

sities, normal schools, technical schools, agricultural colleges and other institutions of higher learning should accept for admission students who have completed any high school curriculum."

Conclusion

Three brief final chapters deal with Adult Education, Voluntary Agencies and Finance. They recommend encouragement of the Voluntary Agencies, the extension of library service over the whole Dominion and continued support for the Canadian Association for Adult Education, together with the establishment of schemes and courses cooperatively by departments of education, local school boards, and university extension departments.

The chapter on Finance counts the cost of all the recommendations previously made and recommends certain steps to be taken to equalize the expenditure per child throughout Canada. (At present some provinces spend more than twice as much per child as others). The main recommendations are that local school boards be freed from capital expenditures, that school monies be secured from all sources where wealth is found and not only from levies on real property and that the present annual expenditure for education be doubled. Such expenditures may seem large, yet, as the Report affirms, they provide not for an ideal scheme of national education, but only for a very moderate practical advance well within the nation's reach as soon as war expenditures cease.

The C.N.E.A. Report is a survey, and, unlike the British White Paper, does not represent the intentions of any government. Nobody is bound by it; nobody need listen to it. But it is a mistake to suppose that Canadian educational authorities are unaware of the faults and shortcomings so clearly stated in the Report. On the contrary the Report expresses several trends of development along which advances have al-

ready been made by the Provincial Governments and others. In Nova Scotia, for example, we have had within the last two years the introduction of the Municipal Unit of Administration, the purchase by the Provincial Government of Shop-mobiles and Dental Trailers for school children, the establishment of Vocational Guidance in more than one centre, and other reforms. But reform in Nova Scotia, as elsewhere, has not gone nearly far enough. For this the public as well as governments are to blame. Progressive as well as reactionary politicians have been heard to complain that they can move no faster than public opinion. For this reason it behoves every citizen to study the recommendations made in the Report and in particular to consider whether he would not get a better return for his money if he paid more for his schools. The whole keynote of the Report is that every reform is designed solely to promote better education for our children, the future citizens of Canada. Such an appeal is made to the best and purest of our feelings.

II

TRANSFORMING ENGLISH EDUCATION

By H. C. DENT

THE WHITE PAPER entitled "Educational Reconstruction" (Cmd. 6458) which was issued by the Government of Britain on July 16 is one of the most revolutionary documents of our time, for it proposes nothing less than a complete remodelling of the publicly-provided education service in England and Wales. (The educational systems of Scotland and Northern Ireland are separately directed and administered, and so do not come within the scope of the White Paper,

though many of the projected reforms would certainly affect them).

In place of the present heterogeneous collection of overlapping parts—elementary education from 5 to 14, secondary education from 11 to 16 or 18, technical education for 12 or 13 to 15 and upwards—there is to be a unified and articulated system organised in three successive and progressive stages: primary, secondary, and further education.

To make this major change effective, the Government propose a large number of other reforms, all in themselves of considerable, and many of great significance. To begin with, the legal responsibility of the parent and the statutory duty of the local education authority (which is responsible for the provision of educational facilities) are both to be redefined.

Duty of the Parent

At present, neither parent nor authority is compelled by law to do more than see that a child gets, between the ages of 5 and 14, "efficient elementary instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic." The Government now proposes that it shall be the duty of the parent "to cause his child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to the child's age and aptitudes", and of the authority "to contribute towards the mental, moral and physical development of the community by securing the provision of efficient education throughout those stages (i.e. the three mentioned above) for all persons in the area capable of profiting thereby."

The obligation is to be laid upon the local education authority to provide nursery schools, to bring all primary school buildings up-to-date, provide appropriate accommodation and equipment for three types of secondary schools—grammar, technical and modern—and for a system of part-time education for all young people up to the age of 18 who have left school, to expand and improve greatly facilities for technical education, and to make provision for adult education in a wide variety of media; to provide milk and meals in school to all who desire these services; to give medical treatment as

well as inspection; and to reduce the size of classes, especially in the primary school.

The Government are to raise the age of full-time attendance at school from 14 to 15 and later to 16, to adjust the present system of local educational administration to the new layout, arrange a compromise with the voluntary bodies whose school buildings are used for purposes of publicly-provided education, bring the famous "public schools" into a closer relationship with the State system, establish supervision over all private schools by making their registration and inspection compulsory, and propose reforms in the system of recruitment and training of teachers.

