

CHANGING PRINCIPLES AND RECOMMENDED PRACTICE
IN THE TEACHING OF FICTION IN ELEMENTARY
AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS FROM 1902 TO THE
PRESENT DAY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
THE AGE-GROUP 11 - 13

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Submitted for the degree of Ph.D. in the
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PREFACE

PREFACE

The purpose of this thesis is to study the changes in theory and recommended practice for the teaching of fiction in schools this century. It will consist of detailed discussion of a wide range of prescriptive writing about English teaching during the past one hundred and fifty years, paying special attention to the emergence of fiction as a well-defined genre for the classroom. Virtually all the sources on which the study is based are published. It draws on a large sample of all of the following works: official publications such as Board of Education, Ministry of Education and Department of Education and Science reports, handbooks and circulars; prescriptive works on the teaching of English which contain significant comment on the teaching of fiction; articles from specialist educational journals and, especially with reference to the contemporary scene, works specifically concerned with children's fiction.

The age group 11-13 has been chosen as a focus largely for historical rather than strictly educational reasons. For most of the period under discussion the age of 11 has been a time of transition to some sort of "secondary" education (in some sense, within the independent sector - so has the age 13). In more recent years the 11-13 age group has constituted the top half of many reorganised middle schools. There is, therefore, organisationally sufficient distinctiveness to warrant its isolation in this study. However, many would make a case for it in maturational and Piagetian terms in relation to fiction.

Hollindale sees emotional, intellectual and physical development being paralleled by the suitability of a more complex type of story answering to this development.

In the years from ten to thirteen the child is passing through an exciting and bewildering phase of growth. A mass of new experiences, ideas and feelings have somehow to be assimilated during a short period of transition from childhood proper to the verge of adult life, and for many children these are years of tension and uncertainty which their resources of language and expression are inadequate to deal with: they cannot describe their perplexities, either to themselves or to others ... There are, broadly speaking, two literatures for children which can particularly help them at this stage. The first is the immediately realistic, which confronts the child with situations he can readily identify himself with, and with characters or settings which are "close to home" ... The second is the literature set in remote and unfamiliar settings, the world of the is-not or the never-will-be, in which potentially disturbing experiences are placed at a distance and so become more manageable. (1)

While this 11-13 age group remains our strict concern, it cannot be isolated from the school population as a whole because much that has been written on the use of fiction in schools does not refer specifically to it. While pronouncements which have to do with a psychological, developmental approach (vide Hollindale above) may well apply specifically to the age-group in question, pronouncements concerning reasons for the use of fiction in schools may apply equally to other age groups.

1902 has been chosen as the starting point for detailed investigation because of its closeness to the beginning of the century and because it saw the passing of the Education Act which set up a national education system recognisably similar to today's. It will be necessary, though, because the issue of the entry of vernacular literature into the schools' curriculum had long before been discussed, to survey the main developments leading to this point.

(1) Hollindale, P: Choosing Books for Children Elek 1974 pp.76-77

The plan of this study will be partly chronological, partly thematic. The Introduction will have a twofold purpose. First, it will explain the three groups of terms about English and its teachers which will be recurrently employed throughout the study. Secondly, it will introduce the main perspectives to be found within the prescriptive writing about literature, during the past one hundred and fifty years, on the controversial question of fiction's corrupting or educational powers. The aim is to provide an introductory guide to the main study where detailed attention will be paid to the changing relationship between models of English teaching and perspectives on fiction which eventually led to its emergence as a separate and valued genre in the classroom.

The study proper will consist of six chapters which treat the progress of fiction chronologically. So many themes and issues are uncovered during the investigation that it has been decided, in spite of some disadvantages, to reject an overall thematic approach in favour of the chronological on grounds of clarity. Thus, each important issue, such as fiction's protective power against corrupting commercial forces or the virtues of rigorous study of texts, has been identified separately and considered within sharply delineated periods of time, and continuity provided, when appropriate, by cross-referencing across periods. Such neatness as might have been achieved by organising the study around ideologies, or groups of academics like the English Association or the Cambridge School, would have been offset by several disadvantages; tension would have been lost by the removal of direct juxtaposition of opposed attitudes within the same period of time; and without much repetitious explanatory comment, movements would have been artificially separated from their intellectual contexts. As stated, there are six chapters. The first deals with views on the development

of vernacular literature as a school subject during the nineteenth century. The second deals with the period 1902 to 1921 (from the 1902 Education Act to the publication of the Newbolt Report); the third, 1922 to 1944 (the Butler Education Act); the fourth, 1944 to 1960 (publication of Holbrook's English for Maturity); the fifth, 1960 to the present day. The sixth chapter consists of a short postscript. Chapter 2 is divided into three parts; chapters 3, 4 and 5 into two parts. In Chapters 2 and 3, the themes to be followed through can be divided into two main, interdependent groups. The first part of each chapter will deal with the first group of themes. Here, fiction is not separated from the broad debate about literature because in the work of many writers it is an integral part of their consideration of English as a larger issue. The second part of each chapter treats fiction as a separate genre posing different problems from those posed by poetry or drama. The moral issues and the questions of values raised by the novel as a form; the nature of textual study; the place and value of narrative; the aesthetic, intellectual and emotional experiences offered to the child - all these issues are raised with specific reference to fiction. In Chapter 2, part 3 brings many ideas together through examination of the Newbolt Report and the work of George Sampson.

However, after 1944 the approach will change. Chapters 4 and 5 will still be divided but the divisions will be made for different reasons. Mainly, both chapters will deal only with the specific issues mentioned in the previous paragraph. The reason for this is that after 1944 there is a quickening of interest in and work on fiction in schools which would make consideration of more general aspects repetitious and unwieldy. The watershed in this process was the publication in 1941 of A.J. Jenkinson's What do Boys and Girls read? This was a work profound

in influence and specific in prescription. As a result of this work and in the context of changed social conditions and new educational developments, attitudes to fiction alter significantly. For this reason, in the first parts of chapters 4 and 5, the general framework of ideas within which fiction developed in schools will be discussed; in the second parts specific matters concerning the genre itself will be considered.

Chapter 6, the postscript, will attempt briefly to draw threads together and examine certain key concerns of the study to test present-day attitudes to them.

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

As stated in the Preface, the purpose here is to introduce the three main groups of terms about English to be employed throughout the study and to introduce some of the special problems fiction raises as an area of the school curriculum. One group of terms which will be used throughout is taken from the following extract from John Dixon's summary drawn from discussions at the Dartmouth Seminar. (1)

The first model centred on skills: it fitted an era when initial literacy was the prime demand. The second stressed the cultural heritage, the need for a civilising and unifying content. The third (and current) model focuses on personal growth: on the need to re-examine the teaching processes and the meaning to the individual of what he is doing in English lessons. (2)

However, because it is impossible to trace a chronological development in which one model supplants another, Mathieson's types of English teacher will also be used, in order to draw finer distinctions between approaches to fiction at different stages of its development. (3)

Traditionalists ... place higher priority upon their pupils' knowledge about literature and language than upon their personal responses to texts and experience; they tend to teach literature on classical lines and language through imitation and instruction. Progressives in the field of English ... are more interested in the affective than the cognitive, the child than the text, and support all forms of creativity. Thus, to call someone like David Holbrook a "traditionalist" is to use the term in an exclusively political sense ... Although (the radicals) share Holbrook's enthusiasm for creativity, they are deeply suspicious of his, and many other English teachers' refusal to compromise on the question of literature in the classroom. The radicals perceive (those who) propose great literature ... as elitists who support the established social system.

-
- (1) Dixon, John: Growth through English A report based on the Dartmouth Seminar, 1966. For NATE by O.U.P. 2nd Edition, 1969.
- (2) Ibid: pp. 1-2
- (3) Mathieson, M: The Ideology of English Teaching - Education for Teaching - Autumn 1975, No. 8, pp. 22-30

Radical English teachers ... are those most likely to move away from literature into classroom discussion of social issues and the children's environment. Their unwillingness to teach literature stems mainly from their convictions about the richness of working class culture. (4)

According to these definitions there is no one-to-one correspondency between the three models of teaching and the three types of teacher. As the relationships between the models of teaching and the types of teacher are important to the framework of this study, examples will be given at this stage of the various attitudes.

A clear statement of the traditional teacher was given by Atkins in 1929. (5)

I want to suggest (1) that what is needed as the basis of our English Teaching is a systematic study of the art of literature, its principles and its technique; (2) that this systematic study should govern the choice of masterpieces for special reading, and (3) that some such scheme should form the main work of the schools. (6)

Since Atkins views literature as a central area of study, he has moved beyond the skills model and into the cultural heritage model. Yet for him, literature consists of "masterpieces" and techniques which can form a body of knowledge. Atkins clearly believes that a stiffening of disciplined study alone distinguishes serious education. The keywords of the passage are "systematic", "study"; the operative verb is "govern". F. Whitehead is clearly speaking from a progressive standpoint in the

(4) Ibid: p.23

(5) Atkins, Professor J.W.H.: The Teaching of English: The County Schools Review, Vol. X, No. 9 (Welsh County Schools Association) July 1923, pp. 413-20

(6) Ibid: p. 417

following passage:

All children, whatever their ultimate role in life is to be, need experience of literature, if their personalities are to expand and flower into a capacity for fullness of living. As Matthew Arnold put it, 'The arts are our storehouse of recorded values ... In consequence there is a necessary relationship between the quality of the individual's response to art and his general fitness for a humane existence.' (7)

Here, the key words appear to be "experience", "personalities", "expand", "flower". The emphasis plainly is on personal growth. However, like Atkins, Whitehead assumes that literature is somehow central and that it is part of a cultural heritage. The quotation from Matthew Arnold - "The arts are our storehouse of recorded values" - itself indicates that Whitehead rates highly the concept of cultural continuity. Both traditional and progressive teachers, then, value literature as cultural heritage, though their interpretations of it differ. However, unlike the traditional teacher, the progressive accepts the personal growth model. The radical teacher, though, rejects the cultural heritage because he does not accept its "civilising and socially unifying content." Keddie points out that different cultures are relative and equally valid.

