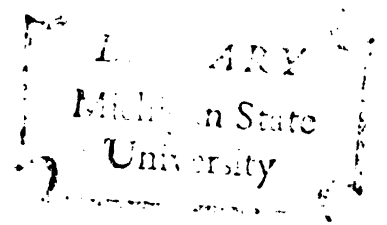


A DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF ENGLISH
SECONDARY EDUCATION FROM 1944-1959
WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO
THE SECONDARY MODERN SCHOOL

THESIS FOR THE DEGREE OF M. A.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

LOUIS COHEN
1960

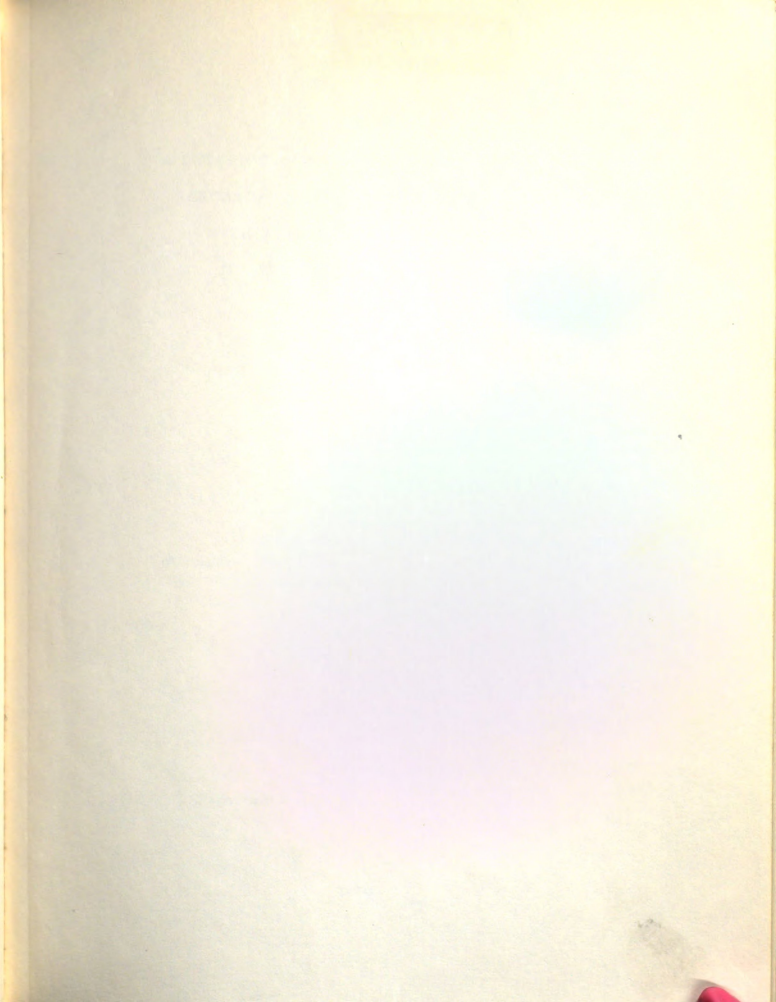




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A DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF ENGLISH
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By

LOUIS COHEN

A THESIS

Submitted to the College of Education of Michigan
State University of Agriculture and Applied
Science in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Foundations of Education

1959

A DESCRIPTION

SECONDARY

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The writer wishes to express his sincere thanks to Dr. Carl H. Gross and Dr. Stanley P. Wronski for their many contributions to the development and completion of this study.

L. C.

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A DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF ENGLISH

SECONDARY EDUCATION FROM 1944-1959

WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO

THE SECONDARY MODERN SCHOOL

By

LOUIS COHEN

AN ABSTRACT

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1960

Approved _____

ABSTRACT

It was the purpose of this study to examine some of the major developments in English Secondary education from the Education Act of 1944 to the present time, searching out in particular, the "growing pains" of the youngest member of the tripartite secondary structure, the Secondary Modern School.

It was found that the expectations of the 1944 Act in regard to this school--that it should cater to the majority of secondary children in a non-academic, examination-free program--have certainly not materialized, nor does it appear that such a development is now possible. Rather, the Secondary Modern school was seen to have been caught up in the tremendous social changes taking place in post-war Britain. Together with the tripartite system of which it is a part, the Secondary Modern school has become, first and foremost, part of a selection process for occupational level, and hence, social class. For this reason primarily, the tripartite system of secondary education was found to be inappropriate to the needs of Great Britain, a country in the process of far-reaching social and economic changes. A comprehensive organization of secondary education was proposed as more in keeping with the needs of a modern democratic society, and a part of the study was devoted to an investigation of a number

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The Problem

educational problems that face present day Britain.

high school per se will act as a sort of elixir for the social and

is presumptuous in the extreme to suppose that the comprehensive

which Great Britain might move towards the democratic ideal, it

school is the most effective organization of secondary education by

While it is acknowledged that the comprehensive high

of the investigation. They might be summarized briefly as follows:

America. Tentative conclusions were drawn from this latter part

studies of the comprehensive high school in the United States of

was examined by reference to an appropriate sample from American

secondary education would lead to the "more closely-knit society"

within their areas. The question of whether such an organization of

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A somewhat delayed Government White Paper, "Secondary Education for All. A New Drive" was presented to Parliament on Wednesday, December 3rd, 1958, with its declared intention of making certain that "every child shall be able to travel along the educational road as far as his ability and perseverance can carry him."¹

Its pages are filled with the hum of controversy about Grammar Schools and Comprehensive Schools, about examinations in Secondary Modern Schools, and to the casual observer it would be more than obvious that the report reflects a rather turbulent state of affairs in English Secondary Education.

The nucleus of the Government Report is a suggested new deal for the Secondary Modern Schools. The creation of the Secondary Modern School has been called one of the greatest educational ventures of our times and yet to many people--educators, teachers and parents--these schools are considered a second best, and a poor second best at that.

¹Secondary Education for All. A New Drive. Cmd. 604.
H.M.S.O. London. 1958.

The Government has apparently been made to realize that there is a very real need for improvement in the opportunities which exist in the Secondary Modern School for the average child to receive an education suited to his age, ability and aptitude.

For a number of years there has been a growing concern, particularly among the parents, that the "parity of esteem" which was promised the Secondary Modern School under the 1944 Education Act has not been realized. Many parents actually dread the thought of their child failing the Secondary Qualifying Examination (generally called the 11 plus) and being directed to a Secondary Modern School.

What are the Secondary Modern Schools? How have they developed since the Education Act of 1944? How far are they meeting the needs of the vast majority of the English children whom they educate? These are the questions which this investigation will attempt to answer.

The Government Report comes almost 15 years after the creation of the Secondary Modern School. The time seems most appropriate for a review of the progress that has been made in this, the youngest member of the secondary educational partnership. Much has already been written about the Secondary Modern School, yet there appears to be a very definite need at the present time for an enquiry in the form suggested above. The Secondary Modern School

is no longer purely an educational problem, for political interests are centered on its growing pains. The Government Report is a reply to the recent publication of the British Labor Party² calling for an end to the present tripartite arrangement of secondary education and the setting up of a comprehensive system of secondary school education. Perhaps, for an Englishman, the perspective from American soil will allow a better balanced presentation of the whole question.

There are a number of excellent studies which have been made concerning curriculum development, evaluating techniques and selection procedures for the Secondary Modern School. There appears to be no general study at the present moment which attempts to trace the development of the Secondary Modern School from the 1944 Education Act to the present day, searching out the main trends of progression and evaluating that progress in terms of the aims and philosophy of the 1944 Act. Such is the intention and purpose of this study.

The investigation will be set against a brief historical background showing the plan of secondary education which existed before the 1944 Education Act, and the work of three Committees in their attempts to outline a program of secondary education for all. It will be necessary to deal briefly with selection procedures which

² Labor Party. Learning To Live. Transport House. London, 1958.

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"stream" children into the tripartite structure at the age of 11 plus.

The selection process is the cause of much misunderstanding and disagreement and has a direct bearing upon the curriculum form in the early years of the Secondary Modern School.

The children of the Secondary Modern School will then be described. Their interests, their capabilities, their range of ability and their home backgrounds will help explain the varied curricula of the Modern School, and in particular, the way each school has developed along its own lines, utilizing the amenities of the local area and reflecting the philosophy of education held by the particular educational authority. There are now many different Modern Schools, all developing and changing rapidly. This variety has emerged because of the great measure of autonomy which is given to the Local Education Authorities and to their teaching staffs to develop a system of secondary education most fitting to their own particular needs. Many schools have developed vocational trends which receive criticism in certain quarters as being contrary to the traditional spirit of English secondary education. Others have introduced special courses leading to National Examinations such as the G. C. E.³ at Ordinary and Advanced Levels, and these schools have received their share of praise and condemnation.

³The G. C. E. is the examination for the General Certificate of Education, a public examination conducted by Regional University

The feelings of the parents and the teachers will also be reported, for the public estimation of the Secondary Modern School is a sword of Damocles destined either to be raised or allowed to fall in the very near future. Here, some statistical evidence, gathered from a number of recent sociological studies will help to illustrate how much the whole question of public esteem is bound up with the structure of society in post-war Britain and the movement toward greater social mobility.

The purpose of this study is to describe and evaluate the English Secondary Modern School from the date of its inception to the present day; to search out the main paths along which development is taking place, and to evaluate the contribution that this particular school is making and has already made towards the emergence of a fully recognized partner within the tripartite structure of secondary education, sharing parity of esteem in the eyes of the general public. If the Secondary Modern School is to continue to exist, it is hardly conceivable that anything less than this ought to be achieved, for it

Boards. Students usually enter for the G. C. E. at Ordinary Level at 16 years of age. They thus offer subjects they have been studying for 5 years. Those who remain at school a further 2 years may offer the principal subjects which they have been following at the Advanced Level. The results of the G. C. E. are used to determine suitability for entrance to universities, teachers' colleges, and certain courses in technical colleges.

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1. *Chlorophyll a* (Chl *a*)

1. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1997; 277: 1033-1038.

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is unthinkable that in a democratic society, over 70% of its children should receive their education in schools not fully acceptable to the public of that society.

If the Secondary Modern School, when weighed in the balance is found to be wanting, then it would appear that an alternative secondary structure might better be adopted. The idea of an alternative system, modelled on the American comprehensive high school, has already gained considerable support in England. There would, of course, have to be modifications to take into account differences in national and local cultural backgrounds, and the whole proposal would require very careful investigation before a national comprehensive system be recommended. The evidence in this area will also be reviewed briefly.

The nature and scope of the investigation necessitates an approach which, for the most part, will be descriptive. Philosophical and sociological considerations will however play an important part in its development. The evidence presented is based upon a close contact with the Secondary Modern School on the part of the investigator for a period of eight years, three of which (from 1949-1952) were spent as an assistant master on the staff of a Secondary Modern School in the northwest of England.⁴

⁴ Holker County Modern School, Barrow-in-Furness, Lancashire, England.

1. The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses of the members of the committee. The names are listed in alphabetical order, and the addresses are given in full. The list is as follows:

Name	Address
Mr. A. B. C.	123 Main St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. D. E. F.	456 Elm St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. G. H. I.	789 Broadway, New York, N. Y.
Mr. J. K. L.	1010 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.
Mr. M. N. O.	1111 Third St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. P. Q. R.	1212 Second St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. S. T. U.	1313 First St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. V. W. X.	1414 West St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. Y. Z. A.	1515 East St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. B. C. D.	1616 North St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. E. F. G.	1717 South St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. H. I. J.	1818 Central St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. K. L. M.	1919 Union St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. N. O. P.	2020 Madison St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. Q. R. S.	2121 Park St., New York, N. Y.
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Mr. W. X. Y.	2323 Park St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. Z. A. B.	2424 Madison St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. C. D. E.	2525 Park St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. F. G. H.	2626 Madison St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. I. J. K.	2727 Park St., New York, N. Y.
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Mr. O. P. Q.	2929 Park St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. R. S. T.	3030 Madison St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. U. V. W.	3131 Park St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. X. Y. Z.	3232 Madison St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. A. B. C.	3333 Park St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. D. E. F.	3434 Madison St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. G. H. I.	3535 Park St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. J. K. L.	3636 Madison St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. M. N. O.	3737 Park St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. P. Q. R.	3838 Madison St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. S. T. U.	3939 Park St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. V. W. X.	4040 Madison St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. Y. Z. A.	4141 Park St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. B. C. D.	4242 Madison St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. E. F. G.	4343 Park St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. H. I. J.	4444 Madison St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. K. L. M.	4545 Park St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. N. O. P.	4646 Madison St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. Q. R. S.	4747 Park St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. T. U. V.	4848 Madison St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. W. X. Y.	4949 Park St., New York, N. Y.
Mr. Z. A. B.	5050 Madison St., New York, N. Y.

References have been made to a number of books dealing with both general and specific aspects of educational theory and practice both in the United States of America and the United Kingdom. The educational publications of the Conservative and the Labor Parties since 1944 have been freely used. Evidence concerning the progressive trends in the English Secondary Modern School has been sought by a careful review of educational publications available both in England and the United States. Statistical data have been compiled from the findings of four or five recent sociological investigations conducted by the Sociological Department of London University, while the considerations towards the end of the work present evidence obtained through a study of recent American investigators in the field of sociology and by a limited amount of experience on the part of the investigator as a teacher and a student in the United States.

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CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Before examining the Secondary Modern School, the third member of the Tripartite System of Secondary Education which has existed in England and Wales since the Education Act of 1944, it is important to review certain elements in the historical background which have influenced its development. It is not the intention here to report at any length upon the progressive Education Acts which culminated in the tripartite secondary structure of 1944. Many excellent histories are readily available to the interested reader. However, there are important trends, clearly visible in the reports and recommendations of various committees, which when closely examined, will help explain the reorganization of English Secondary Education under the Education Act of 1944.

Not long after the Education Act of 1918, public interest in the development of post-primary education appears to have been aroused. The pamphlet, "Secondary Education for All--A Policy for Labor" was issued in 1922 and reflected the views of a group of socialist educators.¹ The pamphlet set forth the idea of the division

¹R. H. Tawney. Secondary Education for All--A Policy for Labor. 1922. p. 7.

of public education into primary and secondary stages:

The only policy which is at once educationally sound and suited to a democratic community is one under which primary education and secondary education are organized as two stages in a single continuous process; secondary education being the education of the adolescent and primary education being the education preparatory thereto. Its objective is . . . the development of public elementary education to such a point that all normal children, irrespective of income, class or occupation of their parents, may be transferred at the age of "eleven plus" from the primary or preparatory school to one type or another of secondary school, and remain there until sixteen . . . It recognizes that the more secondary education is developed, the more essential will it be that there should be the widest possible variety of types of secondary schools. It therefore looks forward to the time when central and junior schools will be transformed into one part of a system of a free and universal education.¹

There were two kinds of school education prior to the 1944 Education Act. The elementary and the secondary existed as two distinct systems. The public elementary school was there mainly for the purposes of elementary instruction (reading, writing and arithmetic) and with the objective of giving basic literacy to its occupants catered to children between the ages of five and fourteen, the latter being the school leaving age at that time.

The secondary school, which aimed at providing a higher education (offering courses in science, mathematics and languages), was, in point of fact, what would today be called a Secondary Grammar School. Pupils entered at the age of eleven either by the special place

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examination, more commonly known as the "scholarship," or because their parents were in a position to pay the necessary fees. Generally, the secondary school pupil remained in school until sixteen, some, taking work leading to University Scholarships, stayed until seventeen and eighteen plus.

For the non-fee paying children a limited number of places was available (varying throughout the country, of course, according to local conditions) and these places were awarded on a competitive basis. The special place or "scholarship" examination was held towards the end of the child's last year in the Junior School and included a paper in mechanical and problematic arithmetic, an English paper which generally required a composition, and a variety of intelligence papers.

The Report of the Consultative Committee on Education presided over by Sir H. W. Hadow was issued in 1926 under the title, "The Education of the Adolescent." The task of outlining a completely new form of post-primary education for a large number of children who had never had it was made even more difficult for the Committee by virtue of the fact that they were bound to work within the clearly marked boundaries of established tradition.

Loukes points out that:

In the nineteenth century there was little challenge to the assumption that the educational system should reflect and

perpetuate the class structure of society. The deliberate provision of different grades of school was considered a positive contribution to social stability. Children were to receive an education suitable to their station in life, because peace and prosperity depended on everyone's keeping his place and being efficient in it."²

The Committee proposed, briefly, that secondary education would fall into two categories--Grammar and Modern. The Modern, which was to cater to the general mass of children was to have a leaning towards a practical curriculum.

²Harold Loukes. Secondary Modern. p. 70. The perpetuation of a rigid class structure where everyone knew his "rightful place" applied to the teacher equally as much as to his pupil. Asher Tropp. The School Teachers. Heinemann. London. 1957. p. 147. notes that, "The hostile attitudes of many of the middle and upper classes towards the elementary teachers and their organization, reinforced the status anxiety of the profession." Tropp quotes E. Webb, Our Partnership. 1948. p. 269, "In July 1903, Winston Churchill's bugbears were, Labor, N. U. T. and the expenditure on elementary education or on the social services."

The tremendous pressures of class consciousness under which the Hadow Committee had to work is further born out by G. A. N. Lowndes. The British Educational System. Hutchinson. 1955. p. 85. "It is barely 30 years since a speaker in the House of Commons, who had been Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education, in arguing against the raising of the school leaving age, claimed that the cotton industry could never do without the pliant and nimble fingers of the fourteen year old worker. It is less than 20 years since members of the Finance Committees of local authorities would bitterly oppose the installation of hot water in new schools as calculated to give children ideas "above their station'."

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Emphasis should be laid in the school curriculum on practical aspects of certain subjects without involving work in the technicalities of any one specific trade or occupation.³

The Committee expressed anxiety lest the Modern School should be regarded by the public as of a lower order than the Grammar School. They pointed out that there were many minds, and by no means minds of an inferior order, which found the stimulus to development in some form of practical, constructive activity. No reference was made in the Report to types of children, though there is the implied assumption that children, broadly speaking, fall into one of two categories--academic or non-academic.

For the non-academic, the Committee rightly observed that a Grammar School curriculum with a year or two lopped off would not suffice. A new curriculum would have to be developed by experimentation within the schools themselves. The Committee was well aware of the immense variety and range of children who would attend these schools. Even in a single school, might be found a great width of range in types of mind and environmental conditions. It followed then that any rigid schemes of instruction would be out of the question if the children were to benefit at all.

³The Education of the Adolescent. H. M. S. O. 1926.

The Report is worded with great caution and judiciously gives positive suggestions for the construction of new curricula, while at the same time, leaving great scope for experimentation. The main principles of curriculum construction which the Hadow Committee advanced were as follows:

1. Emphasis on a practical basis to learning experiences.
2. Judicious use of occupational needs and standards as an incentive (including the use of examinations).
3. The full use of, and development of local interests.
4. The necessity to plan the curriculum as a significant and self-contained whole.
5. The development of permanent interests in the student.

These five points were to have considerable influence on the philosophy guiding the development of the Secondary Modern Schools from 1944 onwards, and it is therefore appropriate that they be examined more closely.

The practical bias, recommended by the Committee, should only be put into effect during the last two years, when, it was noted, many of the children were already beginning to think of the occupation they were going to follow, and were anxious to be doing something which would help them when they left school. Here, the Committee pointed out, were obvious incentives, and if this influence were to be disregarded, then one of the strongest motives for the continuance of the pupil's education would be lost.

The third principle of curriculum construction, the necessity of paying due attention to the conditions in the immediate environment of the school, was to be based upon the pupil's interests, and though these might at some future date encompass the world itself, they would of necessity begin in the home and in the interest and challenge of the things in the children's immediate environment.

The curriculum would have to be planned as a whole, advised the Committee. By whole, they meant not just something which came to a climax before the child left school, but rather the bringing together of school subjects in some form of unified experience. Such a curriculum could be drawn up, argued the Committee, by reducing the number of subjects and by carefully exploiting the common ground between different subjects.

Finally, the Hadow Committee recommended the desirability of arousing in the child interests which would continue throughout his life and which would help him to enjoy his future leisure with greater happiness.

The Hadow Committee, then, in submitting its report on how Section 2 of the 1918 Education Act⁴ was being carried out, recommended that,

⁴The appropriate clauses of Section 2 of the 1918 Education Act are quoted in R. Armfelt. The Structure of English Education. Cohen and West. 1955. p. 62.

[illegible]

Primary education should be regarded as ending at the age of 11 plus. A second stage should then begin, and this stage . . . should as far as possible, be regarded as a single whole, within which there will be a variety of types of education.⁵

Among the "variety of types" of secondary education at this particular time, the Grammar School and the Modern School are the most important. The few existing Junior Technical Schools were treated as something apart from other secondary types, but modifications in this view were introduced some twelve years later by the next Consultative Committee on Education, sitting this time under the chairmanship of Sir Will Spens.

The Spens Committee of 1938 followed the general suggestions of the Hadow Committee, but recommended that there should be Technical High Schools in addition to the Grammar and the Modern Schools and added that these Technical High Schools should be developed from the existing Junior Technical Schools.

We recommend that the three types of secondary schools attended by children over the age of 11, which we have named Modern Schools, Grammar Schools (borrowed from the Hadow Report), and Technical High Schools (their own description) should be administered under a new Code of Regulations for Secondary Schools.⁶

⁵The Education of the Adolescent. H.M.S.O. 1926. p. 173.

⁶Secondary Education. H.M.S.O. p. 377. Apparently the majority of teachers at this time (1938) as represented by the National Union of Teachers, were "against" tripartitism:

"While welcoming the general conclusions of the Report (the Spens), the N. U. T. regretted its approval of the tripartite system and its general disapproval of multilateral schools."

Quoted from Asher Tropp. op. cit. p. 235.

1. The first part of the document is a list of names and dates, which appears to be a record of some kind. The names are written in a cursive script, and the dates are in a more formal, printed style. The list is organized into columns, with names in the first column and dates in the second column. The names are mostly male, and the dates range from the late 18th century to the early 19th century. The list is followed by a section of text that is also written in cursive, but it is too faint to read accurately. The text appears to be a continuation of the record, possibly providing more details about the individuals listed. The document is a single page, and the text is written in ink on a light-colored paper. The overall appearance is that of an old, handwritten record or ledger.

Thus the recommendations of the Spens Committee gave a tripartite arrangement to Secondary Education, but before their suggestions could be put into effect, the Second World War commenced.

The Norwood Committee, in 1943, reported on similar lines to the Spens Committee, and, faced with a situation in which the concepts of three distinct groups of schools had emerged, they argued that,

... these groupings, being the fruits of experience, must roughly represent three groupings of children.⁷

It was the Norwood Committee, then, which affixed the seal to the "tripartite document" and the doctrine of the three "types" was complete. As Armfelt states,

Thus before the 1944 Bill was before Parliament, educational opinion had already become accustomed to what was called the tripartite division of secondary education. So generally was the tripartite division assumed, that it is often supposed, even today, that it was confirmed in the Act of 1944. This is not so.⁸

The comment of the Labor Educational Policy Pamphlet issued in June, 1958, on the tripartite system is even more terse,

... Already modifications have been made in this tripartite system, but it still dominates secondary education. It is not prescribed by law, nor was it adopted after careful thought. ... When the 1944 Act prescribed secondary education for all, it seemed easiest to provide this by adding on a third type of secondary school.⁹

⁷Harold Loukes. op. cit. p. 28.

⁸R. Armfelt. op. cit. p. 74.

⁹Learning to Live. Labor Party. 1958. p. 26.

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The 1944 Act¹⁰ did not, in fact, require tripartitism. The Act obliges the Local Education Authorities,¹¹ one hundred and forty six in number, to provide adequate and sufficient secondary schools, specifying that a necessary attribute of sufficiency is that they will afford opportunities for all children according to their ages, abilities and aptitudes.

The division of children into three "types" continued to be assumed, probably because it fitted in so conveniently with the pattern of secondary education as it emerged.¹²

¹⁰For more detailed reference to the 1944 Education Act and supplementary amendments (Education Act 1946, Education Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1948 and Education Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1953), see: Armfelt. op. cit. pp. 9-27.

¹¹The position of the L. E. A. 's under the 1944 Act is well covered in: W. O. Lester Smith. Education--An Introductory Survey. Penguin. 1957. pp. 118-149, and W. P. Alexander. Education in England--The National System, How It Works. St. Martin's Press. 1954. pp. 14-27.

¹²J. W. Tibble. "Defects in the Tripartite Structure." Times Educational Supplement. March 8, 1957, attacked "the unrealistic and doctrinaire planning" which had produced the tripartite structure of British Education. "To assume, first of all, that there were three distinct classes of children, and secondly that they could be accurately discerned at 11 plus was," he said, "an amateurish bit of typology, recalling something from the pages of a medieval bestiary--psychologists have been laughing at it ever since."

However, the "official" viewpoint, as voiced by the Spens Committee was that the selection could be made at 11 plus. The Ministry of Education took a similar view (The New Secondary Education. Pamphlet No. 9. H.M.S.O. 1947. p. 52).

Many educators opposed to this claim, found support in Sir

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Ottaway traces this evolving secondary school pattern to the unenlightened days of the late nineteenth century and he draws a rather startling parallel of similarity between the three grades of school recommended by the 1868 Taunton Commission and the proposed tripartite structure of the 1938 Spens Report.

The Taunton Commission proposals reflect the social and economic conditions of their day, but when compared with the Spens tripartite structure, they resemble it so closely that many advocates of an overall comprehensive system have used the parallel to substantiate their arguments against tripartitism.

Ottaway's comparison is as follows:¹³

Taunton First Grade School

To age 18 plus. No attempt to displace the classics, but the curriculum to include mathematics, modern languages and science. In general, like a Public School but with lower fees.

Spens Grammar School

To age 18 plus. "No reason to recommend any revolutionary change in the subjects and activities of the Grammar School, except that the curriculum can be lightened after 13 plus, so long as the subjects include English, a language, or science or mathematics."

Cyril Burt: (cited in the British Journal of Educational Psychology. Vol. XVLL. Pt. 2. June, 1947.)

"At the age of 11 plus, the wide differences in innate general intelligence can be estimated with reasonable accuracy by means of standardized tests. But special aptitudes and interests, especially those of a practical, technical, or mechanical character, cannot be assessed very accurately at this age except in a comparatively small proportion of cases."

¹³A. K. C. Ottaway. Education and Society. Kegan Paul. London. 1953. pp. 72-73.

1. Name of the person
2. Date of birth
3. Place of birth
4. Sex
5. Marital status
6. Occupation

7. Education
8. Religion
9. Nationality
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Taunton Second Grade School

To age 16. "Latin and those subjects which can be turned to a practical use in business." For boys wishing to enter the professions, engineering for example.

Spens Technical High School

To age 16 plus. Intellectual discipline along with technical value in relation to a group of occupations, notably engineering and building.

Taunton Third Grade School

To age 14. General education and not vocational. "The most urgent educational need of the country." For farmers, tradesmen and the superior artisans.

Spens Modern School

To age 14 (1938 school leaving age). General education, with a practical and concrete approach but not vocational. For the great majority of the boys and girls in the country.

Since the 1944 Education Act, the concept of tripartitism has received much criticism. Politics have entered into an educational controversy. The official opponents of tripartitism, the Labor Party and the Workers' Educational Association adopted the comprehensive school as their "rallying point" in 1952 at the Labor Party Conference.