Dual Control

It will hardly be imagined that so far-reaching and comprehensive a scheme of reform (of which the above summary indicates no more than the main points) can be carried into effect without raising many and grave problems. Three of these have been with us for many years: Dual Control, the "public schools", and the units of local administration.

Provision of elementary education on a large scale was begun in England by the Church of England and other religious denominations. The Education Act of 1870, which established a State system of elementary education, incorporated these "voluntary" schools into the publicly provided system. The Education Act of 1902 provided that they should be granted out of the local rates as well as from taxation imposed by Parliament.

The position today is that there are about 10,500 "voluntary" (or, as they are officially termed, "non-provided") public elementary schools, and about 10,300 "provided", or "council" schools. All are maintained by the local education authority, but the voluntary bodies are responsible for the fabric of their buildings and for meeting the cost of any necessary structural improvements and additions. In return they have the right of appointing the teachers and giving in their schools denominational religious instruction.

Apart from any difference of opinion as

to whether denominational religious instruction should be given in the State schools (and there have always been acute differences), the voluntary bodies have never been able to raise sufficient funds to keep their buildings up to standard. Consequently whenever an Education Act has been in the making there has always been a stern struggle to determine how much larger proportion of financial aid the State would give, and what concessions should be made in return by the voluntary bodies. The present has proved no exception.

It took fifteen months of strenuous negotiation to arrive at the ingenious and complicated compromise proposed in the White Paper, the gist of which is that voluntary schools prepared to raise half the cost of any structural improvements and additions will have the other half granted from public funds, and will retain their present powers of control. Schools which cannot raise half the cost will pass to the local authority, certain restricted powers being retained by the voluntary bodies.

Abolition of Tuition Fees.

The White Paper proposed that fees should be abolished in all secondary schools maintained by local education authorities. But by no means all secondary schools forming part of the State system are maintained schools; about half have financial resources, large or small, of their own, and are only aided out of public funds.

Three categories of schools may be distinguished on the basis of their grant and other financial arrangements:—

1. *Provided and Maintained Schools.*

This class includes all schools built and equipped, or fully maintained, by local education authorities. The whole expenditure on such schools is met by the local education authority, which receives in respect of it a percentage grant from Parliament through the State Board of Education.

2. *Aided Schools.*

This class comprises schools which

are governed by independent bodies of managers or governors but which receive grants from the local education authority which in turn receives grants on their behalf from the Board of Education.

3. *Direct Grant Schools.*

This class comprises schools which are also independently governed but which receive grants direct from the State Board of Education. Most but not all of them also receive financial aid from the local education authority in whose area they are located.

This summary statement of the position masks a veritable host of complexities, for all sorts of financial agreements exist between schools and authorities.

The problem of the abolition of tuition fees in those schools has recently been the subject of a report to the Board of Education by a committee known as the Fleming Committee. In principle the issue was clear enough; fees were finally abolished in elementary schools in 1918, and now that secondary education is to become not only a right but also an obligation, "the arguments which led to the decision that fees should be abolished in the elementary schools apply with equal force to the proposal that they should be abolished in the secondary schools". (Abolition of tuition fees in grant-aided Secondary Schools, p.16).

Such was the conclusion the Fleming Committee reached; and consequently they recommended that fees be abolished in all grant-aided secondary schools as well as in the maintained schools. But the recommendation was approved only by eleven out of the eighteen members of the committee; the other seven (including the chairman) presented a minority report in which they stated that, while they accepted "the principle that no child shall be debarred by lack of means from obtaining the kind of education best suited for him or her", they did "not think that it necessarily involves the complete aboli-

tion of all fees in grant-aided schools". (Ibid, p.21).

Cherished Tradition

To anyone unacquainted with the history of English education this divergence of opinion may appear inexplicable, or at least only to be explained as a direct conflict between progressive and reactionary views. But the matter is not nearly so simple as that, as the following passage from the majority report of the Fleming Committee will show:

. . . the question of the retention or abolition of tuition fees in grant-aided secondary schools cannot be considered apart from the previous history of these schools and their place in the general organisation of education. The abolition of fees would increase the schools' financial dependence on public authorities and pro tanto strengthen the case for public control. It needs to be borne in mind, however, that a large number of the Grammar School foundations of this country have grown up over a long period and have enjoyed a tradition of independence. With the passage of time, their reliance on public authorities and their association with the general national system have become greater and are likely to be increased in the future. But this must not be allowed to obscure the case for a reasonable degree of autonomy, and we feel convinced that a proposal to abolish fees unrelated to safeguards of reasonable independence would be strongly resisted not only by the schools but by a considerable body of public opinion. (Ibid, p. 5)

The autonomy of a school is one of the most cherished of English traditions, and there is a widespread fear lest increase of public control should mean diminution of freedom and the imposing of an undesirable uniformity on the schools.