... it can at least be argued that all "cultures" - class and ethnic - may have their own logics which are capable of grappling with what we shall for the moment continue to call abstract thought. (8)

Worpole seems to go further, by saying that far from being socially

(7) Whitehead, F. : The Disappearing Dais - A study of the principles and practice of English teaching: Chatto and Windus, 1966. p. 15.

(8) Keddie, Nell (ed.): Tinker, Tailor. The Myth of Cultural Deprivation Penguin 1973, Introduction p. 18

unifying, the cultural heritage is actually socially divisive.

In the 19th century the ruling class's great fear of working-class writing was that it would mean that a shared and non-legitimised literary culture would be allowed to grow and that this would have to be prevented ... it was from this that the idea developed, historically, that working-class reading material, in particular, should be provided from outside that class, and not developed within it. The position is the one which still exists today and which is legitimised by the way in which we still cannot conceive of children's writing and that of their parents as having anything more than an ephemeral charm. (9)

By Worpole's standards, literature as part of the cultural heritage is provided from outside for the great mass of its consumers and is part of a conspiracy to thwart their own personal development. By contrast, working class writing in itself (Worpole directed Centerprise) is to be valued for its own sake, containing the values of a culture at least as valid as that of traditional literary culture and leading to a free and untrammelled personal development. While it is clear, from the foregoing quotation, that there is a certain chronological progression, to establish it is not the purpose of this enquiry. However, it is plain that successive interpretations of literature as our cultural heritage will be a major concern. The ideas of the traditional view of the cultural heritage, the progressive or liberal view and the radical rejection will be examined in greater detail as the study develops.

A third set of terms which will also be borne in mind - though they will not be referred to as often as those of Dixon and Mathieson - are the

(9) Worpole, Ken. : "The Gates": Writing within the Community - Children's Literature in Education Summer 1975, No. 17

"Fallacies" in English Teaching outlined by Shayer (10). He defines them as follows:

Broadly speaking (the fallacies) are characterised by the tendency to study English in ways quite unsuited to that subject, or to study it for entirely the wrong reasons, with consequent distortions of the study material. (11)

He lists the "classical" fallacy, the "Old English" fallacy, "composition and the imitative "fallacy", the "moral" fallacy, "Grammar and the content" fallacy (12). Those most relevant to this study are the "classical" and "moral" fallacies. In the first, the "uneasy transition" from classics as the true literary discipline to English meant that English could only have respectability if it were treated "classically" (13). In the second, because children are "little adults" they must be "well grounded in morality", so literature gives "moral" lessons - "fine actions" and "ennobling sentiments". (14)

The fallacies are mainly associated with the skills and cultural heritage models and the traditional teacher. What this fusion of ideas could mean for narrative prose in schools is shown in the following statement by Dent. Although the issues raised in it refer mainly to the earlier part of this study, they are sufficiently important to raise in the introduction because they characterise an attitude to literature which is not entirely dead.

(10) Shayer, David: The Teaching of English in Schools, 1900-1970
Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972

(11) Ibid: p. 14

(12) Ibid: pp. 14-19

(13) Ibid: p. 6

(14) Ibid: pp. 17-18

At every stage and in every term opportunities should be provided for the systematic reading and study of English prose. This may be done by selected English classics, of which carefully graded examples are supplied by Dent's King's Treasuries and Nelson's Teaching of English series. In selecting these, a teacher should be guided by these considerations: Does the text lie reasonably within the comprehension of the pupils? Does it offer, in addition to its inherent interest, opportunities for a close and detailed study of prose? For the wise teacher will not aim at devoting the same amount of time and energy to all parts of the prose text. He will want to select certain passages, many or few according to circumstance, which will bear the weight of sustained study. There are several prose texts which, interesting - even exciting - as narrative, give little scope for detailed study. It may be found convenient to use some of the prose anthologies which are available. Thought in English Prose (Heinemann) has been proved useful.

(15)

Dent is prescribing for the 11+ age band in this passage. What he says may be immediately related to the "skills" and "cultural heritage" model: the first by implication; the second manifestly.

The notions of "close", "systematic and detailed study" as used by Dent admit of much interpretation within the passage: the rigorous-seeming words themselves cloak an ambiguity. One must assume that much of the "systematic and detailed study" would be linguistic and grammatical; would deal with literary usage with a view to imitation and emulation; would, therefore, use literary texts to transmit skills. The choice of books is limited to "selected English Classics": the assumption is clear that only what has "stood the test of time" is to be admitted to the classroom. The function of literature (including fiction) is to demonstrate and transmit the values of the past: thus fiction as a

(15) Dent, J.C. : (Headmaster, Westminster City School) The Selection of Class Books: Part V: English. The Journal of Education, Vol. 67, May 1935 - p. 270

literary form is seen as a means of passing on a cultural heritage.

This passage relates both to Dixon's first two models and to Shayer's fallacies. Almost the only quite certain inference that can be made from Dent's "close and detailed study of prose" and "systematic reading" is that such study will be made on a "classical" basis. The vernacular prose text will be treated as if it were a piece of Caesar or Horace: English literature is assumed to be merely a surrogate classical literature and can thus, in Shayer's words, be "respectable" in spite of its "pale substitute nature" only when it is treated "classically". The "moral" fallacy can be demonstrated by the fact that Dent, while talking about prose and while implying he is referring largely to the novel when he recommends the "English Classics", relegates the prime virtue of fiction (and thus most prose included within the "English Classics") to an inferior place. "Interesting - even exciting - narrative" (fiction's distinguishing mark) gives "little scope for detailed study". The work which Dent has "proved useful" is, significantly, Thought in English Prose. The subtraction of "thought" from "narrative" and its presentation as material for study indicates the already-mentioned ambiguity inherent in the nature of "close and detailed study" (in what sense is it linguistic, in what sense is it for content?). It also suggests that what is to be transmitted to the pupil is subsumed in Shayer's "fine actions" and "ennobling sentiments" (although "fine actions" may surely be found in narrative!).

In the discussion above, an attempt has been made to relate to each other some main notions concerning English teaching within the chosen period: and also in some way to see the changing place of literature

(and fiction) within them. It is within this framework of ideas that the general themes mentioned above will be worked out.

The second part of this introduction will now focus upon the central issue relating to fiction which will be considered throughout this study; that is, its traditionally uneasy relationship with literature judged suitable for schools. Most critics and method writers who represent the skills and cultural heritage models - thus traditional teachers - assume that literature consists mainly of poetry, some drama (mainly Shakespeare) and a very few novelists (usually Scott, Dickens and Stevenson). In dealing with the novel as a whole, how can the teacher come to terms with its moral ambiguity, its aesthetic elusiveness and its undoubted closeness to popular culture? An explicit statement of the dilemma occurs in Coleridge's Course of Lectures on Literature, Lecture XI, given on March 3rd, 1818 (16). First, he argues for works of imagination in the education of the child:

In the education of children, love is first to be instilled, and out of love obedience is to be educed. Then impulse and power should be given to the intellect, and the ends of a moral being be exhibited. For this object thus much is effected by works of imagination: - that they carry the mind out of self, and show the possible of the good and the great in human character. The height, whatever it might be, of the imaginative standard will do no harm; we are commanded to imitate one who is inimitable. (17)

What form do "works of imagination" take? They may well be either poetry, drama or narrative - but for Coleridge one form is suspect.

(16) Coleridge, S.T. : Notes and Lectures 1836 Edition used: Lectures on Shakespeare, etc. Everyman's Library 1907.

(17) Ibid: pp. 299-300

The common modern novel, in which there is no imagination but a miserable struggle to excite and gratify mere curiosity, ought, in my judgment, to be wholly forbidden to children. Novel reading of this sort is especially injurious to the growth of the imagination, the judgment and the morals, especially to the latter, because it excites mere feelings without at the same time ministering an impulse to action.

(18)

Narrative prose, therefore, can be "injurious". However, it is not rejected out of hand. Coleridge draws a distinction between the injurious and the educative fiction when he selects prose such as Greek mythology, the Arabian Nights and Robinson Crusoe as having a beneficial role to play in a child's development; it is a view which, as we shall see, he shares with Froebel and one which anticipates the Cambridge School in its emphasis upon the need for discrimination. Within Coleridge's distinction between corrupting and educative fiction resides much of later educators' unease about fiction in schools and we shall be investigating many proposals for resolving the problem. There will be demands for "fine thoughts" and "noble actions", for "acknowledged masterpieces", for critical standards, for an absence of "fantasying" (as opposed to "fantasy") and finally, for a viable, serious, specific children's literature. At the root of much thought, however, is the fact that fiction is the closest literary form to popular culture, the one most people come into contact with and therefore, the one most likely to be contaminated. In chronicling the progress of popular fiction for the working man in the nineteenth century, Louis James (19) shows that suspicion of the form, together with a wish to gather "useful knowledge";

(18) Ibid: p. 301

(19) James, Louis: Fiction for the Working Man 1830-1850 Oxford University Press, 1956.

meant that very few novels were admitted to such public libraries as the working class possessed.

... even the Sheffield Mechanics Institute, which barred (fiction) allowed in the novels of Bulwer Lytton, Washington Irving, Thackeray, and Samuel Warren. (20)

James shows the springing up of a specifically working-class fiction during the first half of the nineteenth century which, while containing social criticism to a limited extent in catering for a newly-emergent class of readers, more and more pandered to a lowest common denominator. During the process of adaptation for an urban working-class of the convention of the middle class popular novel:

... the styles of the more leisured novels of the past could not survive amid the bustle and preoccupations of town life; its world could not exist in the new materialism. In the anarchy of slums and factories, the family lost much of its emotional significance. The fainting heroine became ridiculous, but because of sentimentality, a desire to escape from the truth, and the needs of the simplified moral structure of the story, she gained a halo of immaculate purity. The hero, losing his sensibility, became ineffective and colourless, and was kept in the background, although he struggled to emerge as a man of action through monsters and criminals. (21)

After 1860, James traces a new development - in juvenile literature.