It is, perhaps, not an unfair criticism of the present day situation to comment that there has probably been more political activity than educational investigation into the suitability of an overall comprehensive secondary pattern for England and Wales.

The authoritative doubts of Kandel¹⁴ on the adequacy of such

¹⁴I. L. Kandel. Educational Reorganization in Relation to Social Order, in Education in a Changing World. (ed. Dobinson) O. U. P. 1951, pp. 34-46.

a structure and the investigations and findings of Glass,¹⁵ Banks,¹⁶ and Bantock,¹⁷ deserve serious consideration by any political party attempting such a gigantic and momentous educational reorganization. The words of Conant are particularly applicable,

I do not believe that educational practices are an exportable commodity. . . . At times in our own history, attempts to import a British or a European concept have done more harm than good.¹⁸

Would the "importation" of a comprehensive secondary structure to Great Britain succeed in levelling social class barriers? The evidence of a number of recent sociological studies would appear to question this. Has the comprehensive structure in the United States fully succeeded in this respect? Again, a number of American investigators express certain doubts.¹⁹

¹⁵ D. V. Glass (ed.). Social Mobility in Britain. London. Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1954.

¹⁶ O. Banks. Parity and Prestige in English Secondary Education. London. Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1955.

¹⁷ G. H. Bantock. "Tripartite Reform." Times Educational Supplement. March 7, 1958, and "Utopian Fallacies." Ibid. March 14, 1958.

¹⁸ J. B. Conant. Education and Liberty. Harvard. 1953. p. 2.

¹⁹ W. L. Warner. "Who Shall Be Educated?" Harper. 1944. A. B. Hollingshead. Elmtown's Youth. J. Wiley. 1949. W. Lloyd Warner. Democracy in Jonesville. Harper. 1949.

The question of the subsequent organization of Secondary Education in Great Britain (i. e. continued tripartitism or, alternatively, a comprehensive system) may prove to be one of the major political issues in the General Elections of 1959. The Labor Party, currently fulfilling the role of Her Majesty's Opposition, has already stated its policy as far as education goes,

A Labor Government will require local education authorities to prepare secondary education development plans designed . . . with all reasonable speed to adopt a comprehensive principle and provide in each secondary school a wide range of courses.²⁰

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The critical moment will be when the general populace goes to the polls in the coming year.

²⁰ Learning to Live. Labor Party. London. June, 1958.

CHAPTER III

SELECTION FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION

Whether I believe all this "parity" business or not, the Great British Public doesn't. For the past fifty years every decent self-respecting parent . . . has been trying like blazes to get its sons and daughters to the Grammar School. The reasons for their wanting to do that were mixed . . . but whatever the reasons, they wanted it, like hell. Now all of a sudden they are told that all that is wrong, that it represents an undemocratic, unenlightened, reactionary form of privilege, and that the new Secondary Modern School is just exactly as good as Eton. But, not being half-wits, they don't believe it. . . .¹

John, a character in Wolfenden's delightful book, How To Choose Your School, is voicing the opinions of many thousands of anxious parents whose children, having failed to obtain a high enough score in the 11 plus secondary selective examinations, are directed to a Secondary Modern School for the remainder of their school education. Though there is a further examination at the age of 13 plus, for the express purpose of finding any wrongly placed pupils, John realizes that the 11 plus is just about as "final" as any examination could be. Less than 2 percent of the children selected for Modern School education at 11 plus

¹C. F. Wolfenden. How To Choose Your School. O.U.P. 1952. p. 18.

are later transferred to the Secondary Grammar Schools.²

Each Local Education Authority administers tests for admission to its own secondary schools. Though there are differences throughout the country in the actual administration of the 11 plus examination, most L. E. A. 's employ standardized objective tests of verbal intelligence, English and Arithmetic. There is a small number of authorities which still employ a more traditional type of Arithmetic and English test (requiring an essay like the old "scholarship" test) despite the subjectivity involved in the marking and grading of thousands of papers. Again, there are others which use the grading and attainment rank prepared by the Junior School teachers from their records.* However, the vast majority use the standardized objective type tests, prepared either by a professional body (such as Moray House) or by their own educational advisers, or they sometimes use a combination of both these sources. The old type essay examination as part of the 11 plus selection procedure is rapidly being abandoned by most L. E. A. 's, despite conflicting evidence

²"Secondary School Selection in England," Educational Forum. Vol. XXI. No. 3. March, 1957. p. 261.

*It is reported that almost every revision in selection procedures mentions giving more weight to teachers' assessments.
P. E. Vernon. "Trends in Selection." Times Educational Supplement. March 20, 1959. p. 493.

as to its usefulness as a guide to effective selection.³

Penfold's results in essay-marking experiments would seem to indicate that the essay in the 11 plus examination hinders, rather than aids selection. The table below shows the aggregate of marks allocated to each candidate's essay. In all cases, the candidates are borderline students, and it need hardly be stressed that the widespread discrepancies in the marks of the various examiners would have great significance for such children in the 11 plus examination.

Examiners	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
Candidate 1	<u>18</u>	15	<u>9</u>	16	12	13	13	12	17	12	15	17	15	15	12	16
Candidate 2	10	10	14	13	12	15	12	12	<u>8</u>	11	12	<u>15</u>	14	14	10	15
Candidate 3	<u>12</u>	8	10	<u>6</u>	8	8	6	9	11	9	6	9	9	7	7	6
Candidate 4	13	12	10	8	12	9	11	10	14	14	<u>8</u>	11	11	<u>14</u>	10	12
Candidate 5	<u>7</u>	8	<u>14</u>	11	12	10	11	13	10	9	10	7	10	11	10	10

* The range of marks is indicated by the lowest and highest score being underlined.

³D. M. E. Penfold. "Use of Essays in Selection at 11 Plus." *British Journal of Educational Psychology*. Vol. XXVI. 1956. pp. 28-36.

Test	Plymouth	Moray House 1952	Moray House 1954
Intelligence	.826	.808	.792
English	.741	.764	.721
Arithmetic	.792	.751	.735
Intelligence, English, Arithmetic combined and equally weighted	.863	.820	.814

Out of the three tests used, it is reported that the intelligence test generally has significantly higher validity than any other single test.⁴

Richardson's experiments at Plymouth confirm the statements of the British Psychological Society regarding the high validity of the intelligence test. Intelligence tests, English and Arithmetic tests and primary teachers' reports were correlated with criteria of success in grammar school work by Richardson. The table above is Richardson's statement of the overall validity of the examinations, comparing the Plymouth tests with similar issued by Moray House. For the tests as a whole, great accuracy as to their predictive powers of a child's future

⁴ British Psychological Society. Psychological Aspects of Secondary School Selection. Methuen. London. 1957. pp. 147-53.

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attainment in secondary education is claimed, though many experts will admit to some 10 percent of incorrect decisions.⁵

The results of the Plymouth^{*} investigation into the predictive validity of tests and measurements and teachers' estimates showed that reasonably high validities could be obtained by using combinations of selection material. The primary teacher's estimate gave better results than any one single test, but was significantly less good than the whole examination. Adding the teacher's estimate to the qualifying examination result raised the validity, but not significantly. It would appear then that such estimates cannot entirely replace the examination. The whole table is set out below.

Predictive Validity of Tests and Estimates

Qualifying Examination (English, Arithmetic, Intelligence)	.863	
Primary Estimates	.835	
Qualifying Examination and Estimates	.865	--the procedure of the
Intelligence and Estimates	.847	majority of L. E. A.'s
Intelligence	.826	
English	.741	
Arithmetic	.792	
Arithmetic and English	.790	
Arithmetic, English and Estimates	.827	

⁵ As Vernon says, "If 20% enter the Grammar Schools, 5 (that is 1/4) are likely to turn out unsatisfactory, and 5 of those relegated to the Modern Schools (that is 6%) could have surpassed them had they been given the chance." "Secondary School Selection in England." Educational Forum. Vol. XXI. No. 3. Part 1. March, 1957.

^{*}G. C. Richardson. "Some Evidence Relating to Validity of Selection for Grammar Schools." British Journal of Educational Psychology. Vol. XXVI. 1956. pp. 15-24.

Recent investigations into the validity of the general pattern of selective procedures are unanimous in their conclusions that there will always be wrong allocations.

No matter what procedure an authority adopts, it is inevitable that a number of pupils will be admitted to Grammar Schools and subsequently fail to fulfil their promise, and a number of children will be denied admission who might well have been able to acquit themselves creditably had they been offered the opportunity to do so.⁶

It is seen in the previous chapter how the three Consultative Committees arrived at a tripartite structure for secondary education. The Norwood Committee endorsed the views of the Spens Report that there should be three broad types of secondary education--secondary grammar, and secondary modern (as proposed by the Hadow Committee) with the addition of the secondary technical as recommended by the Spens Report. It was further noted that the Norwood Committee went on to describe the three types of minds which, in their opinion, roughly coincided with the three types of secondary schools. The deep mistrust with which psychologists received this part of the report did much to undermine the flimsy theoretical framework on which the principle of tripartitism was founded. Added to this, the Local Education Authorities

⁶ A. Yates and D. A. Fidgeon. Admission to the Grammar Schools. Newnes. 1957. The authors estimated that 122 children per 1000 are wrongly allocated each year. P. E. Vernon (ed.). Secondary School Selection. Methuen. 1957, cited by J. J. B. Dempster. "Book Review." British Journal of Educational Psychology. June, 1958. pp. 144-45.

received no positive guidance in the setting up and administration of the "new" secondary education for all. The Butler Act stated that,

. . . it shall be the duty of the local education authority . . . to contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental, and physical development of the community by securing that efficient education throughout those stages shall be available to meet the needs of the population of their area.⁷

The Act went on to deal more specifically with the primary and the secondary schools in these words,

. . . and the schools available for an area shall not be deemed to be efficient unless they are sufficient in number, character and equipment to afford for all pupils opportunities for education offering such variety of instruction and training as may be desirable in view of their different ages, abilities, and aptitudes, and of the different periods for which they may be expected to remain at school, including practical instruction and training appropriate to their respective needs.⁸

With the general acceptance of the Norwood typology and the readily available tripartite structure (the Grammar School and the Technical School were already named and the old "elementary" school became overnight the Secondary Modern), all that remained to be settled was some philosophy to guide the Local Education Authorities in the placement of their secondary pupils. It was stated at the 1950 Labor Party conference that since the 1944 Education Act did not mention three types

⁷H. C. Dent. The Education Act of 1944. U. L. P. 1958.

⁸Ibid. p. 16.

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of secondary school, it "left the way open for the comprehensive or the common secondary school."⁹

The London County Council went ahead in setting up a program of such "common secondary" schools as did other authorities. The vast majority however, found it more convenient, and possibly, more in keeping with their educational philosophy, to proceed with a tripartite organization. The point of convenience is unquestionable; the philosophy which motivated them is worth some consideration.

Many fell back on the Norwood Report to justify their secondary structure. The Report claimed that the tripartite structure was based on general educational experience. Others looked to the interpretation of the words of the 1944 Act.

Another catch-phrase at the time of the Butler Act "equality of opportunity" brings us back to the fundamental problem of the pattern of secondary education. Like "secondary education for all" it needs interpretation, for it does not follow from it that all children should have the same opportunities. They needed opportunities suited to their capabilities.¹⁰

The acceptance of such a philosophy suggested that the capabilities of the children should be tested and scored and that these scores should be used in the allocation of pupils to the various secondary

⁹Report of the Labor Party Conference 1950. London. p. 92.

¹⁰J. J. B. Dempster. Selection for Secondary Education. Methuen. 1954. p. 7.

schools. Hence the setting up of the 11 plus selective examination by the great majority of the L.E.A.'s. This however brought new difficulties. Since the number of Grammar School places throughout the country varies tremendously, the Grammar School intake each year varies correspondingly. For example, although the overall percentage of secondary school age children entering Grammar Schools in England and Wales is approximately 20 percent, Newcastle-upon-Tyne can take only the top 12 percent while in certain areas of Wales, over 60 percent of the secondary children are in Grammar Schools.¹¹

The validity of the Norwood typology would appear, then, to be questionable, even to the point of its very existence.¹²

The Selection Examinations have brought in their wake a number of undesirable educational practices. Coaching for the examination is carried on in a large number of primary schools throughout the country. Publishing Houses even provide material for the parents to carry on where the teacher leaves off. There is ample evidence that coaching can be effective in giving the border-line child sufficient extra

¹¹ P. E. Vernon. Secondary School Education and Selection in England. loc. cit. pp. 262-65.

¹² Harold Loukes. Chapter I: "Is There a Secondary Modern Child?" op. cit.

marks to gain entry to the Grammar School.¹³ Thus, a "tail-chasing" policy is recommended in order that the "fairness" of the system remain indisputable.

We are forced to the solution that all testees should have opportunities for becoming familiarized with the test . . . the only fair solution is to give adequate practice and coaching to all.¹⁴

There remains after all this the acknowledged 10 percent (at least)¹⁵ of wrong allocations to the Secondary Schools as admitted by the most recent investigations into selective procedures. The borderline group to be interviewed by Committees to determine their suitability

¹³P. E. Vernon. "Practice and Coaching Effects in Intelligence Tests." Educational Forum. Vol. XVIII. Part No. 3. March, 1954, and

D. M. McIntosh. "The Effect of Practice in Intelligence Test Results." British Journal of Educational Psychology. No. 14. 1944. pp. 44-45, and

E. A. Peel. "A Note on Practice Effects on Intelligence Tests." British Journal of Educational Psychology. No. 21. pp. 122-25.

¹⁴P. E. Vernon. op. cit.

¹⁵Many would insist that this figure is too conservative an estimate. There is evidence that middle-class homes provide greater opportunities for extra-curricular learning. Davis [A. Davis, Social Class Influences upon Learning. Harvard University Press. 1948] suggests that verbal intelligence tests require experiences more likely to be familiar to middle-class children than to the working class child. Since the majority of L. E. A.'s use verbal intelligence tests, the results of children from working class homes might conceivably be underestimated. Himmelweit [D. V. Glass (ed.). op. cit. pp. 141-159] found that children from lower socioeconomic groups do relatively less well on attainment tests (English and Arithmetic) and points out that such tests often constitute 66% of the total marks.

for a Secondary Grammar School education often comprises 15 to 20 percent of those taking the examination. (The places at the Secondary Technical School are very often "offered" to the lower division of the border-line group.)

The whole procedure is depressing as shown by the report of one of the interviewers,

The decision we had to make within the space of about fifteen minutes would affect not only our candidates' education but their careers and their whole lives. To recommend or not to recommend--that was our question, but unlike Hamlet's, our decisions could not be postponed.

As long as our system of secondary education involves an arbitrary selection at 11, a division has to be made; the academic sheep must be rigorously segregated from the non-academic goats. The alternatives are large comprehensive schools, overlapping between grammar schools and secondary moderns . . . perhaps one of these would really be the wise choice, but for us--the County has arranged another batch of borderlines tomorrow, the next day and the next.¹⁶

The "non-academic" goats comprise over three-fourths of the secondary school population. They are the non-selected, those without special abilities, those who are best described as ordinary children from whom a certain number have been withdrawn. These are the children of the Secondary Modern School, and the Tripartite System is the typical pattern of secondary education in England today.

¹⁶"On the Borderline." Times Educational Supplement.
June, 1957. p. 939.

Shortly after the passing of the 1944 Education Act, in all the confusion which accompanied the inauguration of a new era in English educational history, optimism ran high,

Authorities were convinced that the new tripartite system provided a clear-cut solution, administratively neat and tidy Most had read the Act to mean that all "academic" teaching should be under one roof, all "technical" under another, and a "non-bookish," "practical," "real down-to-earth" (whatever this means) type of education under a third roof.¹⁷

In particular, the Secondary Modern Schools were urged not to "ape the Grammar Schools," but, in looking after the "average and dull" children to avoid examinations like the plague, and to use their freedom to experiment.

¹⁷Brian Simon. New Trends in English Education. MacGibbon & Kee. London. 1957. p. 38.

CHAPTER IV

THE SECONDARY MODERN CHILD

The children entering the Secondary Modern Schools are reported to vary in their intelligences, as expressed in standardized scores, from 75 to about 115 IQ. The latter figure represents the generally accepted lower limit of general intelligence for the children thought likely to profit from a Grammar School education.¹ This intelligence range would include those for whom the basic tools of education present extreme difficulty and those with abilities and potentialities similar to the lower forms of the academic Grammar Schools.

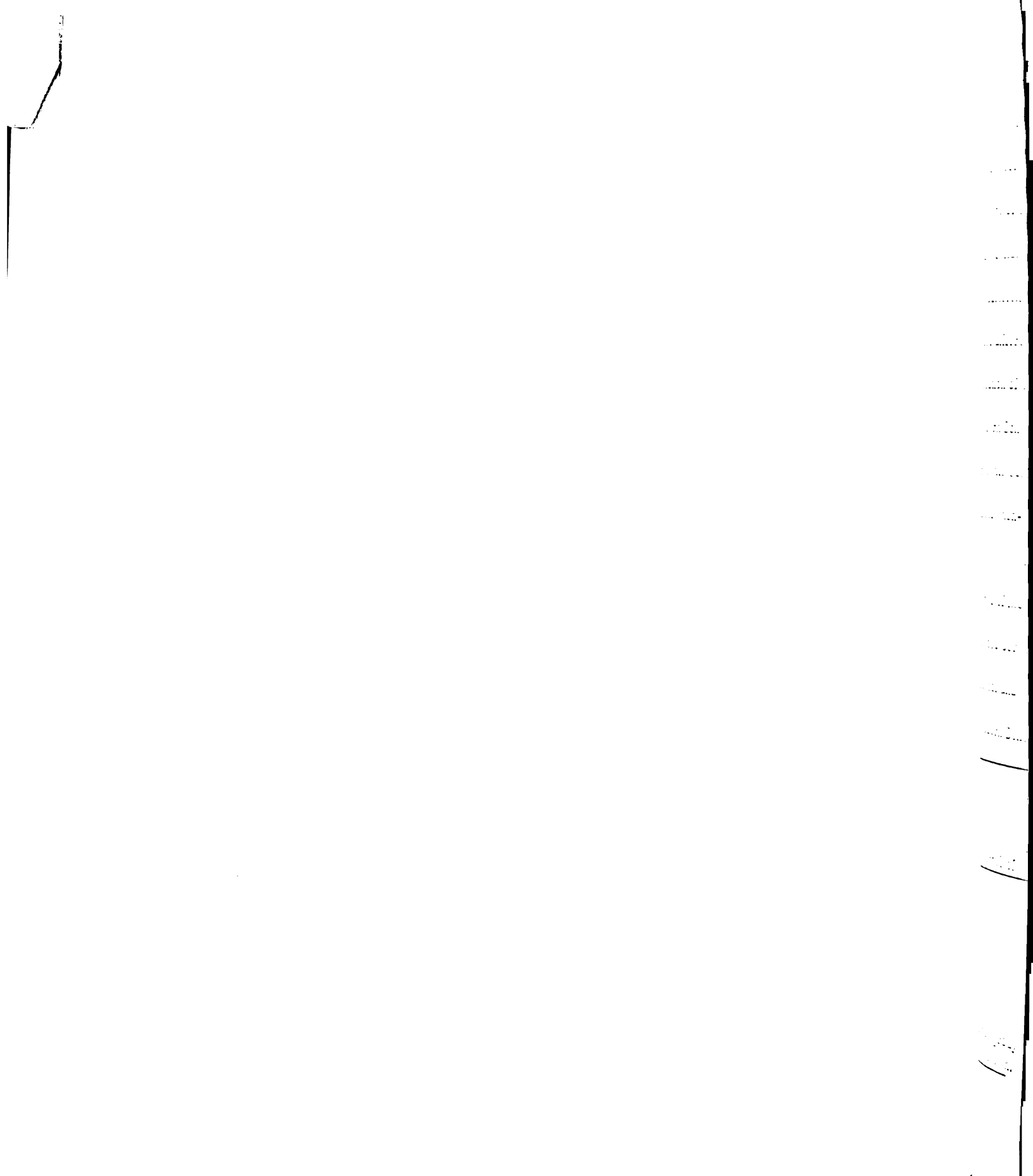
Approximately two-thirds of the total secondary school population (including Grammar, Technical, Comprehensive and Multi-lateral, and the Public Schools) entered the Secondary Modern Schools in 1957.²

¹ J. J. B. Dempster. Purpose in the Modern School. Methuen. 1956. p. 32.

² The figures appeared in "Questions in Parliament." Times Educational Supplement. July 4, 1958. p. 1108.

Total attending Secondary Schools 2,186,497

Total attending Modern Schools 1,424,041



As was noted in the previous chapter, the Grammar School intake varies with the number of places available. Loukes³ cites evidence of seven L. E. A. 's which implied that less than 10 percent of the children in their area were of the "grammar school type" while ten authorities decided that there were more than 35 percent. Since these differences can hardly reflect a regional variation in the distribution of abilities, it points to the fact that the composition of the Modern Schools varies considerably from one area to another, and presents serious doubts as to the validity of the Norwood terminology of the "non-academic" unsuitable for the grammar school curriculum.

For the children at the upper end of the Modern School range of measured intelligence, it is admitted that there is little to choose between those who just passed for the Grammar or Technical School and those who just failed to qualify and went into a Secondary Modern School.⁴ It follows that the curricula suited to the capabilities

³Harold Loukes. op. cit. p. 36, and

J. Williams. "Ablar Child in the Secondary Modern." Journal of Education. December, 1954. p. 547.

"Perhaps the injustices of pre-1944 arising from family circumstances have been replaced by others equally insidious arising from geographical location and statistical caprice."

⁴For a full discussion of the whole problem of the "border line" group, see: J. J. B. Dempster. Selection for Secondary Education. Methuen. 1954.

of the children in the lower stream of the Grammar Schools should be also suited, with minor modifications, to the children in the upper streams of the Secondary Modern Schools. This was not the case in practice, particularly in the years immediately following the 1944 Education Act. The two curricula differed significantly and as will be seen, the movement is toward increasing the demands put upon the children in the upper streams of the Modern School by providing curricula almost parallel to those employed in the Grammar Schools. In this manner it is hoped that the "gulf" between those "just in" the Grammar School and those "just out," will be closed. There was a suggestion that the solution lay with the Grammar School, in that it should take up the role envisaged for it by the Norwood Committee and be strictly a school for academic training, maintaining its high standards and reducing its average annual intake to considerably less than the generally quoted national figure of 20 percent.⁵ Through opposition from both the L. E. A. 's and the parents, the recommendations of the Ministry have not been carried out in this respect. On the other hand, with over 9,000 Secondary Modern pupils entered for the academic G. C. E. external examination in 1958, the recommendations for the role of "non-academic" and "practical" school have also been ignored by the

⁵ Ministry of Education. Education. June 7, 1946 and August 16, 1946.

Secondary Modern headteachers as a whole, with the backing of the Local Education Authority in most cases.

It can be seen then, that the types of education which the Ministry of Education sought to promote in the tripartite structure have not, in fact, become a reality, and, if the present path of development is continued, the chances of three distinct roles emerging, become less and less feasible. ✓

There is considerable overlapping between the schools and this makes the present task of "describing the Secondary Modern child" all the more difficult.

Between the higher and lower ability ranges in the Secondary Modern School stand the "ordinary" children. This group is often thought of as having intelligence quotients (expressed as standardized scores) between 85 and 105 and about half of the secondary school population in England and Wales under 15 years of age are included here.

What are the interests of these children? It is generally true to say that these children are, above all else, interested in practical activity. The standard of achievement to which they aspire may be good or bad, but they appear to be interested mainly by the challenge which activity brings: in drama, in woodwork, metalwork and homemaking courses, in horticultural and nautical studies and in the practical applications of more formal studies.

In the every day life of the school itself, in the preparation for an exhibition of work, the production of a school play, or a music festival, the construction of a sailing boat for the School Sailing Club, there is no end to the numbers of willing volunteers eager to work long after school hours with a vast amount of effort. The secondary modern child is interested in the immediate present. ✓

He is also interested in the immediate locality of the school. The formal work of the classroom takes on new meaning and interest when it is seen to have direct relevance to the economics of the local environment. Visits to the local steelworks, farms and factories make the classroom studies more meaningful to him and the resultant higher standard of school work has made the "school educational visit" a feature of almost all Secondary Modern Schools. When the Secondary Modern child discovers, to his great satisfaction, that he has some aptitude for a particular study or skill, and is positively encouraged to develop that aptitude, then will he give of his very best and achieve results which are rewarding both to himself and to his teacher.

But there is apparently nothing here to distinguish between the non-academic and the academic child. The characteristics outlined above might equally be applied to the Grammar School child.

The difference, as Loukes notes, appears to lie in how far

the Grammar School child is able to go beyond the bounds of the "immediate" and "concrete" and apply his non-academic experiences academically. He would seem to be more able to extract the underlying generalizations of his particular field of study--whether language or mathematics or science--and to apply them abstractly. Furthermore, the Grammar School child appears to approach his secondary education with a wider range of cultural and artistic interests than his Secondary Modern counterpart. This is most likely to be as a result of his home environment. Floud gives evidence of the influence of income, housing and family size in this respect.⁶

There has, for a long time, been a widespread misconception that the Secondary Modern child is, "poor with his head but good with his hands." The Consultative Committee reports calling for a curriculum based on practical activities did much to prolong this error. The teachers in the Secondary Modern Schools have found that, generally speaking, the more able children show greater ability on the practical as well as the academic side. The Brighton investigations of Dempster in 1944 bear out these observations.⁷

⁶J. E. Floud (ed.). Social Class and Educational Opportunity. Heinemann. 1957. Tables 18, 21, 22. pp. 104-109.

⁷J. J. B. Dempster. op. cit. p. 25. An Investigation into the Use of Factor Scores in Describing and Comparing Groups of Secondary Boys of 11 Plus (unpublished M. A. thesis), University of London, and

Harold Loukes, op. cit. p. 35.

The "ordinary" Secondary Modern student appears to show only slightly more specific practical ability than academic. It is because he has had little or no opportunity in the highly competitive academic atmosphere of many present day Primary Schools to "shine" at anything practical, that he is often so agreeably surprised at the results he obtains in the woodwork shop or the practical mathematics course of his "new" school.

These observations are, of course, generalizations. There will be children at all levels of intelligence who are better at practical rather than academic activities, and vice-versa, just as there will be examples of marked musical and artistic ability throughout the whole intelligence range. But it will be agreed that such cases are the exception rather than the rule. The intention here is to deny the "heads and hands" typology which has been affixed to the tripartite division, and to recognize that the children in the Secondary Modern Schools have less "all-round" ability than their fellows in the Grammar and Technical Schools.