The "Public Schools"

A word should be added about the so-called "public schools." Those are boys' boarding schools, some of which like Eton and Winchester have a history extending over hundreds of years. They are outside the state system of education and are supported entirely by fees and endowments. In the past only the rich have been able to send their sons to those schools and they have frequently been

criticized as being the preserve of a class or caste. Since the war began the suggestion has arisen that arrangements be made by means of scholarships to admit the sons of men unable otherwise to meet the heavy expenditure. This has brought to the front the whole problem of the relationship of the "public schools" to the state system, a problem at present being studied by the Fleming Committee already mentioned. The Committee has not yet presented its main report.

Local Administration

The problem of the units of local administration remains. At present there are two types of local education authorities, those for elementary and higher education and those for elementary education *only*. The Government proposes that the second of those types be abolished; that the county councils and the county borough councils which exercise powers in respect of both elementary and higher education) be in future the only education authorities, but that they be required to prepare schemes for the constitution and functions of district education committees in their areas, and to delegate supervisory and other powers to these committees. This proposal has evoked a storm of opposition from the authorities whose abolition is proposed. They not unnaturally object strongly to being deprived of powers they have exercised—many of them with great efficiency, for many years. The prospect of being relegated to the status of a district committee, with delegated powers only (though powers which would be widened to cover a larger field than "elementary educationing"), in no way appeals to them.

The Association of Education Committees at its annual general meeting in September rejected the Government's proposals by an overwhelming majority and approved alternative proposals for the constitution of all-purposes education authorities on a population basis. This appears hardly helpful, for the population basis has been tried once, only to result

in course of time in the gravest anomalies; and the chances are that after the war the population of England and Wales will be more and not less mobile than previously.

Teachers and Curricula

When the legislative and administrative changes projected in the White Paper have been made the hardest part of the task of reform will still remain. The "master key which will open up the whole building" (Educational Reconstruction, p. 4) is an adequate supply of well-trained teachers. This problem is being examined in all its aspects by a strong committee under the chairmanship of the Vice-Chancellor of Liverpool University, Sir Arnold McNair.

When the teachers are found, there is the further crucial question of what they shall teach. The White Paper promises a remodelling of the secondary school curriculum. This is, of course, an inescapable necessity, if only because there are to be three types of secondary schools instead of one; and a beginning has already been made with the required investigations. In August a committee of the Secondary Schools Examinations Council set up by the President of the Board of Education in 1941 to inquire into the secondary school curriculum and examinations, issued its report. This, popularly known as the Norwood report (the chairman of the committee being Sir Cyril Norwood, President of St. John's College, Oxford), has already been the subject of some criticism; but this should not obscure the very real service the committee has performed.

School Certificate Examination

The committee offered definitions of the purpose of education in general, and of primary and secondary education;

analysed and defined the types of pupils which should go to the grammar, technical and modern schools respectively, and of students to go to the university; tackled resolutely the very difficult problem of the School Certificate Examination (an external examination set by university examining bodies and taken by all secondary school pupils at about the age of 16), which has come unduly to dominate the curriculum; examined and made recommendations concerning the grammar school curriculum, entry to the universities, and the inspectorate of the Board of Education.

The committee's proposal to make the School Certificate by degrees an internal examination will probably be accepted, as will also their recommendation that the Higher Certificate examination be replaced by a "Leaving Examination" taken at 18 for the purposes of qualifying for entry to a university or a profession. As the report contained nothing very new about the curriculum it does not alter matters much in this respect, but it has been indirectly helpful by provoking an outburst of criticism and creative thought about the purpose, content and techniques of secondary education.

Finally, in presenting this picture of the present situation, one should not omit mention of the report of the Youth Advisory Council issued in September. Asked to consider the future of the Service of Youth set up in 1939 to provide educational, social and recreative facilities for young people between 14 and 18 who had left school, the Council took the broadest and most understanding view of its task, and made recommendations about housing, education, hours and conditions of employment, holidays, and pre-service training. This is one of the best of the recent reports we have had.