The volume of juvenile literature was immense, and a good deal of it, such as Brett's Boys of England (1866-99) was stirring adventure stuff that could not have brought a blush to the cheek of even Mr. Podsnap's "young person". Another section, however - and it is the direct antecedent of the penny-issue fiction about criminal and town life - was a different case. These bore colourful titles such as The Wild Boys of London (1863), The Skeleton Horseman (c. 1859), The Outsiders of Society (c.1863),

(20) Ibid: p. 5

(21) Ibid: p. 168

Not only, as we have seen in Gentleman Jack, were the vestiges of probability and consistency thrown away, all moral inhibitions went too, and violence, rape and sexual indulgence were accepted. (22)

In commenting on these works, Ellis (23) (making a linguistic point) says:

The factors which rendered "penny dreadfuls" detrimental to the growth of literacy in working-class children were the absence of correct English usage and a limited vocabulary. Some of the children's periodicals were open to criticism in this respect, for example, the stories in Boys of England were comprised of short, jerky sentences, and neither colons nor semi-colons were used in punctuation. (24)

However, the novel in particular and fiction in general, was obviously a main literary form. As such, its currency was as valid as poetry or drama, but it could be given a qualified acceptance into schools only insofar as it could be encompassed without ambiguity into the cultural heritage model. As already mentioned, it was seen as too close to popular culture. For this reason, samples of nineteenth century thought show as urgent an aesthetic concern as a moral concern: their tone often foreshadows both the fears of the Cambridge School and the criticisms of Hoggart and his successors.

One among many commentators of the time was Alexander Strahan (25) who points out that the nature of literature for the young was causing grave concern: that previous writers (working outside a progressive, romantic

(22) Ibid: pp. 168-9

(23) Ellis, Alec: A History of Children's Reading and Literature
Pergamon 1968

(24) Ibid: p. 81

(25) Strahan, Alexander: Bad literature for the young - The Contemporary Review, Vol. 26, November 1875. (Reprinted with introduction by Lance Salway: Signal, No. 20, May 1976. pp. 83-95).

tradition) had seen moral edification as being the only allowable motive for such literature. In 1693, Locke had dismissed fairy tales as "perfectly useless trumpery"; Mrs. Trimmer had echoed this sentiment in the Guardian of Education.

However, Strahan is not convinced that literature's power for good or evil on the young mind is necessarily a direct one.

... can it be proved - ... can (it) even be plausibly made out - that all the Penny Dreadfuls put together can do as much harm as one atheistical book of Science or one cynical story? (26)

It is not reasonable, Strahan suggests, to assume that such reading will make the lower-class boy a burglar or his higher-class contemporary trade "in coffin-shrines". The effect of literature is far more subtle, more suggestive. Bad literature is born and develops in bad conditions.

There is a rapid increase of the population; the diffusion of the capacity to read among the classes whose circumstances are in other respects most unfavourable to the formation among them of proper standards of taste and good feeling; and there is the fact that the young have of late been turned out early to earn their livings and left pretty much to their own misguidance. (27)

As a result, the popular literature normally circulated glorifies robbery, dishonesty, glamourises the thief and teaches that honesty and hard work are "mugs' games".

... there is proof ... that these detestable pennyworths too often do, on the minds of boys and girls, just the infernal sort of work they are expected to do ... everywhere there is a pandering to the appetite for luxury and worldly success. (28)

(26) Ibid: pp. 84-5

(27) Ibid: p. 85

(28) Ibid: pp. 89-90

Here are distinct foreshadowings of the Cambridge School and its fears of the debasement of popular culture. However, can this be part of what Worpole sees as the "ruling class's great fear of working-class writing ... that it would mean that a shared and non-legitimised literary culture would be allowed"? (29) These works, as James points out, were developments of the old broadsheets and the Newgate Calendar. To what extent were they a genuine outpouring of a popular culture, produced by the lower classes themselves? To what extent were they exploitive?

Strahan provides an interesting clue to the motivation behind them when he notes what appears to be a high moral tone (though he dismisses the language used as "high, thin maundering") which is set beside advertisements of a very doubtful quality. The advertisements, he suggests, indicate the readership intended and thus the true nature of the books. The tone of the stories is ambiguous, therefore even more dangerous. In commenting on a scene in a story purporting to be a chaste encounter between a young, innocent girl, inmate of an orphanage, and a male trustee of that orphanage, Strahan comments

We do not know anything more ingeniously prurient
as this and yet where is there an indecent word?
(30)

The implication is that the books in question are produced to exploit the readership and therefore - whatever their origins - they foreshadow the works the Cambridge School criticise in the 1930's and beyond. Strahan's criticism is moral and social; in this he deserves the charge Worpole would level at him that he represents a ruling class afraid of the lower orders. However, Strahan's criticism is more subtle than that of

(29) See above: p. 4

(30) Ibid: p. 94

Dr. Smith, H.M.I., made much later. (31). It contains a remarkable level of textual criticism for its time: the points about tone are clearly expressed and used to move towards a valid social conclusion. Speaking in the same tones of an extremely ambiguous advertisement, he points out

... the extreme difficulty of dealing with such matters by law. The advertisement - on the face of it - is no more than harmless, while the object cannot be doubted, and yet cannot be proved, and certainly ought not to be assumed, for the ends of any law whatever. (32)

One may view this ambiguity in two ways. Either the readers were actually being gulled by exploiters or they understood the ambiguity and were thus "cocking a snook" at their supposed betters and moral mentors. Strahan obliquely points to the difficulties in interpretation of popular culture which are still with us today and which we shall see commentators dealing with in various ways. He has also underlined the moral ambiguity inherent in the novel form itself, ascribed a great potentiality for good or ill and thus reinforced the difficulties experienced in admitting it to the classroom. For the traditional teacher, therefore, the novel as an art form was too wide and various to be fully encompassed - ranging as it does from Sweeney Todd to The Brothers Karamazov. Allied to this - and springing from the sorts of consideration made by Strahan - was a distinct unease which pervaded much method and prescriptive writing concerning the use of fiction and the child's own reading. This unease took two main forms. The first was to do with the distinctive nature of fiction - the quality of narrative. We have previously seen Dent dismiss it as a quality unworthy of attention in the classroom: we shall see such transitional (between the traditional and progressive modes) writers as Ballard and Hayward attempting to

(31) See below: p.136

(32) Op. cit. p. 92

justify attention to it as an isolable quality and account for it as an educative instrument.

More importantly, we shall see the development of an influential argument which springs from the moral dilemma and which may briefly be summarised as follows. Is there a "literary Gresham's Law" in which bad reading drives out good, thus meaning that all morally suspect and generally unworthy literature should be kept away from the child? Or do all types of reading take their place on a ladder which can be ascended as well as descended, so that (say) a reading of a "trashy" pirate/treasure story in a comic will lead the child to Treasure Island? Strahan certainly feels unworthy literature is addictive. We shall note that answers to this question do not, as we should expect, split into neat traditional/progressive parcels: traditionalists may regard the comic as healthy; progressives may regard popular literature as "fantasying". This study, therefore, will investigate changing approaches taken this century towards the central problem of the role of fiction in schools.

CHAPTER 1 : DEVELOPMENTS IN THE TEACHING OF
VERNACULAR LITERATURE IN THE
NINETEENTH CENTURY

CHAPTER 1 - Developments in the teaching of vernacular literature
in the nineteenth century

a) Outline

Behind most of the twentieth century thought we shall be examining stand two figures - Matthew Arnold and Friedrich Froebel. Behind them, in turn, stand the figures of early Romanticism - Rousseau and the German Sturm und Drang movement especially behind Froebel; Wordsworth, Keats and Coleridge behind Arnold - Emile and Ode on the Intimations of Immortality are ancestors of Froebel's On the Education of Man. Coleridge's view of the Clerisy is the ancestor of Arnold's Alien who, in turn, is the ancestor of the Cambridge School and its version of discriminating elite. Behind twentieth-century progressive notions of creativity lies Coleridge's theory of the Imagination.

These assertions have been made without critical examination to indicate that what may appear two main and opposed strands of thought have many connections and are often difficult to separate, easy to unite. While many teachers might place a greater emphasis on "growth" than "culture" and others may do the opposite, few would reject one or the other entirely. Radical teachers, as we have seen, might reject a particular sort of "culture", but they will not reject education as a form of culturalising.

Nevertheless, the work of Holmes, Norwood and Hope, and Caldwell Cook in the early twentieth century indicates that the notions of "growth" and "culture" had become opposed. The effects of a system of education which had at any rate founded itself on a "culture", a particular notion of "cultivation" and a society which developed

according to these notions needed to be roundly condemned.

It is the purpose of this section on the nineteenth century chapter to examine the work of both Matthew Arnold and Froebel as far as it is specifically relevant to this enquiry. Arnold, in particular, needs to be set in his social and historical context because it is of crucial importance to the development of the native educational system and the general place of English in schools.

b) The debate on English in the nineteenth century

"Liberal Education"

Mathieson (1) discusses the divisiveness in the nineteenth century which led to the peculiarly ambiguous nature of English in schools. Public and grammar schools ignored the vernacular literature and emphasised the classics, while the elementary school, the Mechanics Institute and later, London University, were associated with the vernacular. Nevertheless, the "ideals of a liberal education" associated with the classics gave strength to "the notion of English as a character-building subject." (2)

Most nineteenth-century criticism of the public schools accepted the ends proposed for classical education but claimed that the public schools were not achieving these ends. The ends of education in the public school were expressed forcefully in the

(1) Mathieson, M: The Preachers of Culture: a study of English and its Teachers. Allen and Unwin, 1975.

