had suited her former school did not suit her new one at all well, because the first had had very little use for its houses, whereas the second was held together organically by a multitude of house activities. In fact, any school wishing to experiment with self-government must build on whatever social pattern already exists in the school. Variety of form is the spice of effective school democracy.

There are other considerations that should be borne in mind. Although the purpose of school democracy is to share

responsibility, the youthfulness of the pupils must never be forgotten. Too much responsibility is as undesirable for a child as too little. The best leaders need to have their capacities fully extended, but must never be overburdened. In such matters the careful judgement of the adult members of the school community has a contribution to make. One must not overload the willing horse or important matters will get skimped or neglected, and the character of the individual concerned will be injured and the sense of achievement reduced by the enforced failure to be reliable and thorough. The ideal to aim at is to combine every encouragement to undertake responsibility with sufficient guidance to see that every pupil shoulders only so much as he or she can do thoroughly. If any pupil tends to be snowed under with his social duties a redivision of function should be arranged so that more get brought in to take a share. Sometimes the desire to keep prefect status high results in such a limitation of numbers that a prefect who is conscientious barely has a moment to himself. This is an error that the democratic spirit itself corrects, because the preference for a small privileged *élite* when a larger body of leaders would be more satisfactory is the reverse of democratic. On the other hand, of course, one must not make a farce of a prefect's position by multiplying numbers unnecessarily. It is all a matter of reaching a wise balance through trial and experience.

The special position of the head and staff also affects school democracy. The head obviously cannot abrogate his absolute responsibility, while the teachers have, in the school, the status of the expert in society as a whole. There is, thus, a clearly defined area of school life which must remain in the full control of head and staff. This does not invalidate the reality of pupil self-government; it merely defines its limits and powers. In fact, this limitation actually *helps* school democracy, because it enables experiments to be carried out, and mistakes made, without catastrophic consequences.

However, although the area of self-government in a school is inevitably limited, the quality can—indeed must—be genuine. Pupils should be able to inaugurate legislation and

put up ideas for discussion; and they should be able to feel confident that, if their case is made good, the legislation or idea will be adopted.

At all costs sham democracy must be avoided. Sham democracy may take the form of the domination of the School Council by the head or staff, so that the pupil members are merely used to rubber-stamp a staff decision; or of an unjust weight being given to staff opinion so that the mere whim or prejudice of a member of the staff will be considered sufficient to block a decision arrived at by the School Council, although it clearly has advantages for the school as a whole. Of course, there will be rare occasions when what appears to be a useful idea conflicts with the genuine responsibilities of a member of the staff; as—to give an example—when a School Council (which included the staff) decided to run a film club after school on Tuesdays. The geography master, who was absent at the time of the decision, had to use early Tuesday evening for running through the films that arrived by the second post, ready for his double geography period with the second forms first thing on Wednesday morning. The club plan was at once dropped pending possible adjustments. Thus, when such a clash occurs, things can be worked out along commonsense lines so long as general co-operation is good.

Yet another expression of 'sham democracy' is the imposition of unpleasant tasks upon certain sections of the school by a majority vote of the council. 'No responsibilities without consultation' must be the accepted principle. It follows, of course, that sham democracy is very unlikely to occur in a school that has an established democratic spirit.

The Transition Period

Once it has been decided to reform the social pattern and discipline of the school upon democratic in place of autocratic principles, certain preliminary steps should be taken to prepare the school. The following are suggested as a general guide:

1. Some time before any innovations are introduced, the

proposals as a whole should be put before the school and the part that the pupils will have to play explained to them. The reasons for change must be stated, and the character of the challenge being made to the pupils to assist more fully in running the school made clear. They must realize that they are being asked to make a contribution, and that new responsibilities will be theirs.

2. The proposals should be discussed fully at form meetings, house meetings, prefect meetings, and at any other suitable gatherings.

3. When the whole school is aware of what it is proposed to do in general, the announcement should be made that the first representative body of pupils is to be called—this may be on any convenient basis. At this time the nature and limitations of school democracy should be clearly explained. A member of the staff or an outside speaker—or both—should be invited to address the senior members of the school on practical democracy. Plenty of opportunity for questions should be given at such a meeting.

4. When the preliminary School Council is summoned, a constitution that has been prepared to meet the circumstances and potentialities of the school should be introduced and discussed.

5. The findings of this meeting should be promulgated by announcements and notices, and further opportunities given for the pupils to ask questions. At this stage it must be explained why a certain time-lag between the acceptance of a new idea and its being put into operation must elapse.

6. Coupled with the establishment of a democratic framework for representation and discussion there should also be introduced an efficient system for supplying information and reporting back from council meetings to the whole school. The school community must be kept well informed.

7. If pupils meet with the staff as the School Council, they may be disinclined to speak at first. This phase will be quite soon passed as a rule if the chairman is encouraging. To what extent the pupil representatives are tongue-tied will depend upon previous relationships existing between staff

and pupils. If the young people do not begin to find their feet after three or four meetings, they should sit for a few occasions as a Pupil Council without the staff, but with the head as chairman. This will help to give them the confidence and practice they need.

Of course, some schools do not make a deliberate decision to transform the school from benevolent despotism to co-operative democracy; the transition takes place gradually by evolution and experiment over a period of years. But at the present time many schools feel the need to make up leeway as rapidly as possible. In such cases, or when new schools are opened, the general approach outlined in the above seven points will facilitate sound development.

The Whole Personality

Finally, we feel it necessary to repeat that democracy in schools is not only an efficient way of keeping the school community healthy and vigorous, as well as being valuable educationally as preparation for citizenship, but also that *only* the experience of life in a school community run by and for democracy can give young people the values they need, and the understanding of how to mix and share, upon which to build full and happy personal lives. Timidity, lack of self-confidence, apathy, inarticulate isolation, delinquency, neurosis, breakdown—all are degrees of unpreparedness for social living, and all are common features of our society. These cannot be cleared away either by precept or punishment, but only by the development of social adjustment through social experience. At the present time many institutions and organizations in society as a whole are too huge and unplanned socially to provide such experience, whereas home life has ceased to be of the value it once was—important as it is and must remain—because the average family is too small and many homes are too cramped and for other reasons. Thus, it is upon our schools that society must largely depend for the training in social living, without which neither can the individual meet the tests of life with joy and equanimity, nor can civilization survive.

The White Paper on Educational Reconstruction of July 1943 aimed to establish 'an educational system which will open the way to a more closely knit society and give us strength to face the tasks ahead'. Our society is designed as a democracy. It follows that if it is to be 'more closely knit' we can no longer be content to subject our children to autocracy while at school. The school-leaving age is now by law fifteen and, in practice, often seventeen or eighteen. After leaving school the young people are immediately called upon to play their part as democratic citizens, and within a year or two have the right to vote. It is obviously necessary, therefore, to establish consistency in values, relationships, and methods of government between the schools and what we wish to develop in society as a whole. The attainment of a whole personality and the integration of society depend together upon such consistency. The object of this Report is to assist schools to contribute actively towards building an organic society and preparing fully developed citizens for it. There could be no more vitally important work at the present time.

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