Again, it must be stated that the abler Secondary Modern child, the border-line case who failed to gain admission to the Grammar School, is not included in the terms of reference outlined above, simply because as we have seen, his failure to obtain a Grammar School place is often attributable to the great variation in the number of available

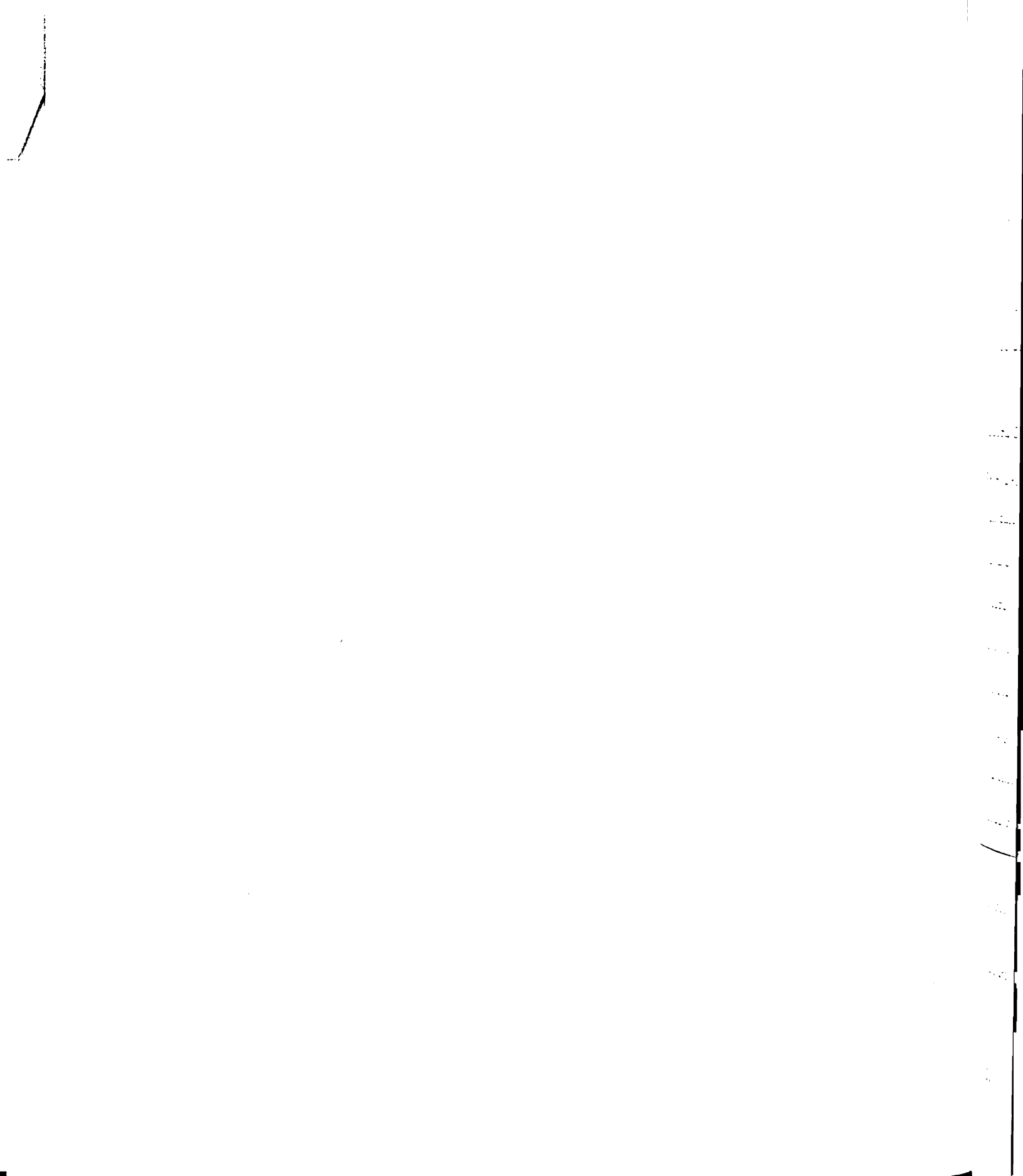
places throughout the country. There is also the fact that he hardly differs academically from the child who has just gained a Grammar School Place.

At the lower end of the ability range, there are those children who need the special care and guidance which is best given in the Educationally Sub-Normal Schools (E. S. N.) by specially trained teachers working with small groups and special equipment. In many areas, children with IQ ratings of 75 and below are cared for in such schools, but this is by no means universal, and to a great number of Secondary Modern Schools* has fallen the task of providing for the urgent needs of these children.

The abler children and the backward children make up the minority groups within the range of children in the Secondary Modern Schools, though, depending upon area, there are reports of Secondary Modern Schools having up to 25 percent of their total admission made up of children of lower than average ability, of whom at least 10 percent would profit from the program which the E. S. N. School could offer.

Though there has been no study (known to the present investigator) of the homebackgrounds or the material conditions affecting

*Some 12,000 children who were in Secondary Modern Schools in 1956, should according to medical opinion have been accommodated in E. S. N. Schools. H. C. Dent. Secondary Modern Schools. Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1958. p. 199.



children attending the Secondary Modern Schools, useful information can be gained by reference to a number of sociological investigations of the relationship between social class and educational opportunity in England and Wales in recent years. From these investigations, a general picture of the home background of the Secondary Modern child may be deduced.⁸

The great majority of the children entering the Secondary Modern School come from working class families where the fathers are engaged in skilled or unskilled manual work. The "chances" of such children entering the Grammar Schools compare very unfavorably with the "chances" of the children of professional workers, such as doctors, ordained ministers, teachers, engineers, etc. Floud⁹ in her examination of two large areas, South East and North East England, gave the "class-chance" of the professional worker's child as 59 percent and 68 percent respectively, while the "chance" of the unskilled worker's child entering a Grammar School was 9 percent in both cases. The figures relate to her study of South West Hertfordshire and Middlesbrough

⁸ J. E. Floud (ed.). Social Class and Educational Opportunity. Heinemann. 1957.

O. Banks. Parity and Prestige in English Secondary Education. Kegan Paul. 1955.

D. V. Glass. Social Mobility in Britain. Kegan Paul. 1954.

G. D. H. Cole. Studies in Class Structure. Kegan Paul. 1955.

⁹ J. E. Floud. op. cit. p. 42.

10. The professional worker of Floud is synonymous with the upper middle class of Glass' terminology.¹⁰ The chances of the professional worker's child (lower middle class) entering the Grammar School were four times as good as those of the unskilled manual worker's child. In both areas investigated, the chances of the skilled worker's child were greater than those of the unskilled worker's, but were still very low at 13 percent and 14 percent respectively.

The cause of this misrepresentation is hardly due to differences in "innate ability", rather, other factors are involved.¹¹

The size of the family unit appears to have direct bearing upon the chances of the working class child's admission to a Grammar School place. Where the percentage of places awarded to the children of unskilled manual workers was as high as 17 in small family units (one or two children) the percentage dropped to 2 in the larger family units (five or more children).¹²

Home conditions directly affect the child's educational opportunities, particularly in the working class. Good basic income, good housing, absence of overcrowding, and extra amenities (car,

¹⁰D. V. Glass. op. cit. pp. 160-73.

¹¹D. V. Glass (ed.). op. cit. H. T. Himmelscholt. Social Class and Secondary Education since 1944 Act: Some Data from London. (p. 41-5).

¹²J. E. Floud. op. cit. Table 21. p. 107.

(phone or television) were used as factors to determine "favorable" or "unfavorable" material characteristics of the working class child's home environment. With a maximum score of four, those homes with a total of less than two points were classed as "unfavorable." The startling figures are startling. In the two large areas surveyed, 73 percent of the working class home environments in South West Hertfordshire were classed as "unfavorable," and 87 percent in Middlesbrough.¹³

It can be seen, therefore, from studies which are cited as reasonably representative of conditions in the large industrial areas of England and Wales, that, generally speaking, the Secondary Modern school child is more likely to come from a home where there are certain adverse material conditions than from a home environment which offers positive educational advantages.

The education of the parents themselves directly affects the child's chances of selection for the Grammar School. Of successful middle class children granted Grammar School places in 1953 in Middlesbrough, 88 percent of their parents had also attended the Grammar Schools. The corresponding figure for the working class parents was 10 percent.¹⁴

¹³J. E. Floud. op. cit. Table 22. p. 107.

¹⁴J. E. Floud. op. cit. Table 15. p. 101.

The figures for South West Hertfordshire repeat the same pattern. The percentage for middle class parents being 86 and the percentage for working class parents being 14. Generally speaking, the great majority of the parents of Secondary Modern School children have not themselves attended a Grammar School. Most would have attended the old "elementary" school and consequently would have terminated their formal schooling at 14 years of age if not before. Their great interest in "getting" their own children to the Grammar School must be understood in the light of this fact, in so far as they themselves have experienced the disadvantages of not having had the Grammar School education which leads to the "best" jobs. Floud classes the parents of unsuccessful children at the 11 plus examination as "frustrated parents." It is significant that in the working class, the percentage of frustrated parents is as high as 82 percent whereas the figure for middle class parents is as low as 27 percent, the inference being that in the latter group, there is always the "escape" of the private school with its high fees, which is beyond the means of most working class families.¹⁵

The Secondary Modern child, then, very often comes from a home where neither parent has had a long academic schooling, nor

¹⁵J. E. Floud. op. cit. p. 83.

particularly interested in such an education other than for the fact that it has definite "vocational" advantages for his child. Of those working class parents whose children are successful at the 11 plus selection, many are most loathe to keep their children on at the Grammar School longer than 16 years of age. They too, see the gaining of the General Certificate of Education as the passport to the better jobs, and the most important function of the Grammar School course.¹⁶

The general picture of the Secondary Modern children is, at best a vague one. The pupils themselves appear to be the "ordinary" children from whom smaller groups have been separated--some 20 percent to the more academic Grammar and Technical Schools, and some 3 to 10 percent to the E.S.N. Schools for special guidance and training.

They are seen as having "average" ability, as being interested in all children) in the immediate happenings of their own locality. They do not, as a rule, have the desire or the ability to pursue academic

¹⁶M. Collins. "Causes of Premature Leavers from Grammar Schools." British Journal of Educational Psychology. Vol. XXIV. December, 1954.

Sir C. Burt. "Symposium on the Selection of Pupils for Different Types of Secondary Education." British Journal of Educational Psychology. Vol. XVII. October, 1953.

A. H. Halsey, I. Gardner. "Selection for Secondary Education." British Journal of Sociology. No. IV. 1953. pp. 60-75.

... to any great length, but are strongly motivated when they can apply their school learning to the immediate task of understanding the social life in their community and taking their own place in that community.

The great majority of Secondary Modern children come from working class homes. Many such homes are excellent both in their material conditions and in parental attitudes towards education. In many more, however, there is an indifference to religious, cultural and artistic values and a negative attitude towards the work of the school on the part of the parents, many of whom are only concerned with how soon their child can leave school and contribute financially to the family income. The question of finance is often an acute one. In a number of homes living standards are low, overcrowding is commonplace and the family budget is augmented weekly by National Assistance funds.

At the same time, there has been a remarkable increase in the interest shown by the general public in education since the war.¹⁷ The course which the Secondary Modern School has followed since its inception in 1944, will be seen to have been influenced to no small extent by the pressures which the parents have brought to bear upon it through the Local Education Authorities and at national level through the Government.

¹⁷See: V. Judges. "L'Evolution recente du Systeme d'Enseignement en Angleterre." International Review of Education. 1955. p. 275.

The attitude of the child "unselected" for the Grammar or Technical School directly affects his work and behavior when he enters the Modern School at 11 plus. His outlook is influenced primarily by his Junior School experiences, by his parents over-concern or lack of concern about his secondary education, and by his relations with the children of his own particular age group.

Where Junior School heads base their reputations upon the number of children who go from their schools to the Grammar School, the parents "evaluate" the "worth" of the school by the annual number of Grammar School successes, then the effect upon the majority of the children who are unselected is hardly wholesome. Often in such schools, the whole school program is geared to the work of the Grammar School potential, and the "Junior headmaster's attitude, spoken or unspoken, is felt and understood by the majority of the children." He "bequeathes a sense of failure as his legacy to the Secondary Modern School."¹⁸

That sense of failure is made reality for many children when the results of the selection examination are published in the local press. (Generally only a list of "successes" is shown.) As Greenough and Crofts¹⁹

¹⁸ R. M. T. Kneebone. I Work in a Secondary Modern School. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1957. p. 26.

¹⁹ A Greenough, F. A. Crofts. Theory and Practice in the Secondary Schools. U.L.P. 1949. p. 31.

"There is no question of passing and failing the examination. There are not 'awarded' as a result of performance in an examination of a competitive character. The Authority is required to provide the kind of education from which a child is best fitted to profit. There can be no question, therefore, of competition for a limited number of places in any kind of school." But as long as parents and teachers think in terms of successes and failures the position will remain as it is today, when very many children do, in fact, enter the Secondary Modern School with an acute sense of inferiority. So much so, that more than one educational writer sees the foremost task of the Secondary Modern School as, "restoring the confidence in the abler child who has been shattered by the 11 plus failure."²⁰

The position is further aggravated for such children when they fail to reach the Grammar School at the second reclassification except at the age of 13 plus.

To sit a further examination . . . has some grave disadvantages. Usually there are a large number of candidates and very few qualify for transfer. . . . Until the examination they are almost bound to look hopefully upon their stay in their present school as a passing phase and therefore never fully become a part of the school. After the result has come, they are bound to regard the few terms left as a period to be filled in.²¹

²⁰M. J. Edmondson. "The Secondary Modern Abler Child." *Journal of Education*. July, 1954.

²¹J. J. B. Dempster. Selection for Secondary Education. London. 1954. pp. 92-93.

It is to be noted that from these children in particular, there should be that leadership and enthusiasm which gives a school its sense of purpose and esteem. It must be added, however, that for many more children the new secondary school brings no such fears. Rather, it kindles out hopes for a new approach both in method and content. Probably for the first time in their school careers, many children discover the joy of success and satisfaction in doing work which is within their capabilities, which arises naturally from their particular interests and can be seen to have some genuine purpose. Such children are the "ordinary" children, those for whom the strictly academic course of the Grammar School is definitely unsuitable. Where such children are fortunate enough to be unhampered by parental disappointment over non-academic achievement and the parents are aware of the efforts made by the school on behalf of their children, then they appear to enjoy and profit from the many and varied learning experiences which the Secondary Modern School attempts to offer.

The understanding of the children's interests and the main trends in curriculum planning which have resulted from that understanding, will be analysed in the next chapter.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

CHAPTER V

THE CURRICULUM OF THE SECONDARY MODERN SCHOOL

Part 1

A review of a number of Local Education Authorities' curriculum guides issued immediately following the 1944 Education Act reveals both a change of attitude in determining the content of the curriculum considered suitable for the child, and some new ideas concerning the best approach to make to the child himself to insure cooperation and sustained interest.

Part 2

The 1944-1949 period in the history of the Secondary Modern School is marked by considerable experimentation in curriculum organisation and teaching method. The 1949 Ministry of Education Report, however, voices a number of criticisms concerning the types of offerings being offered in many Modern schools. There is a growing body of discontent among parents who see the Secondary Modern School as a dumping ground for failures.

Part 3

Developing trends from 1949 onwards reveal the extent of influence of parental pressures to shape the curricula offerings to

practical rather than educational ends. In particular, the General Certificate of Education courses are introduced in many Secondary Modern Schools. The growing number of successes in the G. C. E. examinations by Secondary Modern pupils help the schools gain prestige in the parents and refute the idea of "types" of children.

The review of a number of reports issued by Local Education Authorities from 1944 to 1949 indicates that it was generally recognized that there was a pressing need to revise the traditional forms of secondary education to meet the new problems of secondary education for all. "Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis," is the watchword of one such Authority¹ which called for the new Modern School to be capable of adaptability above all else.

The aims in determining the developmental trends are numerous and varied as set forth in these reports. They all have in common the view that:

The task of the school is to provide the environmental conditions, the organization, the curriculum, and the educational treatment in teaching methods and approach which recognize the mental and emotional differences among children and promote good mental growth within the framework of mental, physical, spiritual and moral development.

They see the task of the school as twofold, namely, (a) the inculcation of attitudes, and (b) the teaching of factual knowledge and a variety of skills.

¹Nottinghamshire Education Committee. The Secondary Modern School and Its Curriculum. Derry & Sons Ltd. Nottingham. 1947.

By the inculcation of attitudes, the reports would seem to stress the desirability of every child developing a self-respect which is satisfied only with the best possible standards of work and play, behavior and outlook. They see it as the school's responsibility to nurture the virtues of courage, humility and faith which will assist the child to face the hazards of life and overcome them.

For the teaching of knowledge and skills the school requires, apart from its obvious material needs,

- a. a purpose, understood and served by the whole teaching staff.
- b. a curriculum based upon sound educational practices and an adequate organization to carry through its plans.
- c. techniques of teaching which "promote the maximum rate of progress in the individual pupil."²

The General Outline of the Curriculum

In considering the general constitution of the curriculum of the new Modern Schools, there was an awareness that there was a need to plan for the education of future citizens of widely varying mental capacity. Many authorities in setting forth their programs, sought a common basis or tradition which they thought essential to the

²The Secondary Modern School. U. L. P. Cheshire Education Committee. 1916.

fluence of the Modern School. They attempted to answer a question which any parent might justifiably ask his Local Education Committee: "What must my child learn to fit him to take part in the modern way of life?"

The reports of the education committees examined stress the importance of the maximum development of mind, body and character to the highest excellence of which each is capable. They suggest that their curricula will include:

1. Physical Education (games, gymnastics, swimming etc. together with instruction needed to train the child to understand the laws of healthy living and encourage him to habitually follow them).
2. English Studies which must take prime place among the humanities. The committees insisted that the curriculum as a whole must give generous opportunities for the child to acquire verbal and written command of his mother tongue.
3. Social Studies, including a combination of history and geography where possible, would have as its central theme the study of the social environment. One authority (Nottinghamshire) recommended the integration of history, geography, science and rural science for the study of the social environment in time and space. The study of science, they further noted, should lead to an appreciation

of scientific method and to a knowledge of some of the achievements of science.

4. Arts and crafts would be studied not only to help to achieve skill and to give a pleasurable sense of material achievement, "but to give the embryonic citizen standards by which he might measure the worth of craftsmanship, the form and the color that enhance or debase his own environment."³

5. Many reports are concerned with a new approach to the subject of mathematics and all would stress the desirability of incorporating into the general syllabus only what is relevant and needful in the everyday life of the child.

One authority, urging a closer relationship between mathematics and science in the schools, saw in such a "partnership" the opportunity to train pupils in habits of careful observation, in sifting facts and in clear thinking.

Though recognizing the necessity to provide for the more able pupil⁴ in the Secondary Modern School, the majority of

³ Nottinghamshire Report. op. cit. p. 20.

⁴ The report of the Nottinghamshire Education Committee on curriculum construction shows that even at the outset, there was an awareness of the necessity for provision to be made for specialized courses according to the desires and the aptitudes of the child.

the Committees saw that their primary task was in providing for the "ordinary child" and his needs. Thus, the mathematical content of the curriculum must contain nothing "that leads to a feeling that mathematics is divorced from reality."⁵ On the contrary, it must provide opportunities for practical work demanding individual initiative and group cooperation. One committee goes so far as to recommend the replacement of the term "mathematics" by the new name "calculations," for, they note, "the average child has little capacity or taste for formal mathematics, and he should receive the kind of training best suited to his ability and needs."⁶

This report suggests that due regard might be made for individual differences by the introduction of courses orientated toward "the scientific, the constructive or the agricultural" lines of development. It goes on to state that these titles are given only as general indications of some of the possible groupings that could be made. It stresses the need for more reliable tests and special methods of observation which would help determine the appropriate abilities of individual children. The need for several safeguards is clearly seen lest an ill-balance of education result from the uncontrolled choice of subjects. The report suggests that several subjects be required for all: English, mathematics, social studies. These subjects would be required throughout the child's whole school career. Any particular choice by the student would be based upon groups of correlated subjects, welded to the solid core of general education. For example, such correlated groups might include: rural science, carpentry and handyman's skills; or woodwork, metalwork and mechanical drawing; or homecraft, arts and crafts.

⁵Cheshire Education Committee. op. cit. p. 90.

⁶Nottinghamshire Report. op. cit. p. 32.

The essentially non-academic nature of the type of studies pursued by many committees for their new Modern Schools, and the practical opportunities which such studies offered, can be seen from a general review of the contents of the courses as set out in the Committee Reports.*

Factors in Determining the Curriculum

The stated aims of these Local Authorities in preparing their curricula might be summarized as follows:

1. to give the pupil such training as will make him reliant and reliable.
2. to help him to use his leisure time in a way which is beneficial to himself and to all who come into contact with him.
3. development of character and personality is more important than mere ability and should be one of the school's main concerns.
4. to help the student develop to full stature mentally, morally and spiritually and to enjoy a healthy life.
5. to help the child to understand something of the social and the industrial environment, of labor conditions and types of

*See Appendix.

employment open to him. Such understanding was regarded as particularly important towards the end of the child's career.

The Approach to the Child

It was generally recognized that a revision was necessary in the general approach to the child, and the curriculum guides of many authorities pointed out that there were a number of important factors to be born in mind.

1. The work should be within the capacity of the child so that it might be accurately done and well finished, providing him with a measure of success. In scope and approach, it should be kept in line with his developing ability and growing maturity.
2. The child's chronological age is important in determining his interests and outlook whatever his mental ability.
3. The ability to learn or reason without concrete example is difficult for many children; therefore an approach should be attempted which proceeds from the practical and specific to the general.
4. The work should at all times be relevant to everyday life.
5. The child should be trained to work alone so that self-reliance might be encouraged.

6. The child should also be taught to work as a member of a group.
7. The child's ability in different subjects may vary greatly, but his attainment in English will to a large extent determine the nature of the work that can be set for him and the teaching method and the approach that can be used.
8. Above all else, opportunity for full mental effort and activity on the part of the child should be insured; he should be provided with the varied mental and physical experiences requiring the application of his intelligence and the development of his aptitudes.
9. Most Secondary Modern children learn more effectively by the use of concrete situations, experience, and demonstration using various kinds of aural and visual aids. Some are able to learn to understand an idea presented in words and they may ultimately use books and speech as their principal means of learning.
10. Activity and expression provide the equilibrium necessary for later progress. Play is one of the most potent factors in emotional development even at the secondary stage.
11. Standards of discipline and rewards and punishments should be consistent and based upon a sympathetic understanding of the pupil's problems.

12. Praise and encouragement foster desirable development. Unfair and harsh criticism and humiliation produce maladjustment.
13. There is a need for the possession of detailed information of the child, and his home background. This might help in producing a sympathy for, and understanding of emotional problems resulting from inadequate and unsatisfactory home circumstances.
14. School work should provide a sensible approach to sex instruction and foster right attitudes towards it.
15. Through clubs, societies, and out-of-school activities the school should encourage pupils to develop productive and worthwhile leisure pursuits which may continue into adult life.

Challenge of "Secondary Education for All"

Many Local Education Authorities, having stated their aims in setting up their curricula, went on to consider what they thought their greatest challenge in the new venture of "secondary education for all." The following is a brief summary of their considerations:

1. How can we teach our children to develop critical judgment to preserve it in the face of propaganda, falsehood and temptation?
2. If a child is to achieve intellectual and spiritual independence then

...be trained to distinguish between falsehood and fact, to think rationally, and to judge honestly.

b. How can we develop in our children a sense of responsibility toward the community? The child must be helped to see how he fits into the pattern of the community and how his talents may be of help to that community. The school must demonstrate by example and exercise the privileges and duties of responsibility.

c. How can we teach our children to understand and appreciate our national heritage? The child should learn that the present is the outcome of the past and that we owe much as a nation to the sacrifices of countless men and women of past ages. The children should see for themselves the modern counterparts of the humanizing movements of the past.

d. How can we promote international understanding and goodwill? All the children cannot possibly understand international affairs. Rather, concentration should be placed at the level that the child understands best, that is, the level of personal understanding between the English child and the child of another land.

e. How can we teach our children to use their leisure wisely and happily with satisfaction to themselves and with benefit to the community? The school must insure that the child's school work brings him intellectual and emotional satisfaction which will continue to be fruitful after in adult life. This is not to be taken as a plea for more

...There is room in every subject within the school curriculum for the profitable exploration of the proper use of leisure.

It is appropriate now to examine some of the experiments which took place in the Secondary Modern Schools immediately following the 1944 Education Act.

Part 2: The Curriculum of the Secondary Modern School The 1944-1949 Period

It is evident that, if such general education is to spring from the actual and real interests of the pupils--interests which are to a great extent dependent on environment, the utmost freedom must exist as regards curriculum and its treatment, which can be determined only in the light of the special circumstances of the school. [The Norwood Committee Report, 1949.]

The recommendation of the Hadow Committee for a "practical" curriculum for the Modern School, aiming at learning experiences through purposeful and meaningful activity, was re-echoed by the Ministry of Education in its 1947 pamphlet, The New Secondary Education. The latter emphasized the need for true regard for the individual differences of the pupils of the new Secondary Modern Schools and the necessity for the schools themselves to have complete freedom to experiment in curricula according to the specific needs of children in their particular area.

The early years of the Secondary Modern Schools were, in fact, marked by many experiments in method and approach, particularly directed towards the less able child.

by own assessment of that early phase of experiment was that considerable success was being attained in research on dull and retarded children. For some time the problem of these less gifted children occupied the center of the stage and there is no doubt that the modern school was achieving something in the special methods adopted in its teaching . . . The general atmosphere of enthusiasm created by "teacher experimenters" was beneficial to the modern schools as a whole.⁷

The freedom from external examinations and the ability to experiment in curricula organization and teaching method were seen as the distinctive assets of the new Secondary Modern Schools,

The possible consequences of this extended and properly designed education are incalculable--on one condition. That condition is that these schools should be free, free to develop their own techniques and their own excellences; free to manage their own affairs and to grow into self-respecting communities.⁸

Moreover, that emphasis on freedom to experiment according to local needs and conditions implied variety in developmental trends and the consequent inclusion of many subjects "new" to the secondary school curricula.⁹ The extension of the school curriculum was a noticeable feature at this time. "Our curriculum has as its inspiration, preparation

⁷B. Simon (ed.). New Trends in English Education. MacGibbon and Kee. 1957. p. 33.

⁸C. H. Dobinson, op. cit. Intellectual Freedom in the Schools. J. E. Wolfenden. pp. 47-62.

⁹A core program based on "Local Studies" was successful with a small group of less able 12 to 13 year olds at Holker County Modern School, Barrow-in-Furness, England, and was planned on a 3-year basis by the present investigator.

life The subjects in our curriculum are as limitless as
 magnitude to life,"¹⁰ said one Yorkshire headmaster, who included

in the weekly time table the following subjects:

Religious knowledge, mathematics (arithmetic, algebra,
 geometry), English, history, geography, housecraft,
 woodwork, metalwork, practical drawing, science,
 gardening, art, bookbinding, weaving, needlework, and
 allied crafts, fabric printing, modelling and printing,
 music, physical education, games (outdoor and indoor).

A particular school, situated about 12 miles from the city of York,

accommodated children living in a predominantly rural area with a

small amount of light industry. It was a mixed school of about 450

pupils. The school mentioned in the footnotes is situated in a town

which has heavy industries--iron and steel and vast shipbuilding yards.

In this school (approximately 300 boys) the subjects offered in 1949-

1951, the period known to the investigator, were:

English, mathematics (arithmetic, algebra, geometry,
 trigonometry), general science including biology, history
 geography, French ("A" stream only), woodwork, metal-
 work, general engineering, mechanical drawing and
 engineering drawing, horticultural studies, nautical studies
 including navigation and boatbuilding, music, art, physical
 education and games.