(2) Ibid: p. 18

Report of the Clarendon Commission in 1861. (3)

... It is the office of education, not only to discipline some of the faculties, but to awaken, call out, and exercise them all so far as this can usefully be done in boyhood; to awaken tastes that may be developed in after-life; to impart early habits of reading, thought and observation; and to furnish the mind with such knowledge as is wanted at the outset of life. A young man is not well educated, indeed, is not educated at all - who cannot reason or observe or express himself easily and correctly, and who is unable to bear his part in cultivated society from ignorance of things which all who mix in it are assumed to be acquainted with. (4)

This notion of "cultivation", part of a Renaissance tradition springing from Castiglione and Sir Thomas Elyot, was accepted in its essentials by most English educationists in the nineteenth century. To the Clarendon Commissioners, the means of attaining it in the Public Schools were plain - their recommendation VIII is as follows:

The classical languages and literature should continue to hold the principal place in the course of study. (5)

Other commentators expressed similar notions with greater moral force. Thus Newman says: (6)

Liberal Education makes not the Christian,
not the Catholic, but the gentleman. It

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- (3) Report of H.M. Commissioners appointed to enquire into the revenues and management of certain colleges and schools and the studies pursued and the instruction given therein. (The Clarendon Report) 1861.
- (4) Ibid: p. 20
- (5) Ibid: p. 53
- (6) Newman, J.H.: The Scope and Nature of University Education (Discourse IV - Liberal knowledge its own end). 2nd Ed. Longman 1859

is well to be a gentleman; it is well to have a cultivated intellect, a delicate taste, a candid, equitable, dispassionate mind, a noble and courteous bearing in the conduct of life; - these are the connatural qualities of a large knowledge; they are the objects of a University. (7)

Newman, at the same time, shows dissatisfaction with the ends of practical and scientific education which he sees as inimical to the values of a liberal education.

There are two ways of using knowledge, and in matter of fact those who use it in one way are not likely to use it in the other, or at least in a very limited measure. You see then, gentlemen, here are two methods of Education; the one aspires to be philosophical, the other to be mechanical; the one rises towards ideas, the other is exhausted upon what is particular and external. (8)

The same ends for education are proposed by Sidgwick in Essays on a Liberal Education. (9)

Let us demand instead that all boys, whatever be their special bent and destination, be really taught literature, so that as far as possible they may learn to enjoy intelligently poetry and eloquence; that their interest in history may be awakened, stimulated, guided; that their views and sympathies may be enlarged and expanded by approaching noble, subtle and profound thoughts, refined and lofty feelings; that some comprehension of the varied development of human nature may ever afterward abide with them, the source and essence of a truly humanising culture. (10)

These three representative statements, therefore, indicate first, what the general aims of a liberal education should be; secondly,

(7) Ibid: p. 168

(8) Ibid: p. 155

(9) Farrar, Rev. F.W., M.A., F.R.S. (Ed) Essays on a Liberal Education MacMillan, 1867. (2nd. ed. 1868)

(10) Ibid: Sidgwick, H: Essay II: The Theory of Classical Education. p. 129

what the results of a classical education ought to be. It was Sidgwick's contention, along with many other commentators, that classical education as it was being carried out in the Public Schools was not producing these results for most of the pupils.

The key phrases in the extract from Sidgwick are "subtle and profound thoughts, refined and lofty feelings", acquaintance with which will lead to a "truly humanising culture". For Newman the "cultivated intellect", the "philosophical" as opposed to the "mechanical" are the leading ideas. Both commentators show a greater moral force than exists in the parallel need to "awaken tastes that may be developed in after-life" to enable the person to "bear his part in cultivated society" which is stated in the Clarendon Report. However, all three statements express similar ideas. It is noteworthy, too, that it is presumed that the qualities will be developed by exposure to and familiarity with the sources of the "noble, subtle and profound thoughts, refined and lofty feelings" - classical literature. It is from these roots that Shayer's "Classical" and "moral" fallacies in English teaching grew.

(c) Scientific Education

Many commentators feared the rising insistence on scientific education in the nineteenth century. Arnold was not the only one who saw elements in it inimical to the "humanising" power of the cultural heritage. Mathieson points out that the public

schools

... despised and distrusted science, identifying
it with grubby industrialism and godlessness.
(11)

For this reason, supporters of a scientific education had also to show that science was as much a means of "real culture" as a literary education. Huxley saw "an exclusively scientific education (as) at least as effectual as an exclusively literary education" in this respect. (12)

Spencer went further (13). He placed the highest value on scientific subjects, especially physical science, because of their practical value and because they best lead to cultivation of memory as well as their ability to inculcate moral values. Spencer saw the elements of a literary education in a most inferior position.

When the forces of nature have been fully conquered to man's use - when the means of production have been brought to perfection - when labour has been economised to the highest degree - when education has been so systematised that a preparation for the more essential activities may be made with comparative rapidity - and when, consequently, there is a great increase of spare time; then will the beautiful, both in Art and Nature, rightly fill a large space in the minds of all. (14)

The foreshadowings here of the twentieth century interest in education for leisure must not obscure the implication that

(11) Op. cit: p. 25

(12) Huxley, T.H.: Science and Education MacMillan, 1895. p. 141

(13) Spencer, Herbert: Education, Intellectual, Moral and Physical. London, 1861.

(14) Ibid: (edition used: The Thinker's Library: Watts, 1926,
p. 33)

aesthetic qualities have no intrinsic educational benefit beyond entertainment. Arnold's distrust of scientific education can be understood from this standpoint, especially as Spencer also implies that the merely "useful knowledge" - that which in Newman's words "is exhausted on what is external and particular" - is of far greater importance. Later on we shall see that Arnold did allow physical science the power to strike at the unlettered student-teacher's "electric chain", thus implying it had a function beyond "what is external and particular". (15) Nevertheless, the point is worth making that Arnold's fear of scientific education, which tended to merge with his dislike of the Revised Code and its educational implications, was so complete that he misunderstood the fact that Huxley, Spencer, et.al. also sought a "liberal education". It might even be said that his subsequent influence, which has carried on the tradition of the nineteenth century liberal educators, has been so great that he has been in part and unwittingly responsible for any polarisation between practical and aesthetic education which exists today.

(d) The rise of English Studies

The paradox that claims for English studies reflected the claims for the very classical education which rejected the vernacular has already been noted. Vernacular literature as a subject of study, however, had to be the preserve of the working-class and the Dissenting Academies. Foster-Watson (16) points out the low

(15) See below: p.26

(16) Foster-Watson - The English Grammar Schools London, 1908.

place of English studies in sixteenth and seventeenth century schools. Palmer (17) points out how, after the 1662 Act of Uniformity, English studies flourished most in the Dissenting Academies as opposed to the concentration on the classics in institutions characterised by high social class and association with the values of the Church of England. English as a University discipline hardly existed even at the end of the nineteenth century. This meant continued exclusion from the public schools. In turn was perpetuated the possession of the classics by the able and privileged, while the vernacular was available for the middle and working classes. At once, we see the nineteenth century tension between the needs of "illumination" for all men and the social philosophy underlying the Victorian class structure. English, however, was seen as a repository of the same values as the classics. Palmer, speaking of F.D. Maurice at the Working Men's College, says:

... his lectures show that he tried to bring out of literature the same moral and quasi-religious principles that were embodied in the practical life of the Working Men's College. Literature offered contact with great minds, and a bond of fellowship between men regardless of class or epoch. This is a special extension of Romanticism in the direction of Christian Socialism ... Maurice (in 1863) evaluated two kinds of knowledge, the factual and the spiritual, in the distinction between "acquisition" and "illumination". (18)

The similarities between this and Newman are apparent. Maurice's "distinction between 'acquisition' and 'illumination' " exactly parallels Newman's notions of the "mechanical" and the

(17) Palmer, D.J. - The Rise of English Studies O.U.P. 1965

(18) Ibid: p. 36

"philosophical". The values of classical education which were claimed for a particular class were here claimed for a whole society. Maurice, therefore, was echoing much of what was being said by Carlyle, Ruskin, Kingsley and Morris and the pre-Raphaelites, as well as Newman, Sidgwick and Arnold. The very existence of Working Men's Colleges with their emphasis on the study of vernacular literature illustrates a need for humanisation felt by both the teachers and the taught. Ruskin asserted the values of the cultural heritage and the need for its propagation.

All books are divisible into two classes, the books of the hour and the books of all time...
I hope it will not be long before royal or national libraries will be formed in every considerable city, with a royal series of books in them. (19)

That there was a deep opposition between the rival claims of liberal and practical education (the "philosophical" and the "mechanical") is plain. The concern of Maurice and Ruskin as well as Arnold was that this opposition should not be expressed in class terms so that the "philosophical" was the sole possession of the able and privileged. In the context of this enquiry Arnold becomes the central figure, not only because Culture and Anarchy depicts a class-ridden society which had become what it was because of insistence on the "mechanical" (Hebraism) as opposed to the "philosophical" (Hellenism) but because, in the figure of the "Alien", he provides a striking metaphor for his work in and his ambitions for the nineteenth century elementary school.

(19) Ruskin, J: Sesame and Lilies 1865. (Edition used - MacMillan Library of English Classics, 1912), p. 210.

(e) Pleas for English in schools - Sidgwick and a Liberal Education

Shayer (20) points out that throughout the nineteenth century most emphasis in English as it made its slow beginnings in Universities outside Oxford and Cambridge was on language and grammar. Palmer, Potter (21) and Tillyard (22) show that English entered Oxford and Cambridge in the guise of language study, philology and cognitive non-literary disciplines. Mathieson (23) points out the low place given to English in the public schools. All this indicates that English as a literary, humanising subject was regarded as a "soft option". To gain academic respectability, English had to be studied in the same way as the classics. Language study and other elements of the cognitive had to take precedence over "mere" reading and "exposure" to literature. In this way disciplined rigour and intellectual toughness would be provided. As we shall see, Arnold himself was to make something of the same assumption: however, liberal educators who criticised the current state of classical education made powerful pleas for English literature as a vital element in liberal education which would not merely be a substitute for the classics. In Essays on a Liberal Education, the classics are attacked and English vindicated in two ways.

(20) Op. cit: pp. 2-3

(21) Potter, S: The Muse in Chains - A Study in Education. Jonathan Cape, 1937.

(22) Tillyard, E.M.W: The Muse Unchained Bowes and Bowes, Cambridge, 1958.

(23) Op. cit: esp. p. 43

First, Houghton opposes the basic contention of the Clarendon Report and its assumption of the higher social status of the classics.

Any training which tends to keep up distinctions, whether real or fictitious, must injure that community of views and objects which is so essential, not only to personal comfort, but to advancement in any special association. (24)

Secondly, Sidgwick makes his famous distinction between natural and artificial education, the first

... that which makes him imbibe the same ideas that are afterwards to form the furniture of his mind; imparts to him the same accomplishments and dexterities that he will desire to possess. (25)

The second

... is one which, in order that man may ultimately know one thing, teaches him another. (26)

The classics, it is implied, prepared only obliquely for life: were an essentially artificial education in the way they were currently taught. Sidgwick further insists that Latin is not a Universal Grammar (27); that Classical Literature does not have an exclusive moral excellence (28), and that while classical literature has a supreme aesthetic value, that of vernacular literature is

(24) Op. cit: (Lord Houghton: Social Results of a Classical Education)
p. 384

(25) Ibid: p. 87

(26) Ibid: p. 87

(27) Ibid: pp. 92-3

(28) Ibid: pp. 103-4

not necessarily inferior (29).. Sidgwick, like Arnold, believes that literature - especially in the vernacular - is "a criticism of life" and subsequently shows a striking similarity with Arnold.

I feel sure that, if the schoolmaster is ever to be, as I think he ought to be, a missionary of culture ... he must make the study of modern literature a substantive and important part of his training. (30)

The Taunton Report (31) which looked at education as a whole in England and paved the way for the 1871 Education Act, returned to this theme. Commenting on the evidence of Professor Seeley (himself a contributor to Essays on a Liberal Education), the compilers say:

... Professor Seeley has rightly defined the true purpose of teaching English literature; not, that is, to find material with which to teach English Grammar, but to kindle a living interest in the learner's mind, to make him feel the force and beauty of which the language is capable, to refine and elevate his taste. If it could be so taught, it would certainly have one merit that could hardly be over-estimated, namely that the man would probably return to it when the days of boyhood were over, and many who would never look again at Horace or Virgil, would be very likely to read Shakespeare and Milton throughout their lives. (32)

The statement owes much to Sidgwick. "Refinement" and "elevation" of taste are the main ends; The "force" and "beauty" of the native language is a quality the learner is not going to experience with the classics. Shakespeare and Milton are seen to be a part

(29) Ibid: pp. 105-6

(30) Ibid: p. 129

(31) Report of the Royal Commission known as the Schools Inquiry Commission (The Taunton Report) 1868.

(32) Ibid: p. 26

of as valid a cultural heritage as Horace and Virgil. If the "man" will "return to it when the days of boyhood were over" then vernacular literature is seen as a culturalising agent in its own right and not merely through the agency of the school. It, therefore, provides, in Sidgwick's terms, a "natural" as opposed to "artificial" education, for it will become part of his "furniture of the mind."

Though the Taunton Commissioners recommend the "keeping up of distinctions" by suggesting different grades of school with different types of education suitable for different social classes, many of the points made by the proponents of English were accepted. Thus, in the "second-grade schools"

English ... should be carefully cultivated to the very last, and no boy should pass through a school of this kind without having acquired a knowledge of the best English authors. (33).

Even in the first-grade (Public) schools,

... besides the classics, it would now be generally admitted that English literature and the elements of Political Economy, modern languages, maths. and natural science ought to find a place in such schools as these, and that even if they be considered subordinate subjects, they should be made a serious part of the business of the school. (34)

(33) Ibid: p. 84

(34) Ibid: p. 86

(f) Elementary Education : Inspectors' Reports and
Royal Commissions

Arnold's main concern was with elementary education. In this field the main division was different from that so far examined. Newman, in differentiating between the "mechanical" and "philosophical" was thinking of scientific and liberal education. While a tension between "mechanical" and "philosophical" existed in the elementary sector, it was of a different sort - between a basic literacy tempered by "useful knowledge" and any vestigial degree of "humanisation" possible.

Garwood (35) points out that H.M.I.'s in the 1840's saw that reading in elementary schools was taught as a drudgery, with virtually no books except the Bible. Reading in the schools was associated with moral instruction, a point which Mullins (36) also makes. Garwood comments:

By the turn of the century such direct moralising began to diminish. The moral approach became a broader one and instead of the do's and don'ts of the old readers, there developed a faith in literature and poetry as civilising influences ... once they had learned to read, the Bible was not the only literary treasure which was open to them in school. (37)

The process outlined above by Garwood was largely the result of the work of Matthew Arnold; however, this sub-section seeks to

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- (35) Garwood, K.W.S.: Towards Literacy: Elementary Schools of the 1840's. Educational Review, Vol.13, No. 1. November 1960. pp. 56-64.
- (36) Mullins, W.R.: A Study of significant changes in the theory of the teaching of English to older pupils in Elementary and Secondary Schools: 1860-1960. Unpublished M.Ed. thesis, University of Leicester, 1968.
- (37) Op cit: p. 63

show some of the recommendations of Royal Commissions and other H.M.I.'s concerning elementary schools so that Arnold's Reports can be given a more specific reference point than the larger questions dealt with previously.

In 1862, one year after the Newcastle Commission reported, Lowe's Revised Code was promulgated. The subsequent attitudes of HMI's polarised around it. Some saw it as helpful: they could trace the child's progress more easily and found the system of "payment by results" a wonderful spur to teachers. Most of the HMI's, however, took a totally different view: selected quotation and comment will show that the chief concepts of liberal education and "culture" were not urged for the elementary school by Matthew Arnold alone.

A fair statement of those who did not wish to see any humanising culture spread to the elementary schools is that of Watkins, an Assistant Commissioner deputed to examine Welsh Schools for the Newcastle Commission.

It is impossible to shut one's eyes to the fact ... that the school age of the children must needs be small, that they are born for hand-work and must go to hand-work as soon as they are physically qualified for it ... yet it has been practically ignored. Their (those "most interested in the education of the working classes") chief efforts seem to have been directed to inform the child, intelligently indeed, and methodically on subjects of great interest and much value to those whose lot it is to labour with the head more than with the hands, but not such as to fit him best for his work in life. He has been in too many instances dealt with as if he were to become a scholar rather than a workman. (38)

{38 } Report of the Commissions appointed to inquire into the State of Popular Education in England. Vol. 1, 1861 (The Newcastle Report) p. 261.

This view was not shared by most of the Commissioners (many of whom later appear as Chief Inspectors). Fraser, reporting on the West of England, draws attention to

The importance of good reading - the key of knowledge - the power which is to enable man to become a self-educator (39)

Cumin, dealing with Devonport and Bristol, shows how book provision in elementary schools made the ideal of a "self-educator" virtually unattainable.

Again, the school books generally in use are singularly uninteresting. Those who compiled them seem to think that increase in useful knowledge and the infusion of moral ideas are the only objects for which reading ought to be employed. Interesting stories and anecdotes are comparatively rare; and thus dull books produce their natural consequence - bad readers.
(40)

Acceptance of reading for pleasure is borne out in the Report almost immediately by Hodgson, who examined East and South-East London.

Again, the choice of reading book is most unfortunate. The subjects are often uninteresting; they are torn into shreds and patches; the language is often difficult and unfamiliar. "Robinson Crusoe" or "Uncle Tom's Cabin" would be far more effective in teaching to read well, because they excite deeper and more continuous interest than the best selections from the best authors in prose or poetry, whatever be the subject of which they teach. (41)

(39) Ibid: p. 251

(40) Ibid: p. 251

(41) Ibid: p. 254

The Assistant Commissioners largely rejected the idea that reading was a mechanical activity picked up by rote: they accepted the principle that interest was the factor which would enable children to keep the ability to read once it was acquired. It was, of course, quite possible for people expressing opinions as widely divergent as Watkins and Fraser to believe it, for estimates of the quality of the interest and the use to which the reading would be put were not, in any concerted way, considered (in spite of Hodgson's slight genuflection towards the notion of literary form). The task was to improve the efficiency of the schools within their social limits (the Report comments adversely that children from higher social classes are being taught in them) and the books provided appeared to work against any such efficiency.

Within the limits of its time, the Newcastle Commission's Report was surprisingly liberal. The fact that "to many children the language of books is a foreign language" (42) was, in the eyes of many contemporaries, proof enough that the Poor were of a different order, beyond reach of the benefits of education. The last passage quoted indicates that the temper of the Commission was different.

The Newcastle Commission could have set an official standard for popular education. However, such conclusions as were not rejected outright were twisted into the 1862 Revised Code. Sturt shows how Lowe distorted the Commission's findings to his own ends; for example, over the matter of the recommended 15s. grant (43).

(42) Ibid: p. 261

(43) Op. cit: p. 249

Even so, the Commission did much to lay the foundations of the 1870 Act and - more importantly for our purposes - it gave Inspectors an important lead. Many Inspectors - themselves educated in a classical, and often ecclesiastical, tradition - realised that the contrast between merely functional instruction and the culturalising effect of liberal education was at its starkest in the elementary school. Like Arnold, they assumed that this culture should not be the preserve of one class. Nevertheless, one must assume that behind their pleas for the humanising of the elementary school child lies Arnold's fear of the "Populace" expressed in Culture and Anarchy. Also, it is clear that the Inspectors tended to regard the pupil as the passive recipient who only had to come into contact with literature for the "culturalising" to take place. Thus learning by heart became a practice often recommended. A typical case made for it is that of Capel Sewell in the 1874 Reports.

Learning by heart is a grateful, easy task to children. In 300 well-chosen lines of Wordsworth, Scott or Cowper, there is a variety of things to master which interest without fatiguing, which awaken curiosity and enlarge the learner's stock of words and ideas; yet this variety is not overpowering because it is limited by the passage of which the pupil has an exact textual acquaintance. Such work is the key to intelligent as distinct from fluent reading. It cannot well be "crammed". (44)

In 1881, literature appeared among the schedules for extra subjects. Requirements consisted of amounts of poetry to be learnt by heart ("with knowledge of meaning and allusions") in three

(44) Committee of Council on Education: Inspectors' Reports, 1874.
p. 186.

stages, rising from 100 to 300 lines (45). The influence of Arnold is plain - indeed, 1878 had seen the most energetic defence of poetry made in his own Reports (46). However, the schedule was inadequate - like the Revised Code, it merely provided easily testable material. One can well imagine pupils "getting up" their 100 lines for the test. Meanwhile, however, books provided by the schools remained of poor standard, as Coward in 1888 pointed out.