The "realistic" philosophy which inspired such breadth and
 variety is seen in curriculum content as the attempt to provide a great
 variety of activities and thus discover some specific ability at which

¹⁰Kneebone. op. cit. pp. 54-55.

child could succeed. Particularly noticeable in such schools were the many alternative crafts. It was hoped that every child would find satisfaction and success in one or more of the practical-skill subjects which were offered. Loukes¹¹ found one Secondary Modern school in the south of England which offered the following subjects:

Mathematics (arithmetic, algebra, geometry), English (language, literature, poetry), history, geography, biology, general science, gardening, needlework, practical subjects (?), physical education, art and craft, music (singing and theory) civics, rural work, hobbies, first aid, religious knowledge, surveying, country dancing, two optional periods and two spent in the school assembly, and in addition, a religious service and hymn singing.

noted,

The idea [of wide range of subjects] has clear justification which has established itself as a principle of general application to be met with in the vast majority of schools, including some of the newest.

A typical timetable organization would have 35 periods per week (7 per day) and would show the common trend of increasing the time allotted to practical skills as the child progressed through the school.

Where the first year pupil would spend some 22 percent of his time in arts and crafts (music, art, bookcraft, woodwork and metalwork) the fourth year child would be devoting more than 34 percent of his weekly periods to some form of practical skills. The study of science, on the other hand, would tend to decrease in time-table allotment from 22 percent of the time available to 20 percent

¹¹Loukes. op. cit. p. 57.

in the first and fourth years. So also would the time allocation of the humanities (English, history, geography, religious knowledge) decreased from 43 percent in the first year to 34 percent in the fourth year to allow for the increased emphasis on practical skills. The allocation of timetable periods (generally 35 to 40 minutes long) would appear as follows:¹²

Subject	First Year	Fourth Year
Humanities		
English	9	6
History	2	2
Geography	2	2
Religious Knowledge	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	15	12
Science		
Mathematics	3	5
General Science	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	5	7
Arts and Crafts		
Music	2	2
Art	2	2
Light Crafts	2	2
Useful Crafts (Woodwork, Metal-work, Housecraft, Needlework, Domestic Science)	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>
Total	8	12

¹² Ibid., p. 59.

Practical Education		
Games	2	2
Other Activities	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	4	4
Total Periods per Week	35	35

Large timetable "blocks" would be given to the practical-skills subjects, particularly, in the fourth year. Kneebone¹³ sets out the timetable organization of a mixed fourth year group and shows that the whole of a boy's schedule, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. would be spent in the woodwork and metalwork shops by the boys and in the housecraft and flowerwork rooms by the girls. More typical, however, would be a whole morning or a whole afternoon devoted to some form of practical work.

Teaching Methods

Together with a widening of curricula in terms of subject matter, there was also, in many cases, a corresponding revision in teaching method and an alteration in the general approach to the child. It was very necessary to find some new method of approach to the many children coming from the Primary Schools who had not found the "diet" as particularly nourishing or for that matter satisfying,

¹³Kneebone. op. cit. p. 34.

To continue to provide such a child with the same educational fare, served up in the same way, apparently in a form which he has been unable to assimilate, is a waste of effort so far as the teachers are concerned, and is a waste of the golden opportunity for a new beginning so far as the child is concerned.¹⁴

The move towards greater emphasis on practical skills was a feature of this attempt to find an alternative to the "traditionalist" approach which was obviously unsuitable for the great majority of the children entering the Secondary Modern Schools. The practical subjects encouraged less formality than the usual "classroom lesson," particularly when they were organized on an individual or on a group basis. Both approaches were in evidence. Boys were encouraged to make articles of their own choice in the woodwork and the metalwork shops, more especially in the third and fourth years when the basic skills of the particular craft had been acquired. Where the boys produced chairs, tables and cabinets for themselves, the girls often furnished their bedrooms with curtains, reading lamps and bedspreads. The group or "communal" approach often ran side-by-side with the individual work. In one large Secondary Modern School for girls,¹⁵ the domestic

¹⁴A. Greenough and F. A. Crofts. Theory and Practice in New Secondary Schools. University of London Press. 1941. p. 16.

In the non-practical subjects (English, history, geography etc.) there were attempts to work through "centers of interest" and "series." See J. J. B. Dempster. Education in the Secondary Modern School. Methuen. 1946; J. J. B. Dempster. Education in the Modern School. Methuen. 1956; and A. E. Smith. English in the Modern School.

¹⁵Victoria County Secondary Modern School, Epsom-in-Turness.

the flat (apartment) was refurnished with curtains, carpets, tables, lampshades, cushions and tea trays--all produced in the workrooms of the school itself. Under the supervision of woodwork and metalwork teachers, the fourth year students of a boys' Secondary Modern School successfully built and sailed two 16 foot sailing yachts as a part of the two year project in nautical studies.¹⁶

At the particular time, these early attempts represented something entirely new in English Secondary education. The new Secondary Modern Schools were, for the most part, experimenting with a variety of ways to adjust both curriculum content and teaching methods to the interests and the needs of their students. The type of educational program often developed was related to the prevailing conditions in the immediate environment of the particular school. In rural and agricultural areas courses would be in evidence in the rural areas, while in industrial regions, the "occupationally-biased" courses would tend to be primarily of the general engineering type. At first, the development of such courses raised anew the whole question of vocational training in the secondary schools and the traditional British prejudice against vocationalism. The present day opinion would appear to favor the limited use of such courses commencing in the third and fourth years, providing that they are preceded by

¹⁶ Holker County Modern School, Barrow-in-Furness, Lancashire.

years of "general" education of a strictly non-vocational nature.¹⁷

Not all schools, of course, found it either desirable or able to utilize a "practical bias" towards a particular industry; the practical activities were extended according to the interests of the children and the staff and within the limitations of equipment, place and budget.

There was a general move throughout the country for the Secondary Modern Schools to attempt some form of experimentation (good and bad) along the lines suggested by the Ministry of Education.¹⁸ Robinson¹⁹ noted a difference in the approach towards the pupil and he noted the improved teacher-child relationships and the greater use of films, the educational broadcasts of the BBC, project methods and school journeys. He commented that more and more, education was being regarded as a "definite preparation for the social life of the citizen." At the same time, however, there were manifold weaknesses, such as:

¹⁷See J. J. B. Dempster. Purpose in the Modern School, for a fuller discussion.

¹⁸The Ministry noted optimistically in 1947, "At present, the parents believe the grammar schools to be in some sense a superior place As the modern schools develop, parents will see that they are good, and it will become increasingly common for them . . . to select the modern school as the one best suited to their children's requirements on grounds unhampered by considerations of prestige."

¹⁹C. H. Dobinson. The Present State of the English Modern School. Education Forum. Vol. XIV, No. 3, Part 1. pp. 261-73.

- a. The inadequacy of many of the premises.
- b. the ill-assortment of the staff--a mixture of the "old tyrant" and the enthusiastic post-war teacher.
- c. no real team spirit in curriculum planning. The teachers were too often too independent of their colleagues and too dependent upon the headmaster. Moreover, they were in Robinson's own words, "without the proper concept of the staff as an integrated body working out a pattern of education for the given group of children."

This final criticism of Robinson's was also voiced by the Ministry of Education in its 1949 Report. The Ministry commented that few schools had "come to grips with the problems of how to meet intellectual needs and how to stimulate fullest effort."²⁰

Criticism of Developing Trends

The reasons for such a comment having been made only three years after the inauguration of the new program and only two years after the optimistic testimony of the 1947 Report can be traced to a variety of possible sources.

- a. There was too little positive direction of the experimentation which was taking place, and too little cooperation between the schools themselves. Very few conferences were called where headmasters and department heads could talk over common aims and purposes or find out certain vaguely the ways in which other schools were attempting to set up their programs. The H.M.I.'s were apparently the only

²⁰"Modern School Today." Time: Educational Supplement. Number 12, 1952.

...tive means of "cross-pollenization," and they were generally hesitant to offer more than very vague guidance lest they infringed on the freedom for individual growth of the particular school. The blame in this respect must therefore be laid at the door of the Ministry itself.

b. Sir Fred Clarke had noted in 1946, "We may underestimate [the Secondary Modern School] unfamiliar novelty for a people whose educational history has trained them to think of secondary education in very different terms."²¹ The Secondary Modern School was, in fact, underestimated by the general public. Wolfenden²² pointed out the serious failure of both the Ministry and the L.E.A.'s to "get across" the idea of tripartitism. There was a great deal of discussion and debate, but all at a professional level,

I'm certain that hundreds of thousands of parents thought that "Secondary Education for All" (one of the battle cries of the 1944 Act) meant "Grammar School Education for All! You can't blame people for thinking that after all, that's what "Secondary Education" did mean until the 1944 Act made it mean something else. If you are going to change the meaning of words you might at least make their new meanings clear to the people concerned."²³

²¹Foreword to J. J. B. Dempster. Education in the Secondary Modern School. Methuen, London. 1946.

²²Wolfenden. op. cit. p. 16.

²³Ibid. p. 17.

Moreover, not only was it the general public which was unaware of the essential newness of this experiment in Secondary Education,

Many teachers, themselves products of Grammar Schools, failed to grasp the order and opportunities of this venture in education and compared the Secondary Modern child with the Grammar School child in terms of academic ability.²⁴

Pressure was soon brought to-bear upon schools to revise their existing programs and to replace "frills" with a more "academic" type of work.

Unless this is done, the education for citizenship and the preparation for life . . . will be so much poppycock and employers will still be able to shout their criticisms from the headlines.²⁵

Employers did, in fact, make comments in the national press about the lack of basic standards in written work and arithmetical skill of many of the children leaving the new secondary schools. Parents, seeking the "paper" qualifications which the academic Grammar School curriculum could offer, were generally unwilling to accept the experiments which were being undertaken. They did not understand what was being attempted, nor did they try to understand. Taking Johnny out to the shipbuilding yards "in school time" was not helping him to attain the necessary academic qualifications which he would need in order to "get a better job than his father." In fact, it just

²⁴"Probing the Way." Journal of Education. May, 1954.

²⁵Ibid.

...ent "education." The parents must not, however, be made to shoulder too much of the responsibility for the return to academicism which was apparent from 1949 onwards. As has been seen, there was a singular lack of good publicity work on the part of the Ministry and the L.E.A.'s. Much could have been done to secure the active interest and cooperation of the parents of children about to enter the Secondary Modern Schools. All too often, the parent, blinded by the child's failure at the 11 plus examination, was a passive member of the first P.T.A.²⁶ meeting where he commiserated with his immediate neighbor on the misfortune which had befallen them both. That first attendance was very often the only one made during the child's stay in his new school. The parents who showed real enthusiasm for the work of the Parent Teacher Organizations were too often only interested in helping their children "out" of the Secondary Modern School and into the Grammar School at the second reclassification test at 13 plus.²⁷ Though this may appear a rather bitter observation, it was nevertheless, very obvious to the teachers of the children concerned.

²⁶Kneebone (op. cit.) aptly comments, "To our first meeting a fortnight after the beginning of term come between 3 & 40 parents . . . sick at heart that their children have 'failed their scholarship.' It is still that with parents however hard educationalists try to make them accept their euphemisms." p. 140.

²⁷Again, one can hardly blame the parent. Greenough and Crofts note, "There is a curious contradiction in the argument which would justify success in one type of school as an adequate reason for sending a child out of it and transferring him to another type of school." p. 32.

c. The gradual return to a more academic type of program in many of the Secondary Modern Schools cannot entirely be traced to external pressures from such interested bodies as parents and employers. There was a growing awareness among many teachers,²⁸ that the only sure foundation for the expansion in curricula and teaching method lay in the child's ability to use the basic tool subjects, and to use them well. The immediate problem was to educate the many children who were being passed into the secondary schools at the age of eleven and who still needed what was termed a "primary education." Nor did this need apply solely to the slower "C" stream child. The desirability for greater proficiency in the "3 R's" applied to all pupils, and "pupil literacy" was noted as being the prime aim during the first year of the Secondary Modern and often longer.

Such thinking did not necessarily represent a volte-face on the part of the teaching profession. There was no out-and-out return to a traditionalist type of program. Rather, there was a wider understanding of the capabilities and capacities of the Secondary Modern child in the light of what had been attempted during those earlier years of growth and experiment. Dempster noted the dangers which befell teachers unskilled in the use of "project" and "center of interest" methods, particularly with less able children. They were

²⁸See Times Educational Supplement. September 12-26, 1952.

... necessarily roused to interest by such methods, he observed, ... could they be necessarily willing to "shoulder the burden of ... which would make them productive."²⁹

The gradual change which followed the 1949 Ministry report was apparent in the increased use of vocationally-biased courses showing two years of "highly effective senior elementary work on fundamental academic and manual skills."³⁰ The project method, which had once been so widely (if not always effectively) used, was, apparently not so frequently employed from this time onwards.

I would not say that they are giving up project work I should have thought that their use of project work was on the whole being realistically and critically examined, with a fair sense of the several plans within which it had to fit, but often playing a quite important part in the plan and method, and not necessarily tied to an individual subject.³¹

... "practical" subjects were not abandoned by any means, in this process of returning to work of a more academic nature. There was undoubtedly a wholesale restriction on the number of alternative handicrafts which were offered on the school timetable, but the same basic pattern of increasing the emphasis on practical studies between third and fourth years was retained.

²⁹Dempster. op. cit. p. 32-52.

³⁰Times Educational Supplement. September 26, 1952. p. 765.

³¹The comment of a Chief Education Officer. Times Educational Supplement. September 19, 1952. p. 763.

The institution of vocational and semi-vocationally biased courses brought about a greater contact between the schools themselves. The typical organizational unit was the County Borough or the District within the County Council. The following might serve to illustrate the emerging pattern.

The Development of Special Courses within the Schools
of the County Borough of Barrow-in-Furness,
Lancashire, England

Within the County Borough, the Secondary Modern Schools, from 1944 to 1948, had experimented more or less independently in curriculum and teaching method. The experimentation was influenced by such factors as: (a) the number of pupils in attendance and the number of teachers available, (b) the limits imposed by the school buildings themselves, (c) the varying needs of the children according to their age and ability, (d) the qualities and the interests of the staff. There were special factors involved in curriculum planning where the school was composed of girls and boys.³²

There were five schools involved:

³²M. W. D. Ray. "Curriculum in the Secondary Modern School." Journal of Education. August, 1955; and M. W. D. Ray. "Organization and Teaching in Secondary Modern School." Journal of Education. September, 1953.

• Walker County Modern School	Boys	Approximately 360
• Wilcox County Modern School	Mixed	Approximately 500
• Victoria County Modern School	Girls	Approximately 400
• Willedale County Modern School	Mixed	Approximately 500
• Alfred Darrow County Modern School	Boys	Approximately 350

Early in 1949, a scheme was proposed whereby each school would attempt to develop a partially-vocational course which would commence in the third year and would be of two years duration. Each school had already shown a leaning toward a particular type of program and it was hoped that if that program were developed, then shortly after the 11 plus examination a choice of Secondary Modern School could be made according to the preference of the children and the parents concerned.

The types of semi-vocational courses offered were as follows:

*School A	General Engineering
School B	Commercial Work
School C	Domestic Science
School D	Commercial Work
School E	Agriculture

All schools could offer a general two year course for the first two years, and provision was made for French to be offered in the "11"

*School A also retained its nautical studies course and in 1951 entered a small number of students for the C. C. I. in Navigation. The content of the course had to be arranged by consultation with the Northern Universities Joint Board for the General Certificate of Education.

... of each school. This was considered necessary because of possibility of transfer to one of the two Grammar Schools within County Borough at the 13 plus re-classification test.³³

The content of the special courses offered and the instructional and teaching methods involved were left to the decision of the headmasters and their assistants.³⁴ In certain cases, the course was organized on an "examination" basis, the examination being the General Certificate of Education. Although this was absolutely contrary to the recommendations of the Ministry, it was the most effective way, so it was thought, of attaining that "parity of esteem" so much sought after by the Secondary Modern Schools. These schools sought the means of "stimulation to fullest effort" in the preparation of their students for the examinations of the Royal Society of Arts in shorthand, typing, bookkeeping and accountancy.³⁵ Only one school (School E) did not prepare students for external examinations, and to the investigator's knowledge does not do so at the present time.

³³In School A, from 1949-1951, only two boys were transferred.

³⁴School A immediately undertook to prepare students for the G.C.E. in subjects allied to general engineering (mechanical drawing, engineering drawing, and mathematics).

³⁵Schools B and D. The position at the time of writing is that all schools except School E prepare students for the G.C.E. examination in the humanities (English, history, geography, French, religious knowledge) as well as the practical subjects.

The illustration of the organization of the vocationally-oriented courses in one particular area might further be used to show the beginnings of two particular problems which are still very much in evidence in 1959. Within the County Borough of Barrow-in-Furness there is also a Technical School for Boys. Re-named Secondary Technical by the Spens Report, its students are drawn primarily from the "border-line" candidates at the 11 plus classification test. At the beginning of vocational courses in the general engineering field in 1949 and the planning of such courses to aim at success in the G. C. E. examination, it is increasingly difficult to see where the work of Secondary Modern School A and the Technical School are essentially different. Since both prepare their students for the same national terminal examination, the separation of the two schools both in name and function (the Technical School has more "prestige value") would be extremely hard to justify.

Secondly, the introduction of the G. C. E. examination to Secondary Modern Schools has undoubtedly "shaped" the curriculum and the method of teaching to such an extent that there is a considerable gap between the Grammar School and the Secondary Modern. This was not the original intention when the scope of the Secondary Modern School was envisaged. "Free from the pressures of any external examination," said the Ministry Report, The Nation's Schools, "these schools can work out the best and liveliest forms of secondary

...sulted to their pupils It is essential that they retain available freedom . . . and should be able to advance along the path they themselves feel to be right."

Primary Part 2

The "return to academicism" which was apparent in the years immediately following 1949 has then been traced to the following main sources:

- a. Of first importance, the overwhelming desire of the parents of the children (particularly the more able) in the Secondary Modern Schools, to have some form of certificate or passport to the "better jobs" like their fellows in the Grammar Schools.
- b. The pressures exerted by interested employers through the popular press, the radio, and other means of mass communication.
- c. The lack of guidance available for the early experiments in curriculum planning and teaching methods, resulting in a lowering of standards of achievement in the basic subjects, and, in consequence, the abandonment of work centered on projects and topics of interest.
- d. Arising directly out of "c" the realization on the part of many of the teachers concerned, that "pupil literacy"

was of prime necessity if the children were to be able to really profit from the more liberal approach to curriculum and teaching methods.

- c. The knowledge that, rightly or wrongly, the examination, particularly the national external examination, offered inducements to the student to apply himself more diligently to study, at a time when the lack of such inducements was held to be the cardinal weakness of the Secondary Modern School.

The final section of this chapter dealing with curriculum development will examine the main trends appearing from 1949 onwards, in particular, the growth of specialised courses leading to the General Certificate of Education.

Part 3: The Curriculum of the Secondary Modern School Developing Trends from 1949 onwards and the Introduction of Special Courses

The Modern Schools appeared to meet the criticism of the 1944 Report of the Ministry in a variety of ways. One report of an official observer³⁶ during the period following 1949 shows an emerging pattern in which broad developing trends can be observed. The report of the Observer cites a number of interesting examples of Secondary

³⁶ Times Educational Supplement, September 26, 1952, 1115.

Modern School planning at this time. Nine schools are reported upon as follows:

School 1

The school had introduced a 2 year general or classifying course which was followed by a three year special course in either language, science, or technical subjects. Selected fifth year students enter for the G. C. E. with each student offering on the average, six subjects. Some better students transfer after the G. C. E. at Ordinary Level to the 6th form of the local Grammar School.

School 2

A four year general course is followed by a two year commercial course. This necessitates at least one full year's attendance past official school leaving age. Selected pupils are entered for the Royal Society of Arts and Pitman's Examinations. Both school 1 and school 2 offer a wide range of out-of-school activities and have thriving school societies.

School 3

This particular school offered no special courses at all. The headmaster, faced with the heavy transfer of his more able students to the Secondary Technical School at the age of 13 plus, emphasized social living in his school, and provided a great amount of practical work, an excellent "house"³⁷ system, and did excellent work in remedial methods with backward groups.

³⁷ The "house" system is almost a tradition in English Secondary Schools. It is the exception rather than the rule to visit a secondary school which does not divide its pupils into different houses for the purpose of inter-school sports and other activities. Each house has its officially elected representatives and is allocated a number of the teaching staff to act in the capacity of advisers. Different colors, badges or emblems distinguish the different houses. The children appear to be enthusiastic about the house plan.

School 4

A two year general course was followed by more and more practically oriented work in gardens, orchards and in general agricultural pursuits.

School 5

A Boys' Secondary Modern School, very typical of a great number to be found in the industrial areas of the country, concentrated on engineering, or in the official language of English educational administration, the school had an engineering bias. The full range of subjects which would be taken by the student in the special engineering course would include: English, mathematics, practical science, mechanics, technical drawing, woodwork and engineering metalwork. The standard of the work in technical drawing, woodwork and metalwork was reported to be of excellent standard. The school did not prepare students for the G. C. E. Rather, considering the G. C. E. as "too theoretical" for his pupils, the headmaster chose to use the City and Guilds Examinations as more appropriate to the needs of his boys.

School 6

This was a Girls' Secondary Modern School which started all pupils out in the "lower" school in a two year general course (including French). The girls then passed to the "upper" school where they spent one whole day each week in a course dealing with the retail trade-display techniques, buying and selling, shopfitting, etc. The course included speech training and personal hygiene. Other school subjects were brought into the general work of the course wherever possible. Art lessons included display work and science provided work in the study of textiles and dressmaking.

School 7

Like school 6, this girls' school provided a general course for the first two years to be followed by pre-vocational secretarial course. The course seemed to be designed to attract attendance after school leaving age.

School 8

This school was situated in a rural community. In addition to a general course, all pupils took agriculture or horticulture in their first year. All pupils took science which included a fair amount of chemistry. The school had 11 acres of land and the livestock consisted of sheep, cows, pigs, poultry and bees. They also possessed a tractor and greenhouses. The land was divided between grazing and experimental plots of grasses, cereals, vegetables and an orchard. There was also a forestry plot with propagating beds where trees were grown from seed. The children had done most of the work in making their own farm and gardening buildings; they also helped to make tools and maintain machines. The emphasis here lay on the educational aspect of the work. A staff of full-time agricultural employees took care of the routine heavy manual work.

School 9

The last school examined was an isolated hill school in a remote farming area. "It appeared to be aiming at providing as broad a general education as possible against the familiar background of husbandry." There was a general course in academic tool subjects together with short sessions of agricultural and bench work (woodwork and metalwork) for the boys, cookery, horticulture and needlework for the girls.

From the different types of school programs outlined above, the general observation of Dent⁵⁸ that a "break-up" in the Secondary Modern structure was apparent from 1952 onwards seems to be born out. Certainly, a number of trends are at once seen.

- a. A number of schools were looking to the General Certificate of Education as the solution to the problem of establishing

⁵⁸H. C. Dent. Secondary Modern Schools. London. Routledge & Kegan Paul. 1958. p. 13.

parity of esteem with the Grammar School and answering the Ministry's criticism in its 1942 Report.

- b. Other schools, convinced that the C.C.E. was not the examination best suited to the Secondary Modern child, were nevertheless still looking for some external form of assessment³⁹ which might show their "worth" in terms that the parents and the public in general would understand.
- c. The courses which led to any of these external examinations all depended upon some form of selection and transfer scheme, though opinion seemed to differ as to when exactly was the best time to make the transfer.
- d. There was a small number of schools, which, believing firmly that the type of program which was already in existence was most appropriate to the needs of the children, refused to follow the growing trend to prepare pupils for any form of external assessment.

Before examining the most significant of the paths of development--the introduction of special courses, particularly those which led to the General Certificate of Education--a brief survey of the rather complex systems of transfer is necessary.

³⁹The examinations of the Royal Society of Arts, the City and Guilds Examinations and those of the College of Preceptors were very often used.

Transfer Schemes
to Special Courses

The ages at which children in the Secondary Modern Schools are selected for various special courses varies considerably from one area to another. Generally speaking, however, there are three ages at which selection is made: at eleven plus, at thirteen plus, and at fifteen or sixteen plus.

✓ Where the Secondary Modern Schools are organized into a pattern within a certain area (for example, within a County Borough, or a division of a County Council), then it is general for the transfer-age to coincide with the secondary selection examinations, that is, at eleven plus. More often than not, each particular school offers one special course under this arrangement and though the special course may not commence until the third year, the child is generally assumed to be choosing to follow that course by virtue of the fact that he has elected to go to the one particular school which offers it. This is particularly the case in the larger towns and cities, though, in spite of difficulties of transportation, it is also to be observed in many rural areas. For this particular arrangement it is claimed that there is a "greater fluidity between courses and schools . . . in those areas where selection is made at this stage."⁴⁰

⁴⁰J. J. B. Dempster. op. cit. p. 97.

The more remote rural areas, faced with greater distances between schools, have of necessity more organized courses specifically designed to meet the common needs of the majority of the students rather than the individual. A very general observation⁴¹ of rural headmasters noted that they were much less inclined to favor the G.C.E. program in their schools than were the urban heads. Furthermore, the rural headmaster sought the "general form teacher" for his staff rather than the specialist teacher who was (and still is) very much in demand in the cities and towns.

Those schools which favor transfer to special courses at the age of 13 plus do so for two main reasons: (a) They feel that by leaving the choice of course to a later date, they give the child a longer time in which to decide, thus insuring that the decision will be more final at that particular time; (b) The 13 plus transfer arrangement has the advantage of giving the school two years in which to observe and help the child during the introductory general course, and at the same time allows for the transfer of the wrongly placed child to the Grammar School should the need arise.

There are, of course, certain disadvantages, the most obvious of which is that after two years in the secondary school, the

⁴¹Times Educational Supplement. September 26, 1952.

child is often reluctant to leave in order to commence a special course offered by another school. Rather than start in a new secondary school and make new adjustments, there is a tendency for the child to choose the course offered by his particular school whether he really wants it or not. This would defeat the whole purpose of offering special courses. Nevertheless, many Local Education Authorities favor the 13 plus transfer to special courses over the 11 plus arrangement, if only for the important fact that the decision and finality of choice is left until the child is a little older.

The third possibility for transfer comes at the normal school leaving age of 15 plus. Children are gathered in certain Secondary Modern Schools to follow a variety of courses--such as secretarial and pre-nursing. The attraction to such courses is often the chance of entering for a specific examination and thus gaining certain qualifications prior to becoming employed. Very rarely do such courses commence work for the G. C. E., the general opinion being that it is wasteful of the child's time to start at such a late period upon work that could have been covered much earlier. For the small number of students who pass the G. C. E. in sufficient subjects at the age of 16 years, there is the possibility of transfer to the 6th form of the Local Grammar School to follow a further period of study before entering for the G. C. E. at Advanced Level.⁴²

It must be added that many of the special courses provided in the Modern School do not end at the age of 15 plus or whenever the child leaves school. Particularly in engineering, commercial and secretarial courses, there are arrangements for the continuation of study (during employment) at the Institutes of Further Education through the Apprentices Education Schemes. In engineering, for example, further courses following on from those commenced in the schools lead to the National and Higher National Examinations in a great variety of engineering fields. Once again however, it must be noted that where such continuation schemes are in effect, it is impossible to see where the Technical School comes into the picture at all.