The books, too, are to blame, or rather the choice of books, for there are good books to be had; and if our managers and teachers would get books calculated to excite the interest and imagination of children, they would do much to stimulate a taste for reading continuous stories, biographies, tales of adventure, good novels, for of such should the children's reader consist. It is curious to observe how very rarely such books find their way into the schools. I fear one reason of this is that teachers frequently know nothing of and care less for books of any literary value. (47)

More succinctly, the Rev. J.D. Steward said

The school process dwarfs where it ought to expand and represses where it ought to encourage. (48)

Those Inspectors who agreed with Arnold had two main opponents - on the one hand, those who opposed all forms of "culture" for the poor; on the other, the inertia of the schools themselves. This combination caused the state of affairs Steward notes. However, there was another important element noted and expressed forcibly in the Cross Report. (49)

(45) Committee of Council on Education: Reports 1881, pp. 134-5

(46) See below: pp.55-56

(47) Committee of Council on Education: Reports 1888, p. 291

(48) Ibid: p. 353

(49) Report of the Royal Commission on the Elementary Education Acts: Final Report, 1888 (The Cross Report)

One of the chief difficulties connected with reading is said to be that the language of the reading books is not the language of the children's home and out-of-door life, and is "an unknown tongue to the children of the illiterate, especially in remote situations." (50)

The language of the cultural heritage itself was alien to the elementary school child. The literature schedule, by virtue of its limited scope, could not produce familiarity with this language for the child. Only wide reading of books with a certain quality and level of content could do so. The Cross Report contains a wide ranging statement to this effect.

Looked at from all sides, it is plain that there is room for much improvement in reading. We are of opinion that it would be of advantage to increase, rather than to diminish, the number of books to be read in each standard, but that the spelling requirements should be diminished, and we think that unless the scholars are taught to read with ease and acquire a taste for reading, the school learning will not be followed up in after life. It must be remembered that a child who has thoroughly acquired the art of reading with ease has within its reach the key of all knowledge, and it will rest with itself alone to determine the limit of the progress. In a reading lesson, the whole of the teacher's attention should be concentrated on securing fluency and expression and in interesting the scholars in the subject matter of the book. The art of reading aloud is acquired largely by the ear and would be better taught by the teachers reading to their scholars ... We strongly recommend the establishment of school libraries as a material encouragement to the habit of reading at home and as forming important aids to the school course of teaching in securing a taste for reading. (51)

(50) Ibid: p. 167

(51) Ibid: pp. 135-6

This passage marks a rejection of most of the practices of the Revised Code and the schedules. Breadth of reading is stressed and less emphasis on the acquisition of skills is recommended. A "macro" rather than a "micro" view is taken: there is an acceptance that reading fluency may not be assessed by objective tests but should be seen as a long-term aim carrying on into later life. Certainly a main preoccupation of Inspectors from then until 1902 was the urging of provision of cheap libraries and other means of wide availability of good reading matter for children.

However, as always, the actualities of the schools worked against such provision: in 1895, E.H. Brodie notes his sub-inspector, Mr. Wilde (South-West Division) as saying:

School libraries exist in 41 schools only,
the number of books varying from 50 to
1,000. (52)

and Mr. Codd in the same area as saying:

School libraries make but small progress.
In some cases the parish or Sunday School
library takes the place of a day school,
but generally there is none. (53)

In the same year, the Rev. C.H. Parey in the North-Central Division notes Mr. Fowler complaining that such libraries as there were tended to propagate useful knowledge and popular science, and that other values implicit in the reading habit were in danger of being lost. Quoting John Morley, he says:

The study of literature, literary culture,
having as its object "to open the mind, to

(52) Committee of Council on Education: Reports 1895, p. 16

(53) Ibid: p. 17

correct it, to refine it, to enable it to comprehend and digest its knowledge, to give it power over its own faculties, critical exactness, sagacity, address and expression" must never submit to be relegated to an obscure place in the field of education. (54)

It would have been ironic if the provision of libraries should result in the triumph of factual information over this particular notion of "literary culture", for it would seem to negate almost everything the Inspectors had been saying. However, some of their observations did indicate this to be the case. Thus in his report on the Eastern Division for 1898, W.E. Currey quotes Mr. Swinburne as saying:

The following case throws a startling light on the reading of girls about to leave school.

School - Church of England (highest grants) -
Number of girls present = 40 (Standard V, VI, VII).

The books are those mentioned by me, and the numbers in brackets indicate the number of girls out of the forty who had read them.

'Pilgrim's Progress' (3); 'Settlers in Canada' (0); 'Robinson Crusoe' (3); Grimms 'Fairy Tales' (2); Anderson's ditto (2); 'Parables from Nature' (0); 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland' (2); 'Aesop's Fables' (0); 'Swiss Family Robinson' (1); and many others with similar results. (55)

Even so, much had been done over the years surveyed here to lead to a set of justifications for the teaching of literature in the elementary schools on the even of the 1902 Act. In summary, these were the points the Inspectors had arrived at.

(54) Ibid: p. 34

(55) Committee of Council on Education: Reports 1899, p. 179

First, reading was not a mechanical exercise: it should be widened into an activity habitual in later life, as a means of, as well as a development of intelligence and self-education. Secondly, there was a literary heritage open to all, the values of which would be expressed in such terms as "higher culture" or "refinement" - concepts unexamined, but felt to be tangibly present. As far as fiction itself was concerned, the understanding of an extended narrative was in itself an act calculated to develop the intelligence. These activities, though developed and adapted from the notions of "training the whole man" of the public school, were no longer seen as being the preserve of any particular class. Popular education, more and more, was being seen by Inspectors as an agent for the welding together of a society. There was, therefore, a similarity in aim between the Inspectors and later progressive writers such as Norwood and Hope, Holmes (himself an ex-Inspector) and Adams. Nevertheless, the gap between (in Holme's terms) "What is" and "What might be" was great.

The Inspectors also carried on the tradition of nineteenth-century liberal education when they talked of literature's tendency to "liberalise", "elevate" and "humanise". Asserting the need for "culture" rather than "self-development", their pleas for liberalisation were, nevertheless, different in kind from the proponents of progressive thought yet to be examined.

(g) Matthew Arnold's Elementary School Reports

Arnold's reports as an Inspector of Schools (56) are documents of the greatest importance. His position concerning literature in the Elementary School can be summed up as follows. Literature was essential in the Elementary School because of its "humanising influence" and "refining power". These qualities were more likely naturally to be possessed by those who had received a classical education. The twin halves of English - grammar and literature - were complementary as language and literature study ought to be in classics teaching. Grammar has a rationale and trains the mind; literature "elevates". The qualities literature fosters do not provide merely a gentlemanly veneer or social gloss. They have positive aspects, referring deep into the personality. Each person possesses "an electric chain" waiting to be struck. Other agencies besides literature can do it but literature is the most potent. Not only through learning by heart but also by the provision in schools of serious worthwhile literature could the elementary school child be admitted to the literary culture.

A brief illustration of the virtues and the limitations of his position can be given by consideration of the following two passages. The first is on the need for a common grammar textbook at all levels of schooling, training and teaching.

(56) Arnold, Matthew: Reports on Elementary Schools, 1852-1882.
MacMillan 1889 (Edition used: ed. F3,
Marvin, Board of Education, HMSO, 1910).

I really think it matters little, comparatively, what the text-book is, so that it be uniformly adopted. Some of the books now in use are, no doubt, more perfect than others. In grammar, for instance, the system of almost all of them has its rationale ... Every one of these grammars following a different system (the scholar becoming a teacher), masters the rationale of none of them; and in consequence, after all his labour, he often ends by possessing of the science of grammar nothing but a heap of terms jumbled together in inextricable confusion. (57)

First of all, it is obviously axiomatic to Arnold that education is more than the amassing of facts. The scholar and later the teacher must master a rationale. However, he implies that the most important quality of any system is its consistency rather than its accuracy (when he says "some of the books now in use are, no doubt, more perfect than others", there seems no implication that its perfection or otherwise disqualifies it from use). Mastery of a consistent rationale without reference to its relevance implies "a training of the mind", exploded versions of faculty and transfer psychology and the reasoning behind a strictly classical education. Arnold's views of the liberalisation of the Elementary School curriculum are of that time and - as far as the terms in which they are couched are concerned - identified too closely with the language prevalent in the then contemporary debate concerning education to seem applicable still today. When Arnold comes to talk of literature itself (he at no point separates fiction from the rest of literature), we have more overtly classically-inspired assertions - "refining power", "elevating and inspiring element", for example. For the purposes of this introduction we must look at his notions of literature generally in schools. His most succinct statement occurs in his

(57) Ibid: pp. 23-24

report of 1861 on Borough Road and Stockwell Training Colleges:
for Arnold it is a sine qua non, though, as the quoted passage
continues, an important cavil is made.

Undoubtedly no refining influence is more
powerful than that of literary culture ...
but this influence seems to need in the
recipient a certain refinement of nature
at the outset in order to make itself felt;
and with this previous refinement, music
and physical science appear able to dispense.
(58)

Musical and physical science have, says Arnold, the power to

awaken young men of the class to which
these students belong; to be capable of
"striking the electric chain in them", in
a way in which no other part of their
instruction can. (59)

The metaphor of "the electric chain" implies that for Arnold
culture and civilisation are no mere gentlemanly veneers. The
passage as a whole implies that literature can do better the things
that music and physical science can do provided that there is already
a "certain refinement of nature" already there. However, it is
symptomatic of the general imprecision of terms used in educational
writing at this time that one is forced to ask wherein lies the
difference between the effects of the civilisation given by music
and science and the "certain refinement" which is the prerequisite
if literature is to perform the same function. One's immediate
reaction to Arnold's statement would be to reverse it - to say that
literature is the most easily accessible of the three because its
raw material is the language we all use, while for the full
appreciation of music - or physical science - one has to be
initiated into a wholly specialised language. Otherwise one merely

(58) Ibid: p. 251

(59) Ibid: p. 250

"appreciates" them in terms of an uncritical emotional wash, or feelings of "awe" or "uplift". (The reference to physical science, in fact, reminds one of Wilson's essay in Essays on a Liberal Education.) That Arnold could seriously make this statement suggests first that his notion of "refinement" and "civilisation" was at best undefined and remarkably uncritical; secondly, that it was conditioned by the generally accepted ideas of the effects of a classical education. Obviously Arnold is speaking of pupil teachers who were largely inarticulate and who had been starved of any literary influence whatsoever, and in this context the point has a certain validity.