The Development of Specialized Courses

Very few Local Education Authorities have not made some move to encourage the Secondary Modern Schools within their jurisdiction to develop special courses leading to some sort of internal or external examination. In the face of such encouragement, there are even fewer headmasters who have not been "won over" to the

⁴²Holker County Modern School, Barrow-in-Furness, cited earlier as commencing a C.C.E. program in 1949, transferred its first pupil to the 6th form of the local Grammar School in 1959. At the time of writing, it has 25 pupils enrolled in the C.C.E. courses, and still offers special courses in engineering and nautical studies. (North-Western Evening Mail. Barrow-in-Furness. March 9, 1959).

case for the examination in the Secondary Modern School.⁴³

The development of specialized courses did not necessarily follow the Ministry Report of 1949, though this is generally the case. There were a number of Authorities which were concerned with this problem in 1948 and in one case earlier.

The concern for the less able children passing (by law) into the Secondary Modern School at the age of 11 plus, had resulted in the development of an excellent remedial program to satisfy their particular needs. There was a growing awareness however, of the vast difference between the work offered to the more able Secondary Modern child and that to the Grammar School pupil. This was particularly apparent in the large cities where Grammar School places were often harder to secure than in less densely populated areas, resulting in large numbers of children of above average ability passing into the Secondary Modern Schools.

With the needs of such children in mind, several Authorities set about designing programs which would better serve and interest

⁴³ On purely financial grounds, the secondary school headmaster is encouraged to build up as large a group of "over-15 year olds" as possible. His salary is governed on a points scale. The pupil who stays at school after school leaving age counts as a certain number of points more than the child under 15 years of age. This is not to suggest, of course, that this is the primary concern of the head, though this investigator has been left in no doubt that it is a consideration that cannot be ignored.

the more able pupil. At the same time, there was a realization that there too, might lie the answer to the much sought after parity of esteem. What seemed to distinguish the pre-1944 secondary school from its new counterpart was its longer school life, the means it provided to its students to enter the professions, its organization of a main 5 year school course, and its elite of 6th form pupils who provided a group of capable leaders for the school community. It was suggested⁴⁴ that if the new modern school was to become "secondary" in this sense, then it too must be given the chance to develop "advanced courses, and parents must be made to see that school life did not necessarily end at 15 years of age.

Typical of the type of development during this period was the program instituted by Mid-East Surrey in 1946:

The Authority provided that the 11 plus child should attend the nearest Secondary Modern School to his home. Each school was to institute a course or courses from the age of 11 plus onwards, designed to give pupils the education best suited to their

⁴⁴Jarrett. "Development of Fifth Forms in Birmingham Modern Schools." Journal of Education. June, 1954.

One area, Chesterfield, in an endeavor to give the Secondary Modern school "status," abandoned the tripartite nomenclature and made all the secondary schools within its jurisdiction plain "secondary." H. C. Dent. Secondary Modern Schools. London. Routledge & Megan Paul. 1955. p. 152.

abilities and aptitudes. The schools were to be so grouped that the school which best provided for the needs of the particular child should be reasonably available to the pupil at the age of 13 plus. The scheme was based upon three principles:

1. It applied to Secondary Modern Schools in a given area.
2. Provision was to be made for academic, commercial, homecraft, and technical subjects.
3. At the request of the parents, the child was to be admitted to a particular course which would last for two years and while having a particular "bias" would not necessarily include vocational training.

Approximately 800 pupils in the 13 plus age group were to be served by 10 comparatively modern school plants. The general arrangements were that from 11 plus to 13 plus, all schools would provide a general course without any particular bias. The headteachers were to consult each other about the children involved and the different activities within each school so that at the time of transfer, those children who elected to move would fit smoothly into the environment of the new school. Close contact between school and home was maintained both by letter and conference so that the parents fully understood the provisions of the scheme. Parents were asked to give their promise that the child would remain at the school of his choice for at least two years following admission to the course. The courses were:

- a. Academic--leading to the C. C. E. examination.
- b. Technical--including technical drawing, metalwork, general technology, industrial design, relative branches of science; for example, electricity and mechanics.
- c. Commercial--bookkeeping, shorthand, typing, office procedures.
- d. Homecraft--cooking, dress, needlework, pre-nursing with work in day-nurseries and visits to hospitals and clinics.

The courses were arranged between the schools as follows:⁴⁵

Academic	2 schools	mixed
Technical	3 schools	boys
Commercial	3 schools	2 girls and 1 mixed
Homecraft	2 schools	girls

From 1950 to 1954 out of 1,200 pupils interviewed, 710 were accepted for courses, the majority being able to get the required course in their own school.

The number accepted in each course and the total that had to be transferred to another school to enroll in the course of their choice were as follows.

⁴⁵The similarity of the Mid-East Surrey scheme and that of the County Borough of Barrow-in-Furness is at once apparent. It is surprising that of the two Authorities, the highly industrialized area, Barrow-in-Furness, was the one to suggest agricultural courses for its students.

Course	Considered	Accepted	Transferred	Percent transferred of total admission
Commercial	406	236	68	20%
Technical	468	206	91	31
Homecraft	308	103	37	19

Figures for the academic course were not given.

The Authority was not slow to recognize inherent dangers in such an organization. It cautioned against the danger of a school which provided a specialized course giving undue attention to the course relative to the work of the whole school generally. The headteachers were asked to be very careful to maintain a reasonable balance between special and ordinary courses. The disadvantage generally found with the 13 plus transfer scheme was recognized-- that due to loyalty on the part of the pupils, there was a tendency toward internal selection. Finally, due to economic circumstances, there were bound to be a certain number of withdrawals despite the undertaking given by the particular parents. The 1945 report of the Ministry of Education added impetus to an ever-growing trend towards the inclusion of courses specifically designed to meet the standards of external examining bodies such as the City and Guilds, the Royal Society of Arts, the College of Preceptors and not the least, the General Certificate of Education of the University Boards. In many

areas,⁴⁶ efforts have been made to set up suitable leaving examinations which would give the student something to show to his future employer. These are specifically intended for those students who are not capable of entering for the more academic examinations set out above. The leaving certificate generally suggests to the interested employer that a certain standard in the basic tool subjects has been satisfactorily attained. It has been criticized on the grounds that what is examinable may prove to be all that is taught, in other words, a narrowing not a widening of educational horizons. It does however, give to the child who is not included in the special course, a goal to work for, and on this point particularly it has stood ground and is becoming more and more popular.

The General Certificate of Education

But for the Secondary Modern Schools, the most important question connected with examinations has centered around the General Certificate of Education. Reading through the reports of dozens of Annual School Speech Days (Commencement), it is at once apparent that the center-piece in the window of the Secondary Modern School is

⁴⁶There are many detailed accounts of the types of leaving certificates used: e. g. Harrow--Times Educational Supplement, January 28, 1955. p. 31; South-west Herts.--The Schoolmaster, January 28, 1955; and Nottinghamshire--Times Educational Supplement, January 23, 1959. p. 129.

the school's reputation of results achieved in the G. C. E. This is the yardstick by which the school appears to be measured. The question of suitability, as far as the G. C. E. is concerned, has raged for a number of years and present day indications would seem to point to the fact that the G. C. E. is most certainly here to stay and is being used by an increasing number of Modern Schools every year. The examination has been criticized as leading to a "deadening and stereotyping effect upon teaching methods,"⁴⁷ Wolfenden⁴⁸ described the G. C. E. as a "forward-looking" examination testing suitability for further higher education, not as a "backward-looking" exam to test the successful completion of a course of study. The Ministry⁴⁹ made little comment upon the growing trend of entering Secondary Modern pupils for the G. C. E. until 1955, when it asked the L. E. A.'s whether they wanted to admit Secondary Modern School students to the G. C. E. examination. The answer was almost unanimously in the affirmative despite the warnings contained in the Ministry circular. The L. E. A.'s not only wanted the G. C. E., but they also called for another type of examination for those children not capable of entering for the G. C. E.

⁴⁷Letter to the Times. November 16, 1956.

⁴⁸Cited by Neal. "Modern School Certificates--Doubts and Queries." Times Educational Supplement. October, 29, 1954. p. 1010.

⁴⁹Ministry of Education. Circular 207. H. M. S. O. July, 1955.

Further comments⁵⁰ upon the unsuitability of the G. C. E. as an examination for the Secondary Modern School have done nothing to stop the ever-increasing numbers of Secondary Modern children who are entered for this test each year.

The examination has many firm supporters,⁵¹

usually the examination results seem to have been most satisfactory . . . children as a whole like examinations It is the old story of the donkey and the carrot, but if we face the facts, we are all donkeys and, providing the carrot is to our taste, we are all drawn on by such incentives.

Dempster produces evidence to show that the G. C. E. is within the capabilities of the average secondary modern student and is not, as is generally supposed, an examination suitable only for the "near-miss" at the 11 plus selection. He gives figures from his own Authority (he is Director of Education for Southampton) showing the 1948 Moray House standardized scores for students who in 1953 gained six passes in the General Certificate of Education.

⁵⁰p. E. P. publication comment cited in Times Educational Supplement. March 25, 1953.

"Modern School Examined." Times Educational Supplement. February 22, 1957.

"The G. C. E. is not practical in the Secondary Modern School. The results obtained by small Secondary Modern groups are an inadequate return for the effort put in."

⁵¹J. J. D. Dempster. Exposure in the Modern School. Methuen. 1953. p. 105.

Pupil	English Quotient	Arithmetic Quotient	Intelligence Quotient
1	103	99	102
2	106	94	106
3	123	110	111
4	102	111	102
5	117	104	111

On the scores outlined above, only pupil 3 would in any way qualify at the eleven plus examination as a border-line case, and even then, the chances that he would be given a place in the "C" stream of a Grammar School are remote. All pupils however, have succeeded in gaining results which will secure a place in a Training College and perhaps a University course.

Dempster goes on to point out that children obtaining a creditable result in the G. C. E. at Ordinary Level have the opportunity to transfer to the 6th form of the local Grammar School. The remarkable number of 23 pupils did this in 1954.⁵² Against such evidence it is hard to refute his comment, "This underlines the value of such a G. C. E. course in the Modern Schools." It might be added however

⁵²J. J. B. Dempster. op. cit. p. 86.

More surprising still is the fact that of the children who sat for the G. C. E. in 1952 in Southampton, none had had more than three years preparation for an examination which is usually preceded by a five year course. 41 children sat for the examination and recorded a total of 127 passes, or 66% of those for which they sat. The average percentage pass for all pupils throughout the whole country (including Grammar School students) is generally about this figure (61.3% in 1954).

that the value of such a course rests with that small minority of more able students who are able to profit from the academic work. It would seem only right and within the philosophy of the 1944 Act that such children should be provided for. Where many schools seem to fall down is that they fail to recognize that the number of children who are really capable of such work in the Modern School is always small. It is hardly necessary to comment that the practice of entering a student for one or at the most two subjects per year in the G. C. E. is not exactly educating him according to his ability and aptitude. This is noted as the practice of a certain number of schools, which, like some Junior schools at the 11 plus examination, are primarily concerned with the quantity of the results, not the quality.

The enthusiasm for the G. C. E. as shown in the Southampton report was matched in many other areas of the country when results became more and more encouraging.

The figures⁵³ for the candidates entering for the G. C. E. at "O" level between 1952 and 1954 show an increase of some 60%.

1952 - number of candidates = 3,420

1954 - number of candidates = 5,505

The total entries from all secondary schools during the 1952-1954 period increased by 36%. It was obvious then, that the number of

⁵³"Modern Pupils Assessed." Times Educational Supplement. November 4, 1955.

students from the Secondary Modern Schools had increased considerably.

The ratio of all secondary schools taking the G. C. E. at "C" level in 1954 showed one Secondary Modern pupil for every twenty-two Grammar School pupils and two Secondary Modern pupils for every three Technical School children. The large majority of the Modern School pupils took the examination at the age of 16 years. On the average, the Modern School student took five papers and passed three of them. There was little difference between the percentage of passes for the Modern School pupils by themselves and the overall percentage for all the secondary schools. The figures were:

passes for Modern School children = 59.6%

passes for all secondary children = 61.3%

As a matter of further interest, the standardized scores that the Modern School pupils received on their Intelligence tests at the 11 plus examinations were re-examined in the light of their results in the G. C. E. examination. The results would hardly seem to support the contention that the predictive validity⁵⁴ of the Intelligence Test by itself is as high as is claimed (0.626).

⁵⁴The predictive validity referred specifically to the 11 plus examination as a selector for a Grammar School type of secondary education. The point is still valid since the culmination of the first 5 year part of the Grammar School program is generally held to be the G. C. E. examination itself.

Percent of Pupils	Range of Intelligence Quotients
30	100 to 109
14	under 100
6	over 120
30	110 to 119

Only 17% of the students had I. Q.'s at the 11 plus selection of over 115, generally quoted as the lowest minimum score for entry to the Grammar School.

The results would seem to indicate that the 11 plus figures are no sure guide to future success or failure in the G. C. E. at the age of 16 years. Rather, success at the G. C. E. examination apparently is influenced to no small extent by factors which are not measurable by the selection examination at 11 plus.

The attempts to introduce new technical subjects into the academic program of the G. C. E. had been expected to attract a growing number of entrants, particularly from the Secondary Modern Schools. It was very often felt that in this area lay the Modern School's best chance of gaining some certain measure of success. The realization that the technical subjects were by no means the most popular with the Secondary Modern pupils (at least, as far as the G. C. E. examination was concerned) must have caused no small bewilderment to those who thought that they knew the Secondary Modern pupil. The report of the Joint Matriculation Board Northern

Universities for the North of England area,⁵⁵ indicated that of all the subjects elected for examination by Secondary Modern pupils in 1954, only 23% of them belonged to what they described as the new technical subjects. The implication that the newer subjects (geometry and machine drawing, geometry and engineering drawing, commercial, and woodwork, etc.) were not regarded as being as vocationally advantageous as the "older" more academic subjects cannot entirely be ignored.

The figures of the Board show several interesting developments.

North of England Only	1951	1952	1953	1954
Secondary Modern Schools Entered for G. C. E.	42	46	56	66
Total Candidates	645	949	967	1243
Candidates at "O" Level Only	322	587	625	1212
Candidates at "A" Level Only	15	23	22	12
Candidates Offering Both "O" and "A" Levels	8	19	20	19
Total Entries for "O" and "A" Subjects	4,736	4,679	4,576	5,547

⁵⁵Joint Matriculation Board Northern Universities.

"Secondary Modern Schools and the General Certificate of Education."
Times Educational Supplement. February 10, 1955.

Generally speaking, the C. C. E. at "A" level is seen to be beyond the attainment of all but a very small minority of Secondary Modern pupils. That any at all should be entered for this extremely academic examination (in many subjects, the first year of the University course is covered) is in itself remarkable.

In the North of England, the response to the challenge of the C. C. E. in the years immediately following the Ministry Report of 1949 was one of caution. It must not be forgotten however, that the C. C. E. preparation is usually a five year course, and even if schools entered pupils for such preparation in 1949, the first candidates would not be ready until 1954. A breakdown of the 1954 "O" level results indicated the popularity of the more academic subjects over the newer technical subjects. The results appear on page 105.

The results seemed to show that while the best percentage of success lay in the new technical subjects which were attempted, the choice of these subjects was by no means the most popular among those students being examined.

By far the most common subject offered at "O" level was English language. Second in popularity was English literature, followed by geography and mathematics. There was a substantial entry for French which would seem to indicate that a large number of Secondary Modern Schools as early as 1949 had started a program

North of England Secondary Modern Candidates
Taking G. C. E. at "O" Level, 1954

Subject	Number of Candidates	Number Passed	Percent Success
English language	696	309	44.5%
English literature	619	287	46.3
History	405	202	49.8
Geography	537	321	59.7
Economics	2	1	*
Religious knowledge	214	90	41.1
Art	374	250	66.8
Music	37	22	*
Latin	14	12	*
French	344	165	47.9
Mathematics syll. 1	432	199	46.0
Physics and chemistry	104	50	50.9
Biology	177	90	51.2
Woodwork syll. 1	110	34	30.3
Commercial	53	40	75.5
Geometry, mechanical drawing	170	82	48.2
Geometry, engineering drawing	23	4	*
Navigation	3	0	*

*Percent success not indicative.

of "streaming" their junior school entrants, and providing their "A" stream with a course of study very similar to that offered in the Grammar School. The possibility of transfer for some of these "A" stream students to the Grammar School necessitated a two year program of French from 11 to 13 years of age. After 13 years of age, many schools dropped their foreign language program. The figures above indicate that many other schools did, in fact, retain their foreign language

program, developing it over a five year period and preparing pupils for the G. C. E.

Generally speaking, the subjects which are considered the more "academic" in the list indicated (and therefore, according to tripartite terminology, more suitable for the Grammar School) are precisely those which attract the largest number of candidates from the Secondary Modern Schools. (It would be reasonable to assume therefore, that the appeals of the Ministry of Education to the new Modern Schools not to "ape" the Grammar Schools, more often than not, fell upon deaf ears.) Not only was the freedom from examinations firmly refused, but the examinations most popular in the Grammar Schools were also chosen by the Modern Schools to be those most worthy of attainment.⁵⁶ It is suggested that while the Grammar School carries more social prestige than the Secondary Modern School, this trend will become more and more common. Certainly this is the case if the number of Secondary Modern students entering for the G. C. E. is any indication. With over 9,000 students entered in 1956, as compared with 5,565 in 1954, it is reasonable to expect in the region of 10,000 students entering in the current year. Some Authorities are selecting Secondary Modern students at 11 plus and immediately embarking upon a G. C. E. preparation course,

⁵⁶ A. V. Judges. British Journal of Educational Studies.
November, 1953.

The director emphasized that to be a success, such courses, must cover a full five years Admission to courses will be restricted to pupils recommended by the examinations board on the results of the 11 plus. . . . The range of the five year courses proposed are: (1) Technical--preparing for the G. C. E. level craft and science examinations. (2) Commercial--preparing for G. C. E. and Royal Society of Arts exams. (3) Pre-catering--following courses to be agreed with the Cardiff College of Advanced Food Technology.⁵⁷

Thus the 11 plus failure is not apparently regarded as sufficient indication that an academic secondary course is inappropriate to the child's real needs.

A three year survey by the Croydon Education Committee shows that there exists a "surprising equality of performance by pupils at maintained grammar schools, selective and modern schools who took English, mathematics and science." It appears that below an I. Q. of 112, "there is a considerable degree of overlap in successes of pupils at various secondary schools."⁵⁸

The results of this survey (which commenced in 1956) have caused the Education Committee of this South London area to recommend the extension of the provision of 5 year academic courses in the Secondary Modern Schools. There is no reason to doubt that

⁵⁷Report of 5 year G. C. E. plans in Secondary Modern Schools in Cardiff, Wales." Times Educational Supplement. June 9, 1958. p. 948.

⁵⁸"Secondary Modern Successes--Croydon Surveys G. C. E." Times Educational Supplement. March 23, 1959. p. 500.

this is a trend which will tend to increase as it becomes more and more generally known that successes are being obtained in the C. C. E. examination by pupils who have hitherto been considered "beyond the pale" as far as the G. C. E. is concerned. The report would seem to substantiate the findings of Dempster whose investigations at Southampton show that I. Q. rating at the 11 plus selection is no indication of future success at the G. C. E. The Croydon survey reveals that in the General Certificate of Education examination, "the group whose I. Q. was between 108 and 100 were surprisingly successful, with an average pass rate of 50 percent."

✓ The Committee's findings might be partly summarized as follows:

School	Percent G. C. E. subjects passed			I. Q. range
	6 and over	3-5	2 and over	
Grammar				
Selective Secondary	23%	50%	22%	116 and above
Secondary Modern	21	41	38	
Grammar				
Selective Secondary	11	68	26	112-115
Secondary Modern	12	57	31	
Grammar				
Selective Secondary	15	68	22	111 and under
Secondary Modern	21	44	35	
	3	67	30	

Summary Part III

The progress and development that has been taking place in the Secondary Modern Schools since 1949 might be briefly summarized as follows:

1. The early experiments in curriculum construction and teaching method which were in evidence throughout the length and breadth of the country before 1949, have for the most part disappeared and their place has been taken by a more fixed or stable type of program in which special courses, often leading to some form of external examination, are constantly being expanded in an endeavor to provide for the Secondary Modern child a course of study which is truly "secondary."
2. The special courses, very often vocationally-biased, appear to have grown out of a public demand for some definite aim and incentive in the Secondary Modern programs about 1949 or 1950. The spectacular growth of the special courses has been noted as the most effective way that the Modern School has developed to convince the general public that it is something more than the old elementary school "written large."
3. The great majority of Secondary Modern Schools are now offering special courses. Dent⁵⁹ notes that both the pupils and the parents appreciate the vocational value of such courses and the sense of purpose

⁵⁹Dent. op. cit. p. 42.

and reality that they give to the school. There was a great variety of courses which covered some 40 different subjects⁶⁰ in 1955. The number of subjects being offered is still increasing.

4. Many of the special courses lead to the General Certificate of Education. By 1956 one school in six among the Secondary Moderns was entering pupils for this examination. It is reported that every year, not only the number of students entering is increased, but also that the quality of their results shows a steady improvement too.⁶¹

5. The number of Modern Schools which are content to do "highly effective" elementary school work is steadily decreasing.

6. A small group of Secondary Modern Schools has arisen which appears to prepare students for the G. C. E., though in a less ambitious way than the Grammar Schools. Dent⁶² labelled such schools "G. C. E. Schools" and far from finding any fault in the type of program which they offer, he suggests that they have an important and necessary function to fulfill. In areas where there are few Grammar School places, he suggests that this particular type of program is ideal for the "near-miss" pupil and also for the Grammar School "C" student who finds the pace too hot for him in the academic Grammar School.

⁶⁰ A Memorandum on Some Aspects of the Work of the New Secondary Schools. National Union of Teachers. Hamilton House. London. 1955. p. 25.

⁶¹ Dent. op. cit. pp. 110-140.

⁶² Dent. op. cit. p. 56.

7. A comparison of the early proposals of many L. B. A. 's with regard to curriculum content and teaching method with the general state of affairs in these areas in 1955 reveals the nature of the movement away from experimentation and toward a more rigid, traditional type program. For example, the Ministry of Education pamphlet "Language"⁶³ noted two main factors limiting the development of English in the Secondary Modern School: (a) the conventional content of the schemes of work, and (b) the tyranny of the textbook. The report found that too often, the scheme of work was based on a diluted Grammar School syllabus, "watered down again and again to suit the less able students." There was room for more originality in devising a scheme based upon a true awareness of the needs of the children, the needs of the community, and the prevailing interests of the school as a corporate body. There was a great lack of material to stimulate the interest and the imagination of the classes. It was further noted that in many schools, the trend was towards a more academic type program to satisfy the demands of parents and employers for leaving qualifications.

"Is it the general practice to encourage the development of style by the use of wide reading, ample oral work and much informal

⁶³ Cited by D. R. Oldham. "English in the Secondary School." Journal of Education. January, 1955.

The February, March, April and July editions of the Journal of Education for 1955 contain useful articles on the work in geography, history, science and French in the Secondary Modern School at this time.

practice?" asks Oldham. "No, we administer the formal grammar lesson and expect results to follow." The general unwillingness to depart from well-trodden ways is pointed out as another factor working against success in the teaching of English. An American visitor, while finding much to his liking, commented, "The schools barely touch upon the problems of social adjustment, civic affairs, home life or leisure. Most pupils have no chance to undertake projects of their own choosing or even to raise the problems which trouble them most."⁶⁴ A later visitor⁶⁵ from the United States commented in similar vein, drawing attention to the lack of adaptation to the needs and interests of the pupils and to the lecture-type teaching and the "perpetual note-taking on the part of the students."

8. The apparent dangers in the developing trends did not go unheeded at home at this particular time. A letter⁶⁶ to an educational magazine in 1954 raised doubts and queries which are still pertinent at the time of writing.

⁶⁴ M. C. Fraser. "English Education Set Us Thinking." Educational Forum. Vol. XVIII. No. 2. Part 1. January, 1954.

⁶⁵ S. Everett. "American Impressions of the Secondary Modern." Times Educational Supplement. March 22, 1957. pp. 333-35.

⁶⁶ Letter to the Schoolmaster, June 16, 1954. Cited in H. C. Dent. op. cit. p. 159.

The whole aim of the modern school was originally that it should provide a type of education adapted to the interests and abilities of the child who is more practical than academic, whose gifts do not lie in the direction of examination passing, but who nevertheless has the right to the sort of education which will widen his horizons, enrich his interests, and help him to become a useful member of society.

The writer of the letter went on to ask the following questions:

How far is this ideal threatened by the setting up of the examination (C.C.E.) goal as a major objective? How far are the mass of genuinely non-academic pupils likely to be still further discouraged by the setting up of a semi-academic elite as the "top" stream of the school? And what of the elite themselves? Are they going to be driven along and extended beyond their real capacities in the striving after examination results? Is the bias of the curriculum to be distorted, and specialist staff to be encouraged to concentrate their attention upon the chosen few? Briefly, is the admitted gain for the few to be made at the expense of the majority for whom these schools were originally planned?

A similar comment⁶⁷ raised the whole question of the intended function of the Secondary Modern School within the definition of the 1944 Education Act.

. . . but any Secondary Modern school that has a selected group working for the C.C.E. is in fact "bi-lateral." It has ceased to be a Secondary Modern School under the terms of the 1944 Education Act. It may be a bi-lateral school of an inferior grade, shorn of the best intelligence, but it is certainly not a "normal" Secondary Modern School.

The fundamental point at issue, the principal task of the Secondary Modern School, is restated by Dent⁶⁸ as follows: The

⁶⁷ Neal. "Modern School Certificates--Doubts and Queries." Times Educational Supplement. October 29, 1954. p. 1,010.

⁶⁸ Dent. op. cit. p. 190.

most important concern of the Secondary Modern School is the education of the very large "middle group of children," a group, "varying in size in different schools, but generally consisting of pupils whose intellectual ability, as rated by standardized tests of intelligence, is round about or somewhat below the mean (100 I. Q.)."

The problem of the development of special courses in the Secondary Modern School therefore raises the important question of whether the education given there should be based upon the developing interests of the children or upon the requirements of some form of external assessment such as the General Certificate of Education.

The striving for "parity of esteem" in the eyes of the public, which has led to the development of special courses, many leading to external examinations, has apparently brought the following dangers:⁶⁹

- a. the danger that the vocational aspect of special courses might be allowed to outway the cultural, and thus the top half of the Secondary Modern school becomes merely a trade training school.
- b. the danger that success in the General Certificate of Education might lead to an undue emphasis on academic subjects at the expense of practical activities throughout the school.

⁶⁹Dent. op. cit. p. 169.

The Secondary Modern School would then in truth be a "pale imitation of the Grammar."⁷⁰

- c. the danger that an over-emphasis upon special courses and G. C. E. work might lead to a disproportionate amount of attention being given to the apt and the able at the expense of the "great middle mass of children" in the Secondary Modern for whom the school was designed. The setting up of five year academic programs for Secondary Modern Schools has been noted as becoming more and more common throughout the country. This growth toward the Grammar School type of academic program would indicate that the brighter pupil in the Modern School is certainly receiving the chances he deserves in the G. C. E. examination. But this present (and growing) development seems a long way from the intentions of the 1944 Education Act. Furthermore, there are many educators⁷¹ who would be much happier

⁷⁰ See letters to the Times Educational Supplement. November 23 and November 30, 1956.

⁷¹ Vernon comments on the danger of "neglecting other school subjects in order to concentrate on a few G. C. E. papers . . . at the cost of less care and attention being given to the 95% or so of Modern School pupils who have no chance of reaching G. C. E. standards." P. E. Vernon, editor. Secondary School Selection--A British Psychological Society Inquiry. Methuen and Co., Ltd. 1957. p. 66.

about the current trends if they could see just what the Secondary Modern schools are going to do for the majority of their pupils who do not make the honor rolls or the local newspaper reports of G. C. E. successes, for it is for these pupils that the Secondary Modern Schools exist.

CHAPTER VI

ALTERNATIVE SECONDARY ORGANIZATION

The 1944 Education Act did not call for the present tripartite division of secondary school education. It will be recalled from Chapter II, that the L. E. A. 's were obliged to, "afford for all pupils opportunities for education offering such varieties of instruction and training as may be desirable in view of their different ages, abilities and aptitudes."¹ The majority of the L. E. A. 's did utilize the already existing Grammar-Technical-Modern structure as the basis for the interpretation of the 1944 Act's recommendations.

In London² however, the County Council decided upon the establishment of comprehensive schools. The Ministry of Education did not welcome the Council's proposal, favoring the tripartite system of secondary organization. Consequently, it was not until 1946 that official sanction was given for limited experimentation in the setting up of a small number of comprehensive schools. As late as 1955, comprehensive schools under the jurisdiction of the London County

¹ 1944 Education Act. Part II. Section 1b. p. 5.

² And in certain other areas, notably Birmingham, Reading, Coventry, Anglesey and the Isle of Man.

Council enrolled only 6.7% of the 14-15 year old age group in secondary schools, a mere 3,501 children out of a possible 475,013 in the relevant age group.³

The Ministry of Education⁴ defined the comprehensive school as, "one intended to provide all the secondary educational facilities needed by the children of a given area, but without being organized in clearly defined sides."

Judges⁵ suggests that a better word for the comprehensive school is "non-selective," adding that to be true to the conception of "comprehensive," the school would have to provide a "common life to be shared under the umbrella of the curriculum of a single institution by every sort of child."

A strict interpretation of Judges' definition would rule out a number of schools frequently referred to as comprehensives. There are examples of compromise to be seen in certain parts of the country today where secondary modern schools are loosely associated with existing⁶

³E. Simon, editor. New Trends in English Education. MacGibbon & Kee. London. 1957. p. 11.

⁴Ibid. p. 85.

⁵A. V. Judges. "Tradition and the Comprehensive School." British Journal Educational Studies. Vol. II. No. 1. November, 1953. pp. 3-19.

⁶"Grammar into Comprehensive." Times Educational Supplement. December 9, 1955. p. 1,275.

The article pointed out that for the first three years the school offered the child the broadest possible general education.

Grammar Schools under the guise of "comprehensive." A truer definition would be bi-lateral. Some authorities utilize a common campus for separate schools, each of which selectively recruits its particular pupils generally by means of the 11 plus examination. Multi-lateral would best describe this type of organization.

A number of comprehensive schools have been in existence for a long enough period of time to afford adequate data for assessment of some of the educational and social implications presented by this non-selective organization of secondary schooling. Many of the criticisms⁷ aimed at the comprehensive school can now be answered by reference to a number of years of experiment in methodology, curriculum development and administrative procedure. It is no exaggeration to comment that for the most part, much of the criticism has been proved to have no grounds for substantiation.

"The trend towards a more comprehensive organization of secondary education is widespread and gathering strength and pace,"⁸

"Most of this he will receive in intellectually homogeneous classes . . . it is difficult to distinguish the 'modernist'; practically without exception they wear the school uniform."

⁷The comprehensive school has had some fascinating labels attached to it. Some of the more colorful include: "rash," "dangerous," "hopelessly idealistic," "the end of all hope in culture," "conveyor-belt system," and "a travesty of education."

⁸Times Educational Supplement. August 29, 1955. p. 1,306.

comments one observer. Certainly there are reports of a number of Education Authorities⁹ which have re-organized their secondary structure in 1958 and 1959. It must be stated however, that by and large, the organization of secondary education in England and Wales is still a tripartite system of separation.

In Favor of the Comprehensive Principle

Those authorities which have been operating a comprehensive system of secondary education, either for a comparatively long time (e.g. Anglesey and London) or for a relatively short period (Carlisle, Leicestershire and Derbyshire) seem to have been influenced in their choice of program by similar philosophical considerations. These might be summarized briefly as follows:

- a. that in the spirit of 1943 White Paper on Educational Reconstruction, which called for measures leading to "a more closely-knit society," there are a number of authorities which subscribe to the belief that,

⁹ Derbyshire, quite a large Midland county has "gone comprehensive" in 1959, Carlisle, on the northern border of England decided to reorganize its secondary educational system on the lines of the Leicestershire Plan. (See Times Educational Supplement, February 27, 1959.)

The Ministry of Education gave the total of comprehensives in England and Wales in 1958 as 68 schools. Of these however, 28 were really bi-lateral rather than truly comprehensive, but had been included in the total because the Ministry had noticed "the recent trend towards increased flexibility in organization." Times Educational Supplement, May 22, 1959. p. 943. See also Inside the Comprehensive School. N.U.T. 1958. Appendix A. pp. 140-143.

It is a matter of first rate importance for modern society that life in a school should promote a feeling of social unity among adolescents of all kinds and degrees of ability.¹⁰

Campbell,¹¹ notes that the decision of the London County Council to modify such "old and revered institutions as the grammar schools," replacing them with comprehensives, came not as many critics observed, as a result of an educational whim or temporary ideological prejudice,¹² but rather,

it has arisen inevitably out of the new political, economic and technical circumstances of recent years. The reforms of half a century ago took place because the old endowed grammar schools were inadequate to serve the expanding needs of the time. Similarly, today in London and other parts of the country, new forms of secondary school organization are necessary to meet the changing requirements of modern society.

The fear that a segregated education leads to the development by one section of the community of "the characteristics of a managerial class,"¹³ is held by some authorities, and the

¹⁰ The Organization of Comprehensive Secondary Schools.
London County Council. 1953. p. 7.

¹¹ Flann Campbell. Eleven Plus and All That. Watts.
London. 1956. p. 183.

¹² London County Council is under the control of the Labor Party.

¹³ G. D. H. Cole. "Education--A Socialist View." Year Book of Education. 1952. p. 57.

common school, accepting all types of children from all social strata within the area, is proposed as the answer to this problem. Such a school aims,

to meet all the educational needs of a heterogeneous group of young children and it does attempt to allow all children to grow up naturally one with another, exercising tolerance towards each other and having regard for each person's place and importance in the community.¹⁴

- b. the comprehensive school presents the opportunity of avoiding "the iniquitous selection test," the 11 Plus. The Holyhead (Anglesey) authority comments, "the competitive examination with all its attendant evils has been dispensed with."¹⁵ Other authorities question the belief in "clear-cut types" distinguishable at the age of 11 plus and lend voice to a growing charge that the break at 11 plus represents a matter

¹⁴S. W. B. Watson. Early Steps in Comprehensive Education, cited in B. Simon. op. cit. p. 93.

¹⁵"Comprehensive Years--Progressive Differentiation." Times Educational Supplement. January 27, 1956. p. 97.

The actual examination may have been "dispensed with" as a competitive instrument, but very often it is still used as a means of "streaming" children when they enter the comprehensive school. Alexander rightly makes this point,

"The claim . . . that differentiation at eleven plus will cease Proves to have no foundation"

of administrative convenience rather than sound educational practice.

The tripartite arrangement of Grammar, Technical and Modern Schools must not be accepted as if it were the result of experiment; it is, of course, something of which we have experience, but which reflects the social origins of each type of school rather than any educational principle.¹⁶

Not one of the authorities can find any justification, educationally, for the early separation of children into "types" and it is pointed out again and again that the comprehensive arrangement (in which any form of separation can be avoided until school leaving age in certain cases), represents the correction of a major weakness of the tripartite system.

Judges comments,

If we look at the foundations of the present tripartite design or examine the pretension that the pattern of provision should follow any narrow demonstration of psychological type-boundaries, and in doing so seek some established scientia discorsantia, the cupboard will be found to be sparsely furnished and probably bare. Certainly there is nothing in that cupboard to sustain and fortify anyone who would seek to take a stand on the essential naturalness and propriety of the clean break at eleven.¹⁷

¹⁶ The Comprehensive School. English New Education Fellowship. p. 7. Cited in Nunn Campbell. op. cit. p. 102.

¹⁷ Judges. op. cit. p. 14.

- c. the comprehensive arrangement offers decided advantages both administratively and financially over the tripartite secondary system. More variety can be offered in courses available, staff-pupil ratios can be improved, and more general amenities can be provided in one school which could not possibly be offered in three. One reason for the failure of the Secondary Technical School to blossom forth in the tripartite system is that it is far too costly for the Local Education Authorities to make such specialized provision for children at the age of eleven.¹⁸ The possibilities for provision of engineering courses in the comprehensive school might indicate the beginning of any real progress toward the adequate development of this essential and very much neglected area.

Procedures and Organization within
the Comprehensive Schools

There are a number of accounts¹⁹ of the organizational

¹⁸ "Recent Trends in English Education." International Review of Education. 1955. p. 269.

¹⁹ R. Pedley and others. Comprehensive Schools Today. Councils and Educational Press. London. 1955.

"Holyhead High School." Times Educational Supplement. February 6, 1953; and Schoolmaster. July 10, 1953.

"Anglesey's Comprehensive Schools." Schoolmaster. July 3, 1953.

"School for the Community." Education. May 7, 1954. B. Simon, editor. op. cit. pp. 65-215.

methods, curricula offerings and administrative procedures of comprehensive schools which are adequately representative of those at present in existence in England and Wales. Though each school has developed according to the particular circumstances of its own environment, there is a common trend in many aspects of that growth which points to certain characteristics of the English comprehensive school as a whole.

1. The comprehensive schools have adopted a common course of study which lasts at least two years, generally three years, and in a small number of schools for four years. They insist that this common course holds many advantages for the child in that it tends to reduce the risk of wrong selection at 11 plus, and postpones the idea of specialization to a later date while the child enjoys a "Cook's Tour" in a wide variety of subject areas. The children placed in a remedial group for retardation in "basic tool" subjects receive a modified version of this common course, more emphasis being placed in their case upon the particular area of retardation.

2. Very few schools have organized their entrants without very careful attention being paid to the child's attainment at 11 plus. One of the large London Comprehensives reported,

There was little departure from tradition in the school's organization. Classes were streamed on attainment and intelligence test results . . . there was little mixing of varied attainment levels, except to a limited degree on

one afternoon a week . . . forms were known by the initials of their form teachers and so there was no overt or avowed classification.²⁰

On the other hand, another London Comprehensive²¹ reported that after streaming the children into three ability groups for a number of years, the staff were of the opinion that,

the difficulties of the third stream, which is depressed by its failure, can be matched by the conceit of the first stream, which sometimes has the feeling that it can rest on its laurels; therefore streaming is equally bad for all the pupils.

✓ The staff had recommended that streaming be abolished and this had been tried in one house²² and would soon be carried out in the whole school. The common-core syllabus employed during the "diagnostic" years--a term which is frequently encountered in reports of comprehensive schools--must be seen in a rather different setting to its counterpart in many of the junior high schools of America. There is no school known to the writer which utilizes a core curriculum type program with groups

²⁰ Mountgrace Comprehensive School, Petters Bar, Middlesex. This was the "worst" example of comprehensiveness which the investigator found. The term "form teacher" or "form master" would be equivalent to "home-room teacher" in the United States.

²¹ Peckham Secondary School. Cited in D. Simon. op. cit. pp. 93-110.

²² The house system referred to in connection with the Grammar Schools, has proved even more valuable to the comprehensives in view of their larger pupil enrollment.

which are heterogeneous as far as ability. The London Comprehensive reported above is approaching such an organization, and may now in fact use the core program, but it does not include what it calls the "backward class" in its policy of "unstreaming."

There is a difference of opinion as to what exactly the common course should entail. For one school,²³ "it should be a common syllabus for every form in a given age group, irrespective of the level of attainment or presumed intelligence of the classes into which pupils are divided." Another school²⁴ however, did not find that a common course, divided into general and special parts for children of varying ability, in any way contravened the idea of a common syllabus.

3. Most of the schools examined, made use of "setting"--another term for ability grouping--particularly in the so-called academic subjects such as mathematics, English, history, geography and French. They all stressed that it was relatively easy for transfers to be made from one group to another without disturbance to the child or to the teacher. They also felt that "efficient setting completely refutes the popular accusation of rewarding the bright and forcing the slow,"²⁵ a criticism often levelled at the comprehensive school.

²³ Holloway Comprehensive School, London.

²⁴ Walworth Comprehensive School, London.

²⁵ Times Educational Supplement. January 27, 1956. p. 97.

4. Because of the large size of the comprehensive school (generally from 1,200 to 2,300 children) and the adequate provision of staffing and amenities, the curricula offerings tend to be extremely interesting in their scope. One delighted parent noted,

a whole range of courses from classics to cooking was available and every child who wanted to sit for the C. C. E. could do so in an endless combination of subjects and so open the door to any kind of career for himself . . . how could any child have so much choice in any smaller school?²⁶

The curriculum of one London school²⁷ (1,253 children) offered the following variety of courses to be commenced at the end of its three year general course:

- a. A two year course in needlework.
- b. Two courses offering a two year program in engineering.
- c. Three courses offering a two year program in commercial work.
- d. One academic course including one science.
- e. One academic course including two sciences (probably physics and chemistry).

It was further possible to offer combinations of subjects to suit the individual needs of the particular student. For example, the school offered the following program for the pupil who wished to progress to college engineering:

²⁶ Letter to the Times Educational Supplement. February 15, 1957. p. 205.

²⁷ Mountgrace Comprehensive School, Petersham, Middlesex. For comparison with another school program organized on similar lines, see report on Great Barr Comprehensive School, Birmingham in Inside the Comprehensive School. N.U.T. Hamilton House. London. 1956. pp. 33-47.

G. C. E. at "O" Level--German, history and geography (with an economic and industrial bias), English.

C. C. E. at "A" Level--Pure and applied mathematics, physical science, engineering drawing.

The school reported that it offered the following purely academic courses for sixth form work (G. C. E. at "A" Level).

English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, history, geography, economics, religious knowledge, art, music, technical and domestic subjects, pure and applied mathematics, and the pure sciences.

Another comprehensive,²⁶ at Reading, aiming at developing a strong arts and crafts program, nevertheless offered a five year course leading up to the G. C. E. at "O" Level in the following subjects: English, mathematics, science, history, music, art, geography, religious knowledge, technical drawing and handicrafts. The pride of the school was a three year course, approved by the National Joint Council of Builders and Building Operatives, which was a "firm groundwork in the basic subjects, upon which is superimposed a coordinated course of building crafts: carpentry and joinery, painting and decorating, plumbing, brickwork, and the drawing and technology connected with these crafts."

Generally speaking, the comprehensives appeared to be able to offer a very wide range of academic and non-academic subjects,

²⁶ Ashmead Comprehensive School, Reading, Berkshire (650 children, all boys). Reported in E. Simon. op. cit. pp. 122-136.

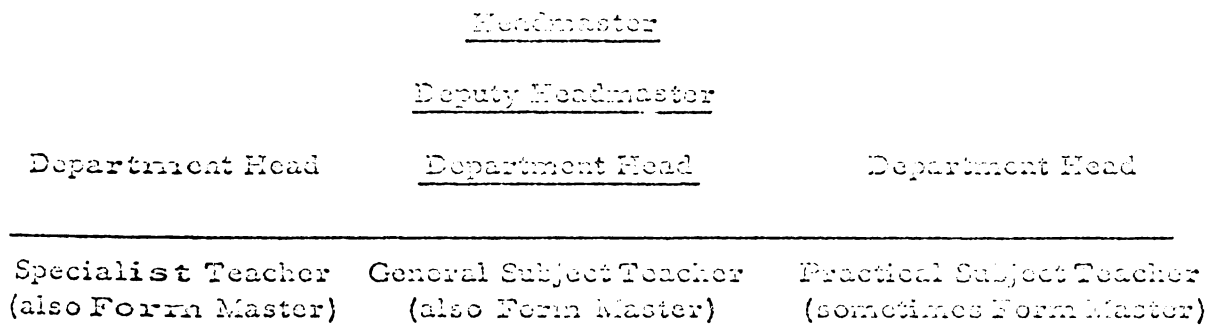
G. A. Winterton. New Beginnings at Reading.

which would as the happy parent observed, "open the door to any kind of career."

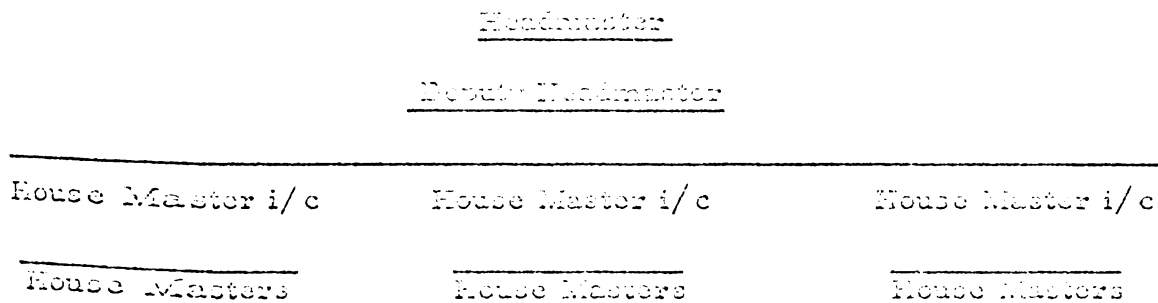
5. The general organization of staff, the delegation of responsibility and authority vary, of course, from school to school. Nevertheless, with most of the schools having developed some sort of house system and with all those examined having heads of departments and form-masters or mistresses, it is possible to present a picture of what might be described as a typical comprehensive school organization. The Headmaster or Headmistress determines the general policy of the school and the Deputy Headmaster is directly responsible for the day to day running of the school as well as for all disciplinary matters. In subject areas, the Heads of Departments are responsible for their particular subject and have under their jurisdiction the specialist teachers together with general teachers who may be teaching in their particular area but at a less advanced level than their specialist colleagues. The heads of departments are very often house masters in charge of certain school houses. This need not necessarily follow, though it is generally the case that the department head, with his greater experience in teaching and longer years of service, is elected the house master in charge of one of the school's houses. All other teachers (other than the deputy headmaster) share in the running of one of the school's houses. This may involve organising inter-house sports and competitions or assisting

at the school meal program. In large schools, the children often go to the cafeteria as a school house, irrespective of age or form.

a. Organization of the academic side of the school program:



b. Organization of the social side of the school program:



The two diagrams above do not, of course, represent two systems which are divorced from one another. On the contrary, they show that each teacher has two roles in school. For example, a teacher of chemistry, spending most of his weekly schedule in his particular teaching field would be classified as a specialist teacher. He might also be the Form Master in charge of Form IIA marking the child-accounting for that class

each day, and meeting the IIA students as a form for at least half an hour each day and possibly longer. At the same time, he will be a House Master attached to one of the houses in the school (call it Churchill House). If there are four houses in the school then about one-fourth of the members of Form IIA will be members of Churchill House, the rest of the class belonging to one of the other three houses in the school. The practical subject teacher may or may not be a Form Master. Often he is relieved of this duty by a thoughtful Headmaster, so that he might have the extra time each day for the maintenance of the workshop equipment. If there are houses in the school, then the practical subject master will also be a House Master. The Churchill House will meet regularly to elect its officers from among the students, under the guidance of the House Master in charge of Churchill House and his House Masters. Wellington House, Nelson House and Baldwin House will also be meeting to plan house business and to discuss house policy.

Most of the comprehensive schools have retained this system of houses as a highly-effective way of counteracting the feeling of "not-belonging" which can overwhelm the child coming from the small Junior School "family".

The headmaster of Ashmead answered the frequent question, "Is the new boy overwhelmed?" in these words,²⁹

²⁹E. Simon. op. cit. p. 132.

The new boy has a form master from the moment he sets foot in Ashmoor; he is in a building no larger than many a Junior School, and having about three hundred boys with its own Daddy (House Master). He has his house meetings and finally the full school assembly. In other words he is gradually taken into the admittedly amble bosom of our large family.

The inter-house rivalry, both in academic as well as in athletic areas does not seem to hinder the development of an overall "school spirit." The schools often encourage their pupils to wear a distinguishing school uniform and headteachers report that it is their opinion that this helps foster the school spirit. Inter-school programs of athletic meetings, football, cricket, hockey and netball matches are as much a part of the English scene as are the baseball and football schedules in the United States. They serve as outlets for the expression of the school's esprit de corps, though the competitive nature of the events sometimes over-stressed under the gaze of the supporting public, may tend to minimize the traditional "character-building qualities" often associated with British sports programs.

It has been noted then, that the comprehensive high school organization of secondary education is said to offer a number of advantages over the tripartite arrangement. The fact that it has been adopted as the method of organization in a mere handful of secondary schools points to a substantial body of criticism which has been levelled against the comprehensive school as the possible replacement of the present Grammar-Technical-Modern triad--criticism which apparently has influenced many

L.E.A.'s to continue to support a tripartite arrangement. Boreday³⁰ concludes that the lukewarmness towards comprehensives is a clue to the present nature of English society. Of the three functions for which the comprehensive school was created: (1) to insure equality of opportunity, (2) to reduce "social distance," (3) to create alternative profiles of achievement, Boreday asserts that the English are "not concerned with goals 2 and 3;" moreover, goal 3 is virtually impossible since the great majority [of the English] "champion an education dedicated to 'academic standards' which are considered the only worthwhile educational ideals." Without doubt, there is much justification in these observations. Recent English sociological investigations bear out the charge that a conservative educational attitude is held by many people in all social classes, and also the fact that the present tripartite structure serves as a vehicle of social class selection.

Against the Comprehensive Principle

The following criticisms have been brought against the comprehensive school and the comprehensive principle in general:

1. It is denied that the comprehensive school will necessarily enroll children from all social classes and provide that essential experience of living and working together. In certain cases where the comprehensive

³⁰G. Z. F. Boreday. "Equality, Equal Opportunity and Comprehensive Schools in England." Educational Forum. Vol. XXII. No. 2. June, 1950. pp. 133-30.

school proves to be the only secondary school within a certain area, then there is often less complete mixing of social classes than would be found in a grammar school.³¹ It is thought that the imposition of a comprehensive system, based as it often is on zoning, will lead to a narrowing of the "social amalgam" which the grammar school avoids by drawing its pupils from a wide area.

2. The advocates of a comprehensive system of secondary organization have profited from the general public's misconceptions with regard to the process of selection at 11 plus. The comprehensive school uses the selection test to evaluate the ability of its entrants and very often, on the results of that evaluation, it provides for them according to their abilities by the streaming of the pupils into different sections of the common course syllabus. It is not strictly correct, then, for supporters of a comprehensive program to talk about the abolition of the "iniquitous" selection examination as if this were a natural result of the adoption of the comprehensive principle.

3. In their desire to show the general public that the really able pupil is as well provided for as in the grammar school, the comprehensives have tended to stress the academic side of their programs ("the

³¹ Comprehensive Secondary Education. Incorporated Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools. London. September, 1950; and The Grammar Schools--A Reply to the Labor Party's Education Proposals. Incorporated Association of Headmasters. Gordon Square. London. 1950.

very front display of the shopwindow")³² to the detriment of the average and below average students who do not thrive on the watered-down version of the stimuli intended to motivate the abler child. The "pursuit of the academic" is illustrated by the following letter from a teacher in a London comprehensive high school.

It is obviously difficult for a staff, whose main concern is the success of pupils in the G. C. E. to devote sufficient time to the organization of their subjects and the special methods of approach which are needed for "modern" pupils.³³

Too many comprehensives feel that they are being judged by their G. C. E. successes and they therefore tend to "teach" for this examination. Bantock³⁴ sees the comprehensives as being in the unenviable position of "having to deliver the goods" in order to find favor and support from the general public, the "goods" being the academic prizes of the G. C. E. and University Scholarship awards. He re-emphasizes the point made by Eoreday that it is primarily in terms of academic achievement that the comprehensives are being judged by the public at large. It is in the light of this knowledge that such courses as Hebrew and Greek at G. C. E. "A" Level, part of an extremely wide academic offering in one

³²"Utopian Fallacies." Times Educational Supplement. March 14, 1953.

³³Letter to the Times Educational Supplement. September, 1953. p. 1,333. Also, "Comprehensive Difficulties--some Questions to Answer." Times Educational Supplement. August 29, 1953. p. 1,336.

³⁴H. T. Bantock. "Tripartite Reform." Times Educational Supplement. February 15, 1957.

London comprehensive, are often criticized as "shop-window" dressing to tempt the parent rather than provisions to meet the needs of the students.

4. It is suggested that the large size of the comprehensive school will either bring a host of new problems or will magnify existing problems in that:

- a. the "unprotected" life in the large un-selective school community will increase the chances of the child's liability to "catch larger doses of piratical miseducation" and encourage him to "sink deeper into stupefying boredom."³⁵
- b. the personal teacher-pupil relationship, so necessary at the secondary school stage particularly with the less able children, will be relatively harder to maintain in the larger school. The consequent lack of encouragement to the less able child might well lead to an increase in discipline problems. Many critics see the use of the house system in the majority of the comprehensives as an admission that the school is too large and that it has to be broken down into smaller units for effective management.
- c. misgivings are expressed as to whether the 15 year old modern leavers can effectively carry out perfect duties along

³⁵ Letter to the Times Educational Supplement. February 15, 1957.

side 13 year old future university students. Many of the comprehensive schools report that they make a point of drawing their prefects³⁶ from suitable seniors irrespective of which courses they are pursuing or when they intend to leave. However, it is questioned whether the 15 year old "modern" boy can really share the status of his 13 year old counterpart, and it is suggested by supporters of the tripartite system that the former would learn to carry responsibility better as a prefect in his own age group in a Modern School.

5. It is pointed out that there might be problems in teamwork with a staff composed of graduate and non-graduate, both having tended

³⁶ The prefect system, like the house system mentioned earlier, might be regarded as an essential characteristic of English secondary education, part of a heritage that has come down to present day schools from the great "public" schools of England. The prefects are elected from the older pupils, sometimes by the students themselves, sometimes by the staff. They hold a respected place in the day to day life of the school, and assist in such duties as supervision of conduct in and around the school, during the recess periods and in the canteen. Sometimes they look after classes until the arrival of form masters during the day. They are very prominent in the school clubs and societies. They have definite powers to assign work or detention time to disobedient students with the knowledge that if the punishment is given fairly (and it generally is) then they have the full support of the headmaster in their action. They generally have privileges such as permission to leave school earlier, a private room of their own, etc. They undoubtedly have the respect of the student body, since they very often are drawn from the ranks of those who succeed athletically as well as academically.

in the past to stay very much to themselves and now brought together under a single roof to work out a common scheme of work together.