Nevertheless, the inference one makes from the last two passages quoted is that for Arnold - no matter what social position he took and no matter how severe his opposition to Robert Lowe (who was himself a "liberal" in terms of educational theory as opposed to practice) (60) - the classics remained the finest education. The "rationale" of grammar was important because

the minds with some aptitude or other for which the discipline of learning to do a thing right will be most beneficial, are numerous. And to the young, grammar gives this discipline best when it limits itself most. (61)

The proposition then is that simplified grammar develops common-sense and the ability to do a thing right. Arnold is not concerned with how a grammar is formed but that it will, for the pupil, form a set of rules which can be easily learnt and understood and which will be, above all, exact. In fact, he is justifying English

(60) Vide Curtis & Boulton - A short History of Educational Thought: UTP. 1953. 3rd.ed. 1961. p. 445

(61) Ibid: p. 87

Grammar as a substitute for the classics as a body of knowledge enabling transfer to take place. This implies a belief in faculty psychology.

However, as the child studying classics worked through the language, the "refining power" of the literature was supposed to work on him. And the only "refining power" Arnold could really propose for vernacular literature in the Elementary School was a pale shadow, standing in the same relation to it as English grammar stood in relation to linguistic study of Greek and Latin. Nevertheless, without it, Arnold sees the future elementary school teacher himself impoverished, completely unfitted to join the ranks of the "Aliens" (62) as a revivifying and leavening influence on a rigidly stratified society.

I have been much struck in examining them towards the close of their apprenticeship, when they are generally at least eighteen years old, with the utter disproportion between the great amount of positive information and the low degree of mental culture they exhibit. Young men, whose knowledge of grammar, of the minutest details of geographical and historical facts, and above all of mathematics, often cannot paraphrase a plain passage of prose or poetry without totally misapprehending it, or write half a page of composition on any subject without falling into gross blunders of taste and expression. I cannot but think that with a body of young men so highly instructed, too little attention has hitherto been paid to this side of education; the side through which it chiefly forms the character; the side which has been perhaps too exclusively attended to in schools for the higher classes, and to the development of which it is the boast of what is called classical education to be mainly directed. (63)

(62) Vide: Culture and Anarchy

(63) Ibid: p. 17

Arnold continues his plea for "study of portions of the best English authors" for teachers-in-training with the significant statement -

...it would have the great social advantage of tending to bring them into intellectual sympathy with the educated of the upper classes. (64)

Arnold elsewhere illustrates the particular sort of crudeness he refers to with the paraphrase "can you not wait upon the lunatic" for Shakespeare's canst thou not minister to a mind diseased. (65) It is this sort of gaucherie caused by lack of any humanising education which he fears, and which leads to his attack on the spread of scientific education.

To have the power of using, which is the thing wished, these data of natural science, a man must, in general, have first been in some measure moralised; and for moralising him it will be found not easy, I think to dispense with those old agents, letters, poetry, religion. (66)

Arnold's attack here, however, seems less directed at Huxley and the other contributors to The Culture demanded by Modern Life and more at those who advocated the inculcation of a merely useful knowledge. His report for 1860 expresses (albeit at some length) his main criticism of the nineteenth century elementary school and the foundation of his case for the teaching of literature within that school. We also see how his experience of foreign education gave an important extra dimension to his views.

The candour with which school inspectors in France avowed to me their dissatisfaction with the school books in use there led me to reflect on the great imperfection exhibited by our school books also. I found in the

(64) Ibid: p. 14

(65) Ibid: p. 176

(66) Ibid: p. 178

French schools good manuals for teaching arithmetic, a good manual for teaching geography; what was wanting there, as it is wanting with us, was a good reading-book, or course of reading. It is not enough remembered in how many cases his reading book forms the whole literature, except his Bible, of the child attending a primary school. If then, instead of literature, his reading book, as is too often the case, presents him with bad literature instead of good - with the writing of second or third rate authors, feeble, incorrect and colourless, he has not, as the rich have, the oorrective of an abundance of good literature to counteract the bad effect of trivial and ill-written school-books; the second or third rate literature of his school-book remains for him his sole or, at least his principal literary standard ... the ... books ... have for the poor scholar the grave fault of actually doing what they can to spoil his taste when they are nearly his only means for forming it ... To this defectiveness of our reading books I attribute much of that grave and discouraging deficiency in anything like literary taste and feeling, which even well-instructed pupil-teachers of four or five years' training, which even the ablest students in our training schools, still continue almost invariably to exhibit ... (67)

Arnold does not want books of facts; he wants "reading books of which the contents were really well related and interesting" (68) because they would give

... the best chance of inspiring quick scholars with a real love for reading and literature in the only way in which such a love is really inspired, by animating and moving them; and if they succeeded in doing this, they would have this further advantage, that the literature for which they inspired a taste would be a good, a sound and a truly refining literature. (69)

This passage recalls that quoted earlier about the "electric chain". Arnold, in assuming literature's refining power, recognises the necessity for the child's exposure to it as early as possible and,

(67) Ibid: pp. 81-82

(68) Ibid: p. 83

(69) Ibid: p. 83

by implication, also recognises the "refinement" given by the presumably far more literate background of the child embarking on a classical education. He also recognises that this literary background enables discrimination and judgment to take place ("an abundance of good literature to counteract the bad effect of trivial and ill-written school-books") and sees that the mechanics of learning to read are best served by a content of a sort which motivates their mastery by the child. The school book will teach children to read if it is worth reading.

In 1863, Arnold shows his approval of the introduction into pupils' studies of "the learning by heart of passages from some standard author". He goes on to say:

How difficult it seems to do anything for their taste and culture. I have often said how much easier it seems to get entrance to their minds and to awaken them by means of music or of physical science than by means of literature; still, if it can be done by literature at all, it has the best chance of being done by the way now proposed. (70)

Once again there is a negative tone to this. More explicit than before is Arnold's feeling that exposure to literature is all that is needed: repeated is the move towards definition of the desired quality in terms of what it is not:

Ignorance is nothing: such a blunder as this of an English student "Pope lived a little prior to the Christian era", a French or Swiss student might also commit; but the hopeless want of tact and apprehensiveness shown by such a sentence as this, "I should consider Newton as a great author; firstly on account of the style and value of his works; secondly, on account of his most valuable and wonderful discoveries,

coupled with the pains he took to diffuse his self-acquired knowledge among the people", no French or Swiss student, who had read the books and heard the lectures which the English student who wrote that sentence had heard would in my opinion ever equal! (71)

If this particular sort of illiteracy can be avoided by exposure to literature in the form of learning by heart, and such learning can lead to detailed familiarity, then we can see why, in subsequent reports, Arnold begins to lay stress on the virtues of recitation - not because in itself it is a particularly good educational tool, but that it will do something to give the child humanisation and refinement.

... all that can be said is that what practically will be found to contribute most towards forming a pupil is familiarity with masterpieces. (72)

Arnold, in the 1878 Report, makes the point even more explicitly:

But for a higher purpose, to serve in any way to form a pupil in addition to giving him the mere power of reading, no serious person would maintain that our reading books are at present fitted. But good poetry is formative; it has too, the precious power of acting by itself and in a way managed by nature, not through the instrumentality of that somewhat terrible character, the scientific educator. I believe that the rhythm and diction of good poetry are capable of exercising some formative effect, even though the sense be imperfectly understood. But, of course, the good of poetry is not really got unless the sense of the words is known. And more and more I find it learnt and known; more and more it will be easy to refuse to let the recitation count for anything unless the meaning of what is recited is thoroughly learnt and known. It will be observed that thus we are remedying what I have noticed as the signal mental defect of our school children - their almost incredible scantiness of vocabulary.

(71) Ibid: p. 100

(72) Ibid: p. 147

We enlarge their vocabulary and with their vocabulary their circles of ideas. At the same time we bring them under the formative influence of really good literature, really good poetry. (73)

As the years progress, Arnold's view of the necessity for literature - and in particular, poetry - in the elementary school is expressed in even stronger terms: the fight against the Revised Code mentality had always to be waged. Thus in the 1886 Report, he says:

Good poetry does undoubtedly tend to form the soul and character; it tends to beget a love of beauty and truth in alliance together; it suggests, however indirectly, high and noble principles of action, and it inspires the emotion so helpful in making principles operative. Hence its extreme importance seems to me at present quite extraordinary. (74)

This is probably the most exactly-phrased version Arnold gives in the reports of the point of teaching literature. It is noteworthy that the tone in some respects differs from his other critical work. The "high seriousness" and "criticism" of life that he sees in poetry here become a rather conventional piece of morality - almost didactic. It is reminiscent of Shayer's "classical fallacy". Yet the phrase "to form the soul and character" indicate that Arnold saw "culture" as containing within it a version of "growth" - that its effects went deeper than the inculcation of a list of precepts but had a definite formative influence on the child.

This summary, then, can be gleaned from Arnold's Reports: if there were nothing else, Arnold's influence might well be comparatively

(73) Ibid: pp. 187-189

(74) Ibid: pp. 200-201

small. But if we put them side by side with Culture and Anarchy, we see them in a new context. "Refinement" and "culture" become "the one thing needful". The need for "humanising instruction" becomes not merely something desirable but an overriding necessity in the face of the division of society into Barbarians, Philistines and Populace.

A band of educated and cultured Elementary School teachers would be obvious recruits to the ranks of the "Aliens". Furthermore, the anti-industrial stance that Arnold takes throughout Culture and Anarchy, allied with firm opposition to the values of the Revised Code places him in many ways close to Romantic-progressive thought. The justifications for literature in terms of "refining power" that he offers place him firmly in the nineteenth-century liberal tradition seeing vernacular literature as "the poor man's classics" and seeking to humanise the "populace". The effect of literature is mainly in terms of "culture". Nevertheless, when seen in terms of the far more dynamic concept of "the electric chain" and of his urgent prescriptions for the Elementary School as a means of "humanising" the "populace", Arnold's thought looks forward to that of later progressives such as Norwood and Hope, and Edmond Holmes. His importance for the purposes of this enquiry therefore, is mainly that many different lines of thought are developed from the assertions that he made.