6. It is regretted that by the merging of several schools into one large organization under the control of one person, there is a wastage of potential headteachers whose initiative and drive might have found expression in the organization and running of schools of their own. ✓

7. Finally, would-be reformers of the present tripartite system are accused of having too little regard for the contribution of the Grammar School to the society as a whole, and are charged with being "so heavily orientated to the future, to the new, to what might, in their limited conception be, that they are too frequently unaware of the virtues of what is."³⁷ A similar point is made by an American observer who comments,

In talks with representatives of the Labor Party I raised various questions [concerning planning for the comprehensive high schools in England] such as would immediately occur to one reasonably familiar with the points of strength and weaknesses of the American High School system, and was convinced that the "parity of esteem" ideal embodies familiar dangers, even probabilities, which its advocates tend to gloss over.³⁸

³⁷ Times Educational Supplement. March 7, 1958.

³⁸ H. W. Dodd. Government Assistance to Universities in Great Britain. Columbia University Press. 1952. pp. 124-35.

Summary

Comprehensive high schools do exist in England and Wales though they have not been developed in such numbers as to offer any real threat to the separate secondary system. Generally speaking, the educational organization of England and Wales remains solidly tripartite in nature. Those comprehensive high schools which do exist have many enthusiastic supporters. Those who have found fault in the comprehensive system of secondary organization have concentrated their criticisms upon the area of academic standards. Their claim that the academic work of the school suffers as a result of a comprehensive reorganization of separate grammar-technical-modern tracts is not born out in fact. This investigation has noted the extremely high academic standards reached in many areas of study among those schools examined.

The criticism that the comprehensive high school will not necessarily reduce distance between social strata is not so easily answered. There are no studies available in Great Britain from which an answer might be formulated. The next chapter however, will present evidence from a number of American investigations which seem to suggest that it is presumptuous to suppose that the English comprehensive high school per se, can effect major changes in social conditions or attitudes. ✓

CHAPTER VII

SOCIOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Throughout this review of trends and developments in English secondary education, emphasis has been placed upon educational rather than social aspects. The schools, particularly the Secondary Modern schools, have been examined in areas of curricula rather than in matters concerned with selection and preparation for particular occupational groups. Yet this latter aspect of the problem cannot be glossed over as being beyond the scope of a purely educational investigation. The relationship of the school system and the social structure is the key to the better understanding of the Secondary Modern school's gradual movement away from the initial freedom to enjoy educational experimentation, to its almost willing acceptance of the examination-dominated curriculum as exemplified by the Secondary Grammar school.

Education, as Broekover notes, is a part of the total social system, that is, "it acts within, and not upon, the social system."¹ As an institution within the total societal structure, the educational system performs or fulfills certain basic functions. It is generally

¹W. D. Broekover. Implications of Social Class Analysis
Analysis for a Social Theory of Education in E. D. Mercer and E. R.
Carter. Education and the Social Order. Rinehart. 1957. pp. 263-72.

agreed that two such basic functions are² (a) the conservative function, where the system acts as the preserver of the status quo, working towards social stability, and (b) the progressive function, "which involves the process of contributing toward the building of a better social order."³ The inter-relationship of the conservative and the progressive functions provides areas for wide investigation and discussion. Two different viewpoints are given by Brookover⁴ and Dent.⁵ The former suggests that "our traditional faith that education can change society is to a considerable extent based on the assumption that the educational system is free of the social forces which influence other aspects of society. There is little evidence to indicate that this is true." On the other hand, Dent affirms that it is "the educational system which conditions the development of society." ⁴ The history of the Secondary

² See F. C. Wegerer. Selected Theories of School and Society. Brown and Co. Iowa. 1933. pp. 171-74.

³ R. J. Havighurst and B. L. Neugarten. Society and Education. Allyn & Bacon, Inc. 1957. pp. 231-32, summarize these two basic functions as follows:

"Thus the educational system, being part of the culture, has two supplementary functions; to be a mirror that reflects the society as it is, and at the same time, to be an agent of social change and a force directed toward implementing the ideals of society."

See also W. E. Brookover. A Sociology of Education. American Book Co. 1953. pp. 37-77; in particular, "Social Change and Education." p. 71; and W. O. Stanley. Educational Social Integration. Teachers College, Columbia University. New York. 1953. p. 129.

⁴ W. E. Brookover. op. cit. p. 271.

⁵ H. C. Dent. A New Order in English Education. University of London Press. 1942. p. 15.

Modern school from 1944 to the present time seems to substantiate the position held by Brookover and others that, "purely educational reforms have foundered whenever they have set themselves up against the selective function of the schools."⁶ Yet there has undoubtedly been created a greater amount of social fluidity⁷ through the legislation of the 1944 Education Act, though as Glass points out, it will be forty or fifty years before we can begin to measure the change.⁸

The tripartite system of secondary education which has been adopted by the majority of the Local Education Authorities as the means of carrying out the requirements of the 1944 Act, must be seen therefore, in relation to the social structure of which it is a part. It has been suggested that the separate secondary system represents the selection ground for the hierarchy of occupational levels upon which the social class structure is founded.

⁶ C. Banks. op. cit. p. 243. See also:

M. W. Reichauer, W. B. Artell and R. E. Gross. The Sociology of the School. Thomas Y. Crowell. 1957. pp. 99-100.

W. Lloyd Warner. American Life. University of Chicago Press. 1953. p. 115.

R. J. Havighurst and D. L. Neugarten. op. cit. p. 204.

⁷ D. C. Marsh. The Changing Social Structure of England and Wales. 1871-1951. Routledge & Kegan Paul. London. 1953. pp. 200-11.

⁸ D. V. Glass. Social Mobility in Britain. Routledge & Kegan Paul. 1954. p. 21.

"The Spens and Norwood Committees envisaged three occupational levels and three types of ability and aptitude, yet enjoying parity of esteem in the eyes of parents, pupils and teachers. If, however, the prestige of a school derives from the social and economic status of the occupations for which it prepares, then equality of prestige is clearly impossible between the non-selective modern schools and the selective grammar schools.⁹

The selective function of the tripartite educational system, and its effect upon the development of the Secondary Modern School in particular, will be examined in greater detail.

The Tripartite System as a Selector for Occupational Levels

a. The selective function and the Secondary Grammar School--

It has already been shown that of the three members of the tripartite system, the Secondary Grammar School enjoys extremely high prestige with the great majority of parents, not primarily for its educational offerings, but because it performs a similar function to the public boarding schools in that it, "confers a social badge, and gives rights of entry to circles which people do as a matter of fact very much desire to enter."¹⁰

"The Grammar Schools," observes Banks, "still provide

⁹ O. Banks. op. cit. p. 242.

¹⁰ C. Norwood. The English Tradition of Education. Methuen. London. 1929. p. 132.

the chief avenue within the State system of education, to occupations of the highest social and economic standing."¹¹

If we accept Rodchaver's observation of occupation as "the criterion of class membership,"¹² then we can more fully realize the pressures which are exerted upon the grammar school from without, to discharge that most important function of selection for occupation. The effect of the type and level of education as it regulates the distance ascended in status class (as measured by occupation) from the fathers' status class, is demonstrated by Hall and Glass:

A grammar school education increases the distance ascended in the status scale . . . further education appears as a reinforcing rather than as a critical agent. The decisive stage in the educational background is the grammar school or its equivalent.¹³

The grammar school, then, is the primary means of upward mobility for the vast majority of the working class children who gain places there.

The degree of "upward striving" is shown by Himmelweit's¹⁴ investigations.

The occupational prestige questionnaire brought to light several interesting points In their vocational

¹¹ O. Banks. op. cit. p. 7.

¹² M. W. Rodchaver, op. cit. p. 89.

¹³ J. R. Hall and D. V. Glass. Educational and Social Mobility in D. V. Glass. op. cit. pp. 291-307.

¹⁴ H. T. Himmelweit. Social Status and Secondary Education since the 1944 Act in D. V. Glass. op. cit. p. 141.

expectation and wishes, grammar school boys, especially of the working class, show a marked social striving. 63% Lower Working class intended to take up at least Lower-Middle class occupations, while 75% of the Upper-Working class boys chose occupations from Hall-Jones grades 1-3 (middle-middle class) which would certainly require attaining the school-leaving certificate and other formal educational qualifications.

The educational function of the grammar school appears to take second place to the social function. The extreme academic nature of much of the curriculum of the contemporary grammar school does not necessarily indicate the educational values either of its staff of teachers or its board of governors. The explanation lies elsewhere.

The persistence of the academic tradition in secondary education is seen as something more fundamental than the influence, sinister or otherwise, of teachers and administrators. It is the vocational qualification of the academic curriculum which enables it to exert such pressure on all forms of secondary education.¹⁵

Banks goes on to pinpoint the source of vocational emphasis in the secondary institutions,

It was the employers and not the universities which did most to foster the tyranny of "Matric" upon the schools, and to slow down the development of alternative courses of a non-academic nature . . . The struggle to substitute an internal examination for the external School Certificate Examination (now the C. C. E.) has been frustrated by the demands from parents and employers alike for an external leaving certificate.¹⁶

¹⁵ O. Banks. op. cit. p. 248.

¹⁶ O. Banks. op. cit. p. 203. The "Matric" was the old matriculation level of the School Certificate Examination, where something like 5 passes and 2 credits were the minimum requirements for

Small wonder that Martin, in his inquiry into parents' preferences in relation to the type of secondary school reported as follows,¹⁷

Preferred Type of Secondary School

Father's Occupational Grade	Number	Percent Preferring				
		Grammar	Technical	Modern	Other	Don't Know No Preference
Professional	104	81.7%	3.8%	1.9%	10.6%	1.9%
Clerical	104	77.8	9.6	4.8	2.8	4.8
Supervisory	225	60.7	19.2	9.1	2.7	3.2
Skilled	630	40.2	23.0	13.9	0.0	13.9
Unskilled	309	43.4	19.4	23.9	1.0	12.3
Total	1,402	54.1%	19.1%	16.0%	2.1%	9.0%

The same investigator noted the emphasis placed by parents in the lower-class groups on the value of educational training as a means of upward mobility. Whereas 43% of the manual group (skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers) chose "education" as the most important single factor associated with upward mobility, the professional group demonstrated much less belief in this factor in so far as only 23% gave it primary placing among some five or six factors which were being

matriculation. English, mathematics and a foreign language had to be among the subjects taken. Metric was regarded as a necessary prerequisite to a white collar job.

¹⁷ F. M. Martin. Parents' Preferences in Secondary Education. In D. V. Glass. op. cit. pp. 100-74.

sidered.¹⁸ The same parents (lower class groups) while concerned in their children's education up to the age of 16, were not particularly interested in higher education for their sons or daughters. Martin reports as follows:

Preferred School Leaving Age for Their Own Children¹⁹

Status	Percent Preferring					Mean Age
	14-15	16-17	18-19	20 Plus Don't Know		
Professional	0%	13%	38%	49%	3/4	18.8
Salaried	11	42	23	24	3	17.5
Manual	27	33	18	11	6	16.6

The pressures from parents and employers will undoubtedly continue to shape the curriculum in the Secondary Grammar School. Such pressure is seen as a force operating in the direction of greater stratification."²⁰ Glass supports the same conclusion,

the selection process will tend to reinforce the prestige of occupations already high in social status and to divide the population into streams which many may come to regard--indeed, already regard--as distinct as sheep and goats.²¹

¹⁸ F. M. Martin. Some Subjective Aspects of Social Stratification in D. V. Glass. op. cit. pp. 51-75.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ W. B. Broekover. op. cit. p. 272.

²¹ D. V. Glass. op. cit. pp. 25-26.

b. The selective function and the Secondary Schools School--

a increase in social mobility since the Second World War has, without doubt, been aided by the great extension of educational opportunity brought about by the 1944 Education Act. Not only does increased mobility promote economic and social efficiency in the community and the nation as a whole, but, it "reduces feelings of personal frustration and promotes greater possibility of social harmony."²² For both reasons indicated, it is a highly desirable aspect of the modern progressive community.

However, the framework within which educational opportunity is being extended is causing anxiety to both educators and parents alike. Stress occurs when the educational structure, designed to provide for educational differences, becomes the vehicle of social forces acting in opposition to educational goals. More specifically, in a desire to promote parity of esteem by the provision of differentiated curricula in separate secondary schools, the Ministry of Education failed to foresee that both the curricula and the schools would become agents of social forces beyond the control of the Ministry, administrators or teachers. The tripartite system from the very beginning was too neat administratively and too absurd psychologically to escape the pressures which have altered its basic function and thus removed its very *raison d'être*.

²² Ibid. p. 24.

It is now primarily a selective instrument for social promotion rather than a means of providing worthwhile educational experiences for children of secondary school age.

Moreover, it is, as we have seen, based upon extremely questionable presumptions concerning grouping for the provision of special courses for individual differences. Both American and British research has indicated this underlying weakness.²³ Yates²⁴ summarizes contemporary opinion as follows:

. . . evidence²⁵ concerning individual differences in rates and pattern of educational progress suggests that the grouping of children in terms of such general measures as mental age or intelligence quotient does not necessarily solve the problem of securing a homogeneous group for teaching purposes. Such, indeed, is the variability in the rhythm of development, not only between one child and another, but during the course of any given child's growth, that they claim that nothing short of individualized instruction . . . can produce satisfactory results.

The Secondary Modern School, it will be recalled, was charged with the responsibility of avoiding at all costs a line of development which in any

²³ Perhaps the best summary is that of C. M. Fleming.

Teaching--A Psychological Analysis. Methuen. 1959. It is sad to note the efforts that have been expended in British research to arrive at findings which have been available in the United States since 1931.

For further details, see bibliography of S. L. Hammond.

Homogeneous Grouping and Educational Results. Department of School Services and Publications. Wesleyan University, Connecticut. Curriculum Letter No. 46.

²⁴ A. Yates. Educational Research. Vol. 1. No. 3. June, 1959. pp. 37-47.

²⁵ Olson and others. University of Michigan.

way resembled its academic counterpart, the Secondary Grammar School. It was to go its own way, and by experimentation, to work out appropriate curricula and methodology to suit its particular purposes. This investigation has noted that from an early date in its history, the Secondary Modern School was subjected to pressures demanding change, not away from the academic curriculum of the Grammar School, but towards it. The vocational qualifications demanded by parents and industry have resulted in the rapid development of G. C. E. courses in very many of the Modern Schools, and as with the 11 plus reclassification test, the G. C. E. results in the Secondary Modern Schools are becoming the measure of the schools' success and efficiency in the eyes of the parents and employers.

However questionable all this may be educationally, the plain fact of the matter is that if academic qualifications are to be the means of rising in occupational level, and thus in social class, the parents of over 70% of the English secondary school children are going to see to it that their children are going to have such qualifications if at all humanly possible. It would appear to be reasonable to predict that within a continued tripartite system, the trend towards more academic work, hinged upon the content of the G. C. E., will increase rather than decrease in the Modern schools. In other words, they will move further away from their original position as envisaged in the 1944 Act.

If the Secondary Modern School were able to offer equality of opportunity (equal, that is, to the Grammar School), then the problem of prestige would be eradicated. The question of "parity of esteem" is, as has been demonstrated, dependent upon changes in accepted social values rather than educational enactment. Certainly, the parents of Secondary Modern children will look for wider chances for promotion into desirable occupations than has so far been possible.

An examination of the percentages of Grammar and Modern School children entering Universities and Training Colleges in 1932, reveals the finality of the decision at 11 plus, as far as the chances of the Secondary Modern child are concerned.

Destination of School Leavers Aged 14 and over in England and Wales during the Year Ending July 31, 1932²⁶

Type of School	Total Leaving	University	Training College
Grammar	56,381	8,033	4,967
Secondary Modern and All Age Schools	300,623	22	54

²⁶ Compiled and adapted from D. C. Marsh. op. cit.
Table 49. p. 205.

The table shows that whereas the entrance to Universities from the Grammar Schools is something like one in ten, the figure drops to less than one in 17,000 of children leaving non-selective secondary schools for Universities. The importance of the 11 plus examination and its effect upon the child's whole future is well illustrated.

As percentages, the figures in the table on page 152 are:

Boys and girls leaving Secondary Grammar Schools in England and Wales for Universities in 1952	9.3000%
Boys and girls leaving Secondary Grammar Schools in England and Wales for Training Colleges in 1952	5.7000%
Boys and girls leaving Secondary Modern and All-Age Schools in England and Wales for Universities in 1952	0.0000%
Boys and girls leaving Secondary Modern Schools and All-Age Schools in England and Wales for Training Colleges in 1952	0.0150%

In view of the increased success of Secondary Modern children in the C. C. E., there is every reason to suppose that more are gaining places in the Universities and Training Colleges than the figures for 1952 indicate. No figures are available to show that 1959 entrances to the Universities and Training Colleges from the Secondary Modern Schools.

It has been suggested that only when the Secondary Modern Schools can compete academically with the Grammar and the Technical schools will they enjoy "parity of esteem."

The admission of children in the higher ability range to the modern schools is likely to be the consequence of good modern school work rather than its cause Before they can hope to attract children of higher ability they must produce results worthy of comparison with those obtained in grammar and technical schools and they must do this with children available to the modern schools here and now.²⁷

On an academic basis this is clearly impossible. Yet this is precisely what is being attempted by the Secondary Modern Schools as every year, more academic programs centered on the C. C. E. syllabus are instituted, and more subject-specialist graduates are sought by harassed headmasters to carry out the courses.

If it is held that the educational system is merely the mirror of contemporary society, "reflecting prevailing trends in social policy,"²⁸ that is, if the conservative function is seen as being completely dominant, then it might well be concluded that there is no way of escaping the giddy educational vortex in which the present secondary system appears to be rotating. On the other hand however, to admit the strength of the forces tending toward the preservation of the status quo is not to concede to the proposition that they alone are operative.

²⁷J. Mander. Old Battles and New Wars. Newnes. London. 1943. p. 25.

On similar lines, another observer noted that the C. C. E. "boosts secondary modern morale precisely because it is the C. C. E., the Grammar School examination. Replace it and you add another symbol of discrimination between the schools." "Comment in Brief!" Times Educational Supplement. July 3, 1959.

²⁸R. J. Havighurst and E. L. Neugarten. op. cit. p. 264.

Broadly speaking, it is agreed that "education functions 'in' society and not 'on' society," but in the very process of functioning 'in' society, does it not thereby also function 'on' society? As Glass²⁹ puts it,

. . . education cannot by itself create the social structure of a country. Nevertheless it is a contributory and re-inforcing factor . . . [therefore] we must not "take the world as we find it" and ground our educational system in the existing social structure. In the schools, as in the wider society of which they are a part, we must deliberately make that closer community; it will not create itself.

The final question to be raised concerns the active role of the educational system operating as a force directed towards the implementation of the ideals of a society.

Will the adoption of a comprehensive high school system make for the closer-knit community, and by eliminating or lessening the selective function of education, thereby permit a widening of educational opportunity for a greater number of secondary children?

Here, implications from a representative sample of the vast number of American studies in this area, will be sought in the hope that in some small way, a tentative interpretation might be beneficial to future English secondary school planning.

Summary

The selective process, as has been noted, exerts an extraordinary influence upon the whole secondary system, an influence which

²⁹D. V. Glass. op. cit. pp. 27-28.

say the least, is educationally unhealthy. Not only are children "typed" and segregated at the age of eleven, but the purpose of the curricula in two members of the triad (and increasingly in the third member too), appears to aim primarily at the provision of vocational qualifications rather than educational experiences to encourage wider social skills. The present secondary system might well be cited as a monument to misplaced values.

The most important elements in a society are its human beings; to stunt their capacities in order to facilitate social organisation is to put the cart before the horse.³⁰

Barnard notes that "our educational system will have to be greatly modified if we are to rid ourselves entirely of this habit of thinking about education in terms of class."³¹

With some qualifications,³² it is the firm conviction of a large number of educators and political leaders in England that the common secondary school is the answer to many of the problems, both educational and social, which plague the present secondary school organization and the society at large. The infamous 11 plus examination

³⁰ C. Waterman. The Three Spheres of Society. Faber & Faber. 1946. p. 103.

³¹ H. C. Barnard. Short History of English Education. University of London Press. 1937. p. 373.

³² See C. Fanks. op. cit. p. 245.

will be eliminated, curricula extensions, free from the tyranny of the external examination, will be possible, and "parity of esteem" will, as far as the State System is concerned, be a reality.

Furthermore, social tension, it is hoped, will be reduced, for where "segregation results inevitably in lack of mutual understanding, narrowness of outlook, and the formation of castes," the comprehensive high school should "provide adequately for diversity of individual aptitudes, yet unite all as members of a single community."³³

An investigation of American data will aid the resolution of some of the opinions which are commonly held concerning the function of the comprehensive high school and its relation to the wider social structure.

Implications from American Investigations

In an attempt to resolve some of the basic beliefs currently held in Great Britain regarding the possible effects of the adoption of a common secondary school structure upon the school community and society as a whole, three questions might be asked of the American comprehensive high school system and its relation to the wider societal structure. Implications for the future guidance of English secondary

³³ H. C. Bent. op. cit. pp. 57-58.

See also Learning to Live. Labor Party. London. June,

school organization might be drawn from the findings of some recent American investigations.

The first question concerns the effect of the comprehensive principle of school organization upon the immediate school community. Does this particular system of educational organization make for a closer-knit community? In other words, is such an educational structure a positive force in the reduction of social distance?

Secondly, whereas the present tripartite system in Great Britain has been shown to act primarily in the capacity of a "sorting and selecting agency"³⁴ for occupational (and thus social) level, does the comprehensive school system necessarily eliminate this social function of the school? Put another way, does such an educational structure "strip education of its selective function?"

Finally, having intimated that the tripartite system of secondary school organization functions predominantly as a "preserver of the status quo," is there any justification in the assumption that a comprehensive system tends to act more as a force directed toward "the implementation of the ideals of society?" In other words, does such an educational structure function more as a "mirror reflecting

³⁴R. J. Havighurst and E. L. Neugarten. op. cit. p. 223.

society" or as "an agent of social change?"³⁵

The Comprehensive School and
the Reduction of Social Distance

There is divergence of opinion regarding the comprehensive school's ability to function as a positive force in the reduction of social distance, both within the immediate school society and within the wider community.

Bereday claims that,

The lessons of the American high schools confirms the proposition that mixing children of different social classes can shorten the psychological distance . . . within any residential area and within most socio-economic groups, people of most diverse background and belief have come to learn to accept each other as equivalent if not as equal.³⁶

He goes on to point out that,

The comprehensive system realizes that academic standards are only one of many desirable profiles of achievement thus opening several channels of equivalent opportunity. Care has been taken to offer wide choices in curricula studies to avoid the "frustration of a single vertical hierarchy of merit Instead of one Buckingham Palace, an endeavor has been made to build a city in which many more can rejoice in the possession of their particular skyscraper.

³⁵ See D. M. Worcester and E. R. Carr. op. cit. pp. 261-11. John Dewey. Education and Social Change.

The school as an intelligent participator in the production of a future society, or as Dewey puts it, the school:

" . . . may select the newer scientific, technological, and cultural forces that are producing change in the old order, as their allies."

³⁶ G. Z. F. Bereday. "Equality, Social Cohesiveness and Comprehensive Schools in England." Educational Forum. Vol. XIII. No. 2. June, 1953. pp. 133-33.

Hereday is enthusiastically supported by Holmes, an English observer, who sees the common school structure as the producer of "a large educational middle-class of men and women. . . trained far beyond elementary level." Holmes concludes that,

Nobody who has had the opportunity of observing the strength and vitality that are thereby given to the American community can fail to want to build a similar educational middle-class in Britain, where it is still woefully small.³⁷

There is however, conflicting evidence introduced by a number of educational and sociological studies. It does not appear to follow that the gathering of children into one common school necessarily eliminates or even reduces those differences between children which spring from the norms and values of the particular classes to which they belong. In certain respects, these differences are reinforced rather than reduced. Stendler shows that by the time they reach 8th grade, children are acutely

. . . aware of social class symbols . . . they rate the class position of their schoolmates on the basis of home and family, occupation of the father, clothes, and manners . . . and they choose friends largely from within their own class groups and there is little interaction between upper-middle and working class children. They connect favorable items of behavior with uppers and unfavorable with lowers . . .³⁸

³⁷ B. Holmes. "The Reform of English Education under the 1944 Education Act." Year Book of Education. 1956. pp. 329-37.

³⁸ C. B. Stendler. Children of Frostown. Urbana. University of Illinois. 1949. p. 95.

See also B. L. Newgarten. The Democracy of Childhood in W. Lloyd Warner. Democracy in Jonesville. Harper. 1947. pp. 77-83.

She goes on to show that the children's out-of-school activities tend to be conditioned by the class position of their parents. In the types of out-of-school activities cited by Stendler, there would appear to be very little opportunity for social contact between the upper-middle class and the working class child. Another observer reports that the middle class parents exert a strenuous push to motivate their children not only to study their lessons, but "to avoid lower class playmates . . . they keep steadily before the child . . . the status goals of a 'nice' play group and social clique."³⁹

Hollingshead⁴⁰ demonstrates that the percentage of participation or non-participation in extracurricular activities is very strongly associated with social class position.

Social Class	Percent Participation	Percent Non-participation
I and II	100.0%	00.0%
III	75.0	24.7
IV	57.4	42.6
V	27.0	73.0

³⁹ Allison Davis. Social Learning and Social Class. From B. O. Smith and others. Readings in the Social Aspects of Education. Interstate Printers. Danville, Illinois. 1951. pp. 92-95.

⁴⁰ A. E. Hollingshead. Midtown's Youth. John Wiley & Sons. New York. 1949. p. 201.

Furthermore, each club, reports Hollingshead, is class-graded. For example:

Homemakers' Club	Class IV girls membership approximately 60% Class III girls membership approximately 2-5%
French Club	Class IV girls membership--only 2 girls belonged. Class II girls membership approximately 60%
Library Club	Heavily weighted with Class III, approximately 71%
Future Farmers of America	Class III boys approximately 60%.

The reported⁴¹ intraclass and interclass dating patterns of Elmtown boys and girls were found to be related to the class identity of the family. Brockover comments on Hollingshead's findings as follows,

The majority of dates at all class levels occurred between class equals. It is apparent that the class orientation of the interaction among the school youth includes the attachments between the sexes as well as the friendships within either sex category.⁴²

Hollingshead allows a class IV girl to demonstrate the effect of the social class system in her comprehensive high school as she sees its operation in extracurricular activities,

⁴¹A. B. Hollingshead. op. cit. p. 231.

⁴²W. B. Brockover. A Sociology of Education. American Book Company. 1955. pp. 103-04. See pp. 93-103 for class differences in school activities.

. . . . There is a group of girls here who think they are higher than us. They look down on us. They have a club that is supposed to be outside of school, but it's really in the school. They just go from one club to the other and hog all of the offices. . . . I'd like to go to the dances, and things like that, but they make us feel like we're not wanted If we go to the high school dances, nobody will dance with us. They dance among themselves and have a good time and we're nobody

Mercer⁴³ summarizes the points that have been made so far concerning the common school and its effectiveness as a force in the reduction of social distance.

Studies show that the school reflects the social-class system of the community. The various social classes identified in the community can also be identified in the school; moreover, the school serves to perpetuate these distinctions.

Though the comprehensive school organization might initiate⁴⁴ more understanding between social classes, there appears to be little evidence to support the view that the comprehensive school per se necessarily acts as a positive force in the reduction of social distance or makes for a closer-knit community.

⁴³D. B. Mercer and D. R. Carr. op. cit. p. 261.

⁴⁴C. Banks. op. cit. p. 245.

"The most that can be claimed for the common school is that it will spread a greater measure of understanding between different strata. There is no evidence that it will necessarily diminish either the differential prestige accorded to the various social and occupational levels, or the antagonism which derives from opposing interests or divergent functions."

The Comprehensive School and
Selection for Occupational Level

The second question asked of the American high school is concerned with its function as a selecting agency for occupational level.

If, as Bereday asserts, the comprehensive organization offers "many desirable profiles of achievement . . . opening several channels of equivalent opportunity," then it might be concluded that such an organization is a definite improvement upon the contemporary British structure, "dedicated to academic standards . . . the only worthwhile educational ideal."⁴⁵

What has to be demonstrated to substantiate the claim for the comprehensive school is that the wide variety in curricula choice does, in fact, open "channels of equivalent opportunity." The Secondary Modern Schools in England and Wales have been frantically "building" alternative structures to the "one Buckingham Palace of academic study" for over a decade, but such edifices, apparently, have elevators leading nowhere, or so it is believed by the parents of those for whom such towers were built.

An investigation of the various "skyscrapers of equivalent opportunity" in the limited sample of American comprehensive schools examined here reveals that they tend to select for occupational level;

⁴⁵ G. Z. F. Bereday. op. cit. p. 136.

they seem to select their occupants by social class, and they tend to reinforce the "social distance" barriers between the students themselves.

Research indicates that enrollment in various courses offered in the high school is related very significantly to the social-class position of the students concerned. As Hollingshead reports, "that is, each course acts either to attract or repel students in different prestige classes."⁴⁶

Percent of Each Social Class in Flintown High School
Enrolled in Each of Three Curricula

Curriculum	----- Social Class -----			
	I and II	III	IV	V
College Preparatory	64	27	9	4
General	36	51	58	58
Commercial	0	21	33	36

Warner and Lunt⁴⁷ show a similar distribution of curricula choice among the students of Yankee City High School in each of four curricula.

⁴⁶A. B. Hollingshead. op. cit. pp. 168-170.

⁴⁷W. Lloyd Warner and P. S. Lunt. Yankee City. New Haven. Yale University Press. 1934. p. 364. Table shown in W. D. Brookover. op. cit. p. 86.

See also: Vernon C. Bellmann. "Relationship between Ability, Socio-Economic Status and Choice of Secondary School." Journal of Educational Sociology. No. 9. Vol. 29. May, 1953. pp. 395-397.

Robert Jay Thomas. "An Empirical Study of High School Drop-Outs in Regard to Ten Possibly Related Factors." Journal of Educational Sociology. No. 1. Vol. 28. September, 1954. pp. 11-16.

Curriculum	-----Social Class-----				
	Lower Upper	Upper Middle	Lower Middle	Upper Lower	Lower Lower
Latin	25	68	16	21	12
Science	75	19	11	25	14
General	0	7	18	22	20
Commercial	0	5	55	32	54

There is no deliberate attempt on the school's part to differentiate between students in regard to their social background and the types of courses which they elect to follow in their high school programs. If anything, the very contrary is true,

Our attempts to design various types of school curricula to provide for individual differences have apparently increased the barriers rather than trained individuals who can move freely in our social system.⁴⁸

Rodehaver substantiates this observation,

Programs tailored to the assumed requirements of children from the various social classes represent a hierarchy of prestige values. Even where guidance programs exist, children may be advised to pursue courses of study that will be "appropriate to their station in life." There is no particular malice in this procedure. If class promotion calls for higher education, the student will be directed into the college preparatory course. If on the other hand, it appears likely that his earnings will be needed at home, the student will be encouraged to take commercial, home economics, or industrial arts courses.⁴⁹

⁴⁸W. B. Brookover. School Curricula and Social Class. Quoted in Mercer and Carr. Education and the Social Order. Minchart. New York. 1937. pp. 266-273.

⁴⁹M. W. Rodehaver, et al. op. cit. pp. 99-100.

The comprehensive high school is seen then, to act as a sorting and selecting agency, and the sorting, as Havighurst⁵⁰ points out, is done in respect to two quite different characteristics, namely, the child's ability and the child's social class background.

Of the types of programs offered in the high school, the college preparatory course appears to carry considerably more prestige with both parents and teachers⁵¹ than either the general or the commercial course. No study known to this investigator has indicated that these three courses might be regarded as "channels of equivalent opportunity" in any sense of the phrase.

The college preparatory course is generally seen as leading to a higher level of training, and consequently, a higher status position and occupational level. So much store is apparently set in the relationship between the academic course and the process of upward mobility, that, as Brookover illustrates,

⁵⁰R. J. Havighurst and E. L. Neagarten. op. cit. p. 200.

⁵¹W. D. Brookover. op. cit. p. 96.

"In addition to the parents, the teachers also provide the model for status differentiation between curricula . . . they place high value on the type of education (college preparatory) which enabled them to attain their positions It is not unusual for a teacher of English, mathematics, languages, or science to look with disdain on both teachers and students in vocational courses."

Parents who envision high status positions for their children generally insist on their enrolling in the college preparatory course. They insist that their own children must prepare for college regardless of academic ability.⁵²

Furthermore, the most generally expressed expectation from the educational system is shown to be overwhelmingly vocational in nature. Parents seem to wish primarily that the educational system prepare their child for, "a particular occupation or the acquisition of skills necessary to earn more money." Moreover, "the American people are acutely aware of the association between schooling and vocational success."⁵³

The Comprehensive School and the Status Quo

Insofar as this present study has cited evidence to show the primary role of the comprehensive school to be that of reflecting community norms and values, the final question concerning its function as a "preserver" or as a "disturber" of the status quo, might be presumed to have been already answered. Broekover notes,

⁵²ibid.

⁵³W. D. Broekover. op. cit. pp. 46-47. The National Poll cited indicated that in reply to the question concerning the expectations from education, 66% responses were concerned with "preparation for a better job, a trade or profession, greater earning power," for the son, and 46% responses similarly for the daughter.

Certainly, under the present system of educational control, there is little likelihood that the schools can assume a major role in the reorganization of the economic, power, or other systems which are basic to the present class system.⁵⁴

Although, as Havighurst⁵⁵ comments, much depends upon the individual school, the community and its allied organizations, this does not however alter the overall picture of the American comprehensive high school as the "mirror reflecting society"⁵⁶ rather than the "agent of social change implementing the ideals of society."

⁵⁴D. D. Mercer and E. R. Carr. op. cit. p. 271. W. D. Brockover. The Implications of Social Class Analysis for a Social Theory of Education.

⁵⁵R. J. Havighurst and B. L. Neugarten. op. cit. p. 279.

"The relation of the educational system to social policy . . . productive of a healthy balance between social mobility and social stability can only be if it is conducted with intelligence, devotion to democratic values, and understanding of the social structure. There is no school program that works toward this end automatically."

⁵⁶" . . . the school is expected, by those satisfied with the status quo to transmit the unmodified norms of society to the new generation. In general the control of the school rests with people of this persuasion. It must be recognized that most Americans want the social norms undisturbed, although this is not in harmony with their desire for a better world."

W. D. Brockover. A Sociology of Education. American Book Company. 1955. p. 75. See also Brockover's summary of Social Change and Education. p. 77.

Summary

The implications of the American data cited above appear to be that: (a) The comprehensive organization of secondary schooling per se will not "strip education of its selective function" any more than modifications in the tripartite system will. (b) There is no justification for the belief that the offering of various types of educational programs within one school will automatically bring to them the high prestige which is associated with the academic course,⁵⁷ be it the "college preparatory course" in the United States or the "grammar school G. C. E. course" in Great Britain.

Both in America and in England, the academic program particularly appeals to parents and students as the essential ladder to higher education and thus to higher occupational levels. It is its social rather than its educational function which singles out the academic curriculum for high prestige rating with parents, students and employers alike.

The valuable lesson to be gained from the small number of American studies cited (studies which may not be too representative despite the prominence attached to their findings)⁵⁸ is that it is the

⁵⁷ For the students' rating of the academic courses see W. Lloyd Warner, Democracy in Townsville, Harper & Bros. 1949, p. 227.

⁵⁸ "The handful of studies we have . . . do not allow us to triangulate the entire area or even readily to interpret the data we already have; thus we know that Middletown and Blantown are (or were) to some degree company towns and possibly not representative even of their regions." David Riesman, Constraint and Variety in American Civilization, University of Nebraska Press, 1953, p. 111.

height of presumption for English educators to see the comprehensive high school as a sort of elixir for some of their social and most of their educational problems.

The selective function of education has been seen to work through the medium of the comprehensive school structure as it does through the tripartite system, bringing to both, the problem of conflicting educational and social forces.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY

The 1944 Education Act represented a tremendous step forward in English education for it marked the beginning of a unified system. The dual system which it superseded had consisted of the secondary schools (really the equivalent of the present Grammar schools) and the public elementary schools. The latter were in every way inferior to the secondary schools in terms of buildings, equipment, curricular offerings and quality of teaching staff, but nevertheless had the responsibility of providing two or three years of education beyond the Junior schools for the children of the lower classes. It will be recalled that the Public Elementary School was originally established for the children of the "laboring poor."

In one mighty sweep, the 1944 Act called for the full recognition of the principle of "secondary education for all" and charged the Local Education Authorities with the responsibility of seeing that the specific recommendations of the Act were carried out as soon as possible. The tripartite system of separate secondary schools which already existed in many areas was seen by the majority of the L. E. A.'s to provide the most convenient framework

through which they might fulfill their obligations, and overnight as it were, the old Public Elementary schools became the new Secondary Moderns. Such was scarcely an ideal beginning, but many Authorities enthusiastically got down to the task of replanning the whole approach to the child, aided for the first time in many cases by a genuine consideration of his needs and his interests. The philosophy guiding a number of Local Authorities was examined in Chapter V and a summary of some of their specific proposals for the reorganized curriculum is provided in the Appendix.

The enthusiasm of many Local Education Authorities was reflected in that early period of Secondary Modern development, a time that might well be called the period of experimentation. Headmasters and teachers were wisely given freedom to try out new methods and new approaches to the student. The second part of Chapter V deals with some of that experimentation. All too soon, however, criticism of the type of work being attempted in the Secondary Moderns was voiced by parents and employers, and the 1949 Ministry of Education Report called for a replacement of "trills" by a more academic approach to subject matter. The third part of Chapter V dealt with the main developments in the curriculum of the Secondary Modern School from 1949 onwards. The continuation of an academic approach was seen to result in the spectacular growth of special courses leading to external examinations, the most important of

which, the General Certificate of Education, had previously been considered beyond the ability of the Secondary Modern child.

Though the tripartite division of secondary schools is the main organizational pattern of most of the Local Educational Authorities of England and Wales, there are nevertheless, a growing number of areas in which the comprehensive high school is the medium through which the secondary school children receive their education.

Chapter VI was devoted to a survey of the work of the English comprehensive high schools and a summary of the main criticisms which have been brought against their widespread adoption as the means of implementing the requirements of the 1944 Education Act.

In Chapter VII, an attempt was made to introduce a number of sociological considerations which might throw light upon the general developmental trends of the tripartite system as a whole. A number of sociological studies in post-war Great Britain have noted the growing association between occupation and social class on the one hand and occupation and educational level on the other. Chapter VII showed how the selection for the occupational hierarchy is centered upon the educational structure as it exists in Great Britain at the present time. The selection process for entrance into the secondary system (the 11 plus examination) as described in Chapter III and the development of the C. G. E. courses in the Modern schools as revealed in Chapter V, are but two indications

of the working of selective function for occupational level through the medium of the tripartite system.

In condemning this very strong association between the present tripartite system and the occupational hierarchy, an interesting question was posed. Would the institution of a comprehensive high school system lead to a lessening of the selective function of the educational system and thereby permit a widening of educational opportunity for a greater number of children? Lack of suitable studies of the small number of comprehensive schools at present in existence in England and Wales led the questioner to examine a representative sample from the wealth of American studies of the American high school and its relation to the social structure.

From the evidence examined, it appears to be generally accepted that the comprehensive system does not necessarily have any advantages over the tripartite system where it is used merely as a more elastic framework through which the selection function can work to promote an intellectual and thus occupational elite. The college preparatory course in the United States carries similar prestige to its English counterpart, the G. C. E. course, in this respect. There is little support, therefore, for the claims that the comprehensive school per se will bring solutions to the educational and social problems which confront the British at the present time.

There was ample evidence, however, in many of the American

udies examined, that the comprehensive high school can successfully resist the strangling that develops when the association between occupation and education is allowed to unduly influence curricular offerings and the internal organization of the school itself. (It is the successful American high school in this respect which this investigator would like to see serve as a model for a reorganized English educational structure.) Apart from the theoretical weaknesses upon which the tripartite system is founded there are more basic errors which such a system blatantly condones, errors concerning the function of the school in the democratic society. The headmaster of a successful English comprehensive school expresses the fundamental flaw in the separate secondary system with these words:

. . . education for democracy involves a complementary idea of the school in the right relationship with the community it serves, and it is as this comes that we move towards the educative society . . . selection and segregation by types at eleven violates the two fundamental principles upon which an enlightened democratic education must be founded: respect for individual personality and the principle of growth, applied to the whole educational structure.¹

It is in support of these later observations that this writer draws the following conclusions from this inquiry and makes a number of recommendations for the improvement of the educational structure of Great Britain.

¹The National Union of Teachers. Inside the Comprehensive School. London. Schoolmaster Publishing Co. p. 139.

Conclusions

The Tripartite System

The tripartite system of secondary schools is considered inappropriate to the needs of Great Britain, a country which is in the process of vast social and economic change. The separate secondary organization stands condemned for the following reasons:

1. It cannot be justified on historical grounds since it was neither sanctioned nor recommended as the required structure for English secondary education by the 1944 Education Act.
2. It cannot be justified on psychological grounds. The theory of discrete "types" of children is completely untenable in the light of an overwhelming body of evidence to the contrary presented by recent research both in the United States of America and Great Britain.
3. It cannot be justified on social grounds. It has been seen to reflect and help perpetuate a form of social stratification which has no place in a modern democratic society.
4. As an organizational pattern, the tripartite system has lent itself to gross misuse. An educational system should consider the task of neutralizing the maldistribution of educational opportunity as one of its many varied aims in a well integrated program. The tripartite system has allowed this one aim (however worthy it might be) to dominate over all other considerations. In consequence, the

whole process of education has been seen to consist of diagnostic selection, of grading, shuffling, segregating and rewarding according to ability.² This is surely looking through the wrong end of the "educational" telescope.

The 11 Plus Examination and the Selection for Secondary Schools

An important part of the sifting and grading process is the 11 plus examination which consists of a battery of diagnostic tests given to each child at the end of his Primary school career. The vast amount of research which has been undertaken to perfect this examination as an instrument of selection has failed to improve upon an admitted 10% error in allocation to the various secondary schools. Apart from its lack of precision as an instrument of selection, the 11 plus examination is to be thoroughly condemned for its pernicious effect upon the curriculum of the Primary schools, where too often, the last two years are devoted to the practice of techniques in arithmetical and linguistic skills solely for the purpose of gaining sufficient marks to enter the Secondary Grammar Schools.

The Secondary Grammar Schools

In curriculum development, the Secondary Grammar School has for the most part failed to keep abreast of the tremendous

² See A. V. Judges (ed.). Looking Forward in Education. Faber and Faber. London. 1955. p. 51. For a satirical analysis for this trend, see Michael Young. The Rise of the Meritocracy, 1886-1933: The New Elite of Our Social Revolution. Random House. 1959.

social and economic changes which have taken place in Great Britain since the second World War. The development of the Welfare State, for example, and the vital need at the present time for skilled technologists and engineers have had little effect upon the "traditional" grammar school curriculum. The necessity for an ever-emerging curriculum, aware of and modified by social, economic and political considerations, arouses scant enthusiasm among those educators who see the grammar school curriculum as something static, inflexible, suitable for all time. Ignoring the 90% of the students who do not go on to the universities, the percentage of those students who withdraw from the English Secondary Grammar Schools before taking the G. C. E. examination is sufficient indication that the real needs of the majority of the students are not being met by the type of program generally provided in most Grammar Schools.

The Secondary Modern Schools

The type of Secondary Modern school envisaged by the 1944 Education Act does not exist for it was designed for children who do not exist, except in the minds of those few who still subscribe to the theory of discrete types of children. The developments which have taken place in the great majority of the Modern schools have been traced to social and economic pressures rather than to educational experimentation. The typical Secondary Modern school in 1959 is a far cry from the idealistic community proposed by the

ictionaries of 1944, a community where the children, free from the burden of examinations, could pursue their interests and hobbies under the guidance of sympathetic and understanding teachers. The early experimentation along such lines was soon terminated by the need to establish parity of esteem with other forms of secondary education, particularly the Secondary Grammar School.

The development of academic, technical, and special education courses within the Modern schools to meet the wide range of interests and varying capabilities of the Modern school students, demonstrates the inherent fallacy of the tripartite theory. Secondary Modern schools today are not at all "secondary modern." In point of fact, they are multilateral in their attempt to provide their students with the type of work for which the student is capable and for which he feels an interest. Whether or not the Secondary Modern Schools will admit to this more applicable name does not in any way affect the issue. What is extremely important is that these schools have clearly been influenced by a "force of comprehensiveness" which has caused them to institute courses of work which overlap with the Grammar, the Technical and the Educationally Sub-Normal Schools. They are comprehensive almost in spite of themselves. And yet, despite academic courses, new buildings, school uniforms etc., the Modern Schools have not attained that parity of esteem which has been sought for some fifteen years. The Grammar School still

represents the means of upward mobility, the highway to the middle-class, the gateway to the white collar occupations.

With these conclusions in mind, the writer makes the following recommendations, with the firm conviction that their adoption in Great Britain would be a positive contribution to the further development of the Welfare State and a step nearer to the truly democratic society.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Local Education Authorities which utilize the bipartite or tripartite system to provide for the secondary educational needs of the students within their areas be encouraged to adopt the comprehensive high school as soon as they are able to reorganize their separate secondary structures. The comprehensive principle might be made effective immediately by the grouping of the existing secondary schools into one common secondary school for administrative purposes and the redistribution of children and staffs. Future building would aim at replacing these campus type arrangements of existing schools by the provision of large comprehensive schools designed to serve the total needs of a given locality.

Despite the evidence from sociological studies that the comprehensive system per se will not necessarily lead to the "more

closely knit society," it is nevertheless held to be the most suitable form of secondary school organization to meet the needs of a modern democratic society for the following reasons:

1. It provides the right social atmosphere for life in a democratic society, and inspite of present imperfections as revealed in various studies, it can be improved upon with the full knowledge that each improvement is a positive move forward toward the democratic ideal. In other words, the comprehensive high school is considered to be the most effective instrument by which Great Britain might progress towards those goals which are in keeping with its dominant social philosophy.
2. Administratively and economically, the comprehensive system has decided advantages to offer when compared with a separate secondary structure.
3. The social cleavage and unrest caused by early selection methods is avoided and the Primary Schools are free to develop educational activities and experiences without the constant shadow of the 11 plus examination.
4. The greater ease of transfer within the comprehensive school will help eliminate the misplacement of students (at present over 10%) and will reduce the waste of both human and material resources. More than ever before in her long history, Great Britain needs to develop to the maximum all her resources of human ability.

Where geographical or administrative considerations prevent Local Education Authorities from embarking upon an immediate revision of existing separate secondary structures, the following alternative proposals might prove valuable as interim measures offering a temporary means of acknowledging the comprehensive principle and affording some experimentation without total commitment to change.

The process of expansion in curricula offerings which has been noted as one of the major developments in the Secondary Modern school's short history might be actively encouraged by the particular L.E.A. Similarly, the Grammar Schools within its jurisdiction should be encouraged to expand their curricula by the abolition of the 11 plus examination. The resultant infusion of new, non-academic "blood" should cause a revision of traditional teaching methods and curriculum design. A partial reshuffling of teaching staffs from the Grammar to the Modern schools would insure that the academic courses in both schools would be held in equal regard by the parents.

Alternatively, an all-out effort might be made immediately to expand the curricula offerings of the Secondary Modern Schools by a process of additional building and of cooperation between the heads of Grammar and Modern schools to share existing facilities and staffs. In this way, parity of treatment in curricula offerings might go a long

way to satisfy both pupils and parents within a tripartite system of secondary organisation. Under such an arrangement, it could be supposed that tripartitism would gradually disappear as it no longer became possible to distinguish any advantages to be gained by attending a particular school.

Finally, the organization of secondary schools by the Leicestershire Authority, commonly referred to as the Leicester Plan, offers a popular and workable compromise between all-out tripartitism and a fully comprehensive secondary structure. This particular secondary pattern provides for the abolition of any 11 plus selection examination and a common entry of all pupils of secondary school age into Junior High Schools. After three years of work on a common curriculum, students elect to follow courses best suited to their interest, capabilities and vocational aspirations. Such courses are offered in Grammar, Technical or Modern Schools within the authority's area of control. Other education authorities have shown interest in Leicester's secondary organisation.

Traditionally conservative and slow-moving, it is through such compromise and experimentation that many Local Authorities will in all probability gradually adopt the comprehensive organisation of their secondary education. That such an arrangement will eventually be the principal structure in Great Britain is considered inevitable by this writer. The weaknesses and contradictions of the

present tripartite system, together with the social and economic forces at work in Great Britain since the second World War clearly spell out the inevitability of that change.

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- Vol. 20, No. 1. September, 1954. R. J. Thomas. "An Exploratory Study of High School Drop-outs in regard to Ten Socially Related Factors."
- Vol. 29, No. 9. May, 1956. V. C. Perlmutter. "Relationship between Ability, Socio-Economic Status and Choice of Secondary School."

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APPENDIX

The curriculum guides and development plans of a number of County Councils and County Boroughs were used to obtain a general picture of the early planning in Secondary Modern curricula. The following references were used:

Nottingham Education Committee, The Secondary Modern School and Its Organization. Derry and Sons, Ltd. Nottingham. 1949.

Cheshire Education Committee, The Secondary Modern School. U. L. P. 1946.

Leicester Education Committee, Secondary Modern Schools. Leicester. 1946.

Lancashire and Cheshire Teachers' Association, The Development of the Secondary Modern Schools. Pitman, London. 1951.

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Development plans of the following counties and county boroughs were also used:

^ Chesterfield--from Part 2 of A. Ordensburgh and L. A. Grolla, Theory and Practice in the New Secondary Schools. U. L. P. 1949).

Dorset--Times Educational Supplement. No. 1632. August 1946.

Worcestershire--Times Educational Supplement. No. 1617. April, 1946.

Surrey--Times Educational Supplement. No. 1612. March, 1946.

Cambridgeshire--Times Educational Supplement. No. 1609. April, 1947.

A summary of the content of courses recommended for development in Secondary Modern Schools within the counties of Nottinghamshire and Cheshire immediately following the 1944 Education Act is given as an appropriate sample of the non-academic type of studies being formulated by many L. E. A.'s throughout England at this time.

The summary is compiled from the publications of the Education Committees of the two counties mentioned above.

1. In mathematics, practice is recommended at appropriate stages in basic, domestic, and civic arithmetic. Algebra, geometry and trigonometry receive little or no mention at all. The basic arithmetic course would include such topics as the calculation of amounts and costs of a variety of materials, and the use of railway guides, fares' tables and freight charge bulletins. In the domestic arithmetic scheme, the children would concern themselves with shopping lists, price lists, and the ordering of goods. They would be introduced to simple bookkeeping, rent studies and the higher purchase buying (credit buying). The civic arithmetic course would include study of various forms of taxation, practices in dealing with a variety of government returns, for example, National Insurance, licences, Pay-As-You-Earn Income Tax, and a simple introduction to terms and their meanings which the children would need to know when they entered adult employment, for example, piece work, overtime, bonus, and commission.

2. A number of science courses are part of a general science scheme, having as its core a loosely-bound body of topics such as, "Why our clothes keep us warm, Flooding our homes, The human frame--bones, muscles and nerves." From this central scheme, other topics are introduced as parts of related courses. The areas related to the general science scheme include hygiene, biology, home science, homecraft, child welfare and home nursing. Some of the topics to be developed in these related areas are given as:

Hygiene--home cleanliness and sanitation, including the care of food, water supply, light, ventilation, heating and the work of public service departments.

Biology--a study of animal life, including human life and the area of reproduction.

Home science--familiarization with home appliances and services and their proper use and maintenance.

Homecraft--topics to include kitchen hygiene, basic principles of cookery, and nutrition and meal planning.

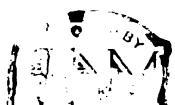
Child welfare--an investigation of public medical and welfare services, nutrition and hygiene for the expectant and nursing mother.

Home nursing--accidents and simple first aid, simple anatomy and physiology, the public health services, children's common ailments.

3. Where facilities are available, courses in gardening and animal husbandry are to be offered as part of rural study programs. The emphasis in these courses is upon practical work. The gardening courses, for example, stress such activities as the cultivation and maintenance of fruit bushes and trees, and the production of vegetables in school gardens.
4. The art and craft departments within the educational schools are to be encouraged to develop such courses as puppetry, toy-making, textiles, model-making, dress design and millinery, interior decorating and bookbinding. These courses are to be developed along side the more

traditional offerings such as woodwork and metalwork. It is further suggested that there be some general course providing simple instruction in household repairs and the care and maintenance of equipment.

5. Apart from those classes which contain children who might qualify for transfer to the Grammar or Technical schools at the age of 13 plus, it is recommended that there be no formal language or grammatical work. Grammar is to be taught functionally as the need arises in speech, reading or writing. The word "composition," implying artificiality and formality in written work in class, is often replaced by the term "written expression." The interests of daily life and various school activities are seen as providing ample occasion for written expression for the great majority of the students. The teacher is reminded that at the risk of clipping the wings of a poet, he is to "concentrate on making the ploughboy literate." Biographies and autobiographies are suggested as being more appropriate to the Secondary Modern child than the traditional classical authors. Books dealing with real figures such as Florence Nightingale, Barnado, Booth, Wilberforce, Shaftesbury, Livingstone and Schweitzer are therefore suggested. Set books, to be studied intensively for examination purposes, have no place in the Secondary Modern Schools. Formal spelling lessons involving memorization of lists of words are to give way to vocabulary study where almost exclusive attention will be given to words which children use most frequently. Finally, the serious study of such poets as Shelley, Keats, Browning etc. is not recommended for the Modern School child, though it is thought desirable that the child should have a general knowledge of the great poets' names and works before they leave school.
6. In general, it is recommended that history, geography, and relevant areas in general science be combined into a series of topics under the title "Social Studies." Continuous cooperation between the teachers and constant modifications of the syllabus are noted as vitally necessary if the children are to benefit from this arrangement. The project method is seen as being particularly useful in providing cooperative group activity and sustaining curiosity and interest in the area of study.



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