(h) The Early Progressives

The progressive educators' attitude towards fiction is of extreme importance to the enquiry. Their concept of growth has to be examined in relation to Arnold's and the classical educators' concept of culture. At first, progressive education and the reading of fiction seem opposed. Rousseau, in Emile, forbids all fiction except for Robinson Crusoe. The exception is made because Robinson Crusoe shows a man learning by doing and thus creating his own world completely untrammelled by a corrupt society. In effect, the work provides a model for a particular mode of living.

Wordsworth, like Coleridge, objected to the decadent contemporary fiction - "frantic novels", as he called them (75). However, he also regarded the idea of story, of narrative, as essential to growth because it prepared the child for experience yet to come (76). In making this distinction, Wordsworth gives the nub of the progressive standpoint for the duration of this enquiry. In Book V of The Prelude, lines 451-457, Wordsworth recounts how as a child of nine he saw the body of a drowned man recovered from the lake.

... No soul debasing fear,
Young as I was, a child not nine years old,
Possessed me, for my inner eye had seen
Such sights before, among the shining streams
Of faery land, the forest⁺ romance.
Their spirit hallowed the sad spectacle
With decoration of ideal grace ...

For Wordsworth the power of story is a potent one. Like Rousseau, he rejected the corrupt, hectic effusions of the contemporary novel.

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- (75) Wordsworth, W: Preface to Lyrical Ballads 1800 (edition used - ed. Carlos Baker. Holt, Rinehart and Winston 1948, p. 7).
- (76) For a full discussion of this point relative to Wordsworth, see Field, C: The Selection and Presentation of Fiction in the Junior School. Unpublished M.Ed. thesis, University of Leeds, 1964. Chap. 2, pp. 129-145.

However, particular types of story have a potentiality for helping growth which Rousseau does not allow. The particular types of story are those which can have no connection with the urbanised, corrupt society - fairy-tale, myth and legend.

Oh! give us once again the wishing-cap
Of Fortunatus and the invisible coat
Of Jack the Giant-killer, Robin Hood
and Sabra in the forest with St. George
(77)

Froebel, too, sees the importance of story in the growth of the child. In The Education of Man (78), his first remarks on myth and story are made in the context of the "boyhood" stage of man. At this stage of development - about the age of seven - play is essentially purposive.

While, during the previous period of childhood, the aim of play consisted simply in activity as such, its aim lies now in a definite, conscious purpose; it seeks representation as such, or the thing to be represented in the activity. (79)

This plainly has become a basic tenet of progressive education; however, for Froebel, the "external activity" is not enough, for in man there exists another, complementary, desire ...

... a desire of the soul that cannot be gratified by external occupations, external activity. (80)

(77) Wordsworth, W. The Prelude. Book V. 11.341-4.
(78) Froebel, F: The Education of Man, the Art of Education, Instruction and Training arrived at in the Educational Institute Keilhau, 1826. Edition used - translated and annotated by Hailmann, W.N., Appleton (N.Y.), 1887, 2nd edition, 1906.

(79) Ibid: pp. 112-3

(80) Ibid: p. 114

This desire is to feel oneself part of a continuity from past to present - "he would know the reason, the past cause of what he now is" (81). It is here that the need for stories arises.

The existence of the present teaches him the existence of the past ... who fails to remember the keen desire that filled his heart ... when he beheld old walls and towers, ruins, old buildings, monuments ... to hear others give account of these things, of their time and their causes ... And who ... can furnish him their accounts if not those who lived before he did - his elders? That these might tell him is his earnest wish, and thus there is developed in the boy at this age the desire and craving for tales, for legends, for all kinds of stories, and later on for historical accounts (82).

The first reason for the telling of stories, therefore, is to provide a sense of continuity to the child. Not only is a heritage to be carried on but also it is a vital part of the child's growth to receive it. Myths and legends, those stories which illustrate the beginnings of a society, are important to transmit. However, they do not supply the child with all his wants.

... even the present in which the boy lives still contains much that at this period of development he can not interpret, and yet would like to interpret ... He wishes that others might furnish him this interpretation and impart a language to the silent objects; that they might put into clear words the inner living connection of all things which his mind vaguely apprehends. (83)

But, says Froebel, "these others" - the elders who tell him of the past - cannot always help the child in this respect - so there is developed in him

(81) Ibid: p. 114

(82) Ibid: p. 114

(83) Ibid: p. 116

... the intensive desire for fables and fairy-tales which impart language and reason to speechless things - the one within and the other beyond the limits of human relations and human, earthly phenomena of life ... if the boy's desire is not or can not be gratified by his attendants - he will spontaneously hit upon the invention and presentation of fairy-tales and fables and either work them out in his own mind or entertain his companions with them. (84)

Fairy-tales are not arbitrary constructions. Foreshadowing Jung, Froebel sees them acting out basic human aspirations. The stories made up by the child as well as those heard from story-tellers about him express obliquely deep feeling.

Whatever he feels in his heart, whatever lives in his soul, whatever he can not express in his own words, he would fain have others express. Whatever his mind vaguely apprehends, whatever fills his heart with joy and pleasure, as the sense of power and the feeling of spring, he would fain express in words; but he feels himself unable to do so. He seeks for words and, as he can not yet find them in himself, he rejoices intensely to hear them from others, especially in song. (85)

Song, poetry and story combine. The stimuli of stories - objects, buildings, events, people - thus gain an importance for the child beyond themselves.

... very many of the external phenomena, very many things in the boy's conduct and actions, have an inner, spiritual significance; that they indicate his inner, spiritual life and tendency and are, therefore, symbolic. (86)

This notion of the story as a means of understanding the self is

(84) Ibid: pp. 116-7

(85) Ibid: pp. 117-8

(86) Ibid: p. 118

expanded considerably in a later section. In a sense, Froebel sees the need for stories to be relevant to the situation of the child listener.

... the story, in order to be especially effective and impressive, should be connected with the events and occurrences of life. (87)

However, this connection is not important in its own right but only as a means of comparison for the child. If the events in the story can be understood by the child and made a means of comparison with his own life, then they have succeeded.

He needs for clearness concerning this, comparison with something else, and with someone else; and surely everybody knows that comparisons with somewhat remote objects are more effective than those with very near objects. (88)

The legend becomes the most important type of story according to this criterion.

The power that has scarcely germinated in the boy's mind is seen by him in the legend or tale, a perfect plant filled with most delicious blossoms and fruits. The very remoteness of the comparison with his own vague hopes expands heart and soul, strengthens the mind, unfolds life in freedom and power. (89)

Again, listening is not a passive occupation: assimilation of a story calls forth activity:

... the roused and stimulated inner life should at once find an external object on which it can manifest and, as it were, perpetuate itself. Therefore with boys of this age, the hearing of stories should always be connected

(87) Ibid: p. 309

(88) Ibid: p. 305

(89) Ibid: p. 306

with some activity for the production
of some external work on their part. (90)

The three founders of progressive thought here referred to - Rousseau, Wordsworth and Froebel - have provided the foundation which will become familiar as this enquiry progresses. Rousseau's rejection of the corrupt novel form and acceptance of Robinson Crusoe does two things. It implies the supreme importance of content and subject matter and also hints at the great power of literature to corrupt as well as develop. Wordsworth has drawn attention to the supreme power of story to prepare for experience yet to come. Froebel's contribution has introduced the theme of relevance to the individual life, the symbolic power of events and objects for the development of inner life, the need for the child to see himself as part of a continuum and the potentialities for the child's own creativity arising from the hearing of others' words. For Froebel, then, stories and story-telling have a very important role to play in the development of the child. It is significant that all these ideas reappear subsequently in more developed form. However, it is true to say that no subsequent progressive writer introduces any wholly new element.

(i) "Culture" and "Growth"

The use so far in this introduction of the terms "culture" and "growth" has implied that the two are completely different things. "Culture" to the Clarendon Commissioners was an "awakening of tastes", to enable the man to "bear his part in cultivated society". For Newman, liberal education formed "the gentleman". Such aims - especially in a society which tended to "keep up

'distinctions', as we have seen Houghton put it - inevitably suggest that culture is the application of a veneer. On the other hand, "growth", the fostering of an expanding inner life, has been of prime importance to Froebel and the progressives and throughout the development of educational thought the two concepts seem opposed. However, in practice, is any such opposition possible? For many educators, is there not a large penumbral area where the two are virtually synonymous? When Arnold speaks of "the electric chain", who is to assign the metaphor to either "culture" or "growth"? Literature may be used to "cultivate" and perhaps "cultivation" was an indivisible concept to many in the nineteenth century. But to Arnold, "culture" and "growth" would have to overlap; literature's place in the elementary school was to extend the child intellectually, morally and aesthetically. For Arnold, this was a proposition going far beyond that of the majority of Inspectors - such expansion inevitably would entail "growth", "development", "flowering", in the progressive senses. Froebel, too, would not reject the notion of "culture". As we have seen, he was at pains to place the child in the present in a relationship with the past: myth and legend spoke to him of his origins and put him in a context of social history. In these respects, Arnold and Froebel, who can be seen as the major ancestors of the prevailing modes of thought subsequently to be examined, inevitably have much common ground. This presumed commonality of view is a major element in the development during the twentieth century of the progressive view of the cultural heritage, a process which will receive much attention as this enquiry progresses.

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CHAPTER 2 : 1902-1921

CHAPTER 2 - 1902-1921

Introduction

The three main topics to be dealt with in Part 1 of this chapter refer to both the traditional and progressive versions of the cultural heritage. The first is the process of pragmatic re-definition by practitioners within the skills and cultural heritage models as defined by Dixon: as will be seen, where elements of progressive thought appear to be incorporated, they lack the underpinning of psychological and social theorising which appears to be a mark of the progressive writers. The central discussion concerning the rival claims of the cognitive and the affective in the teaching of literature in schools is couched in terms of a simple opposition between "thought" and "feeling". The background to the argument appears to be the existing tension between language and literature in the Classics: the prime need to reserve for English the hitherto exclusive virtues of the Classics. The "classical" and "moral" fallacies as defined by Shayer remain clear. Prescriptions will be seen not to move beyond a watered-down version of the traditional view of the cultural heritage. A key figure here is Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, whose insistence on the centrality of English studies typified the best thought of the period. The second topic, by contrast, is the development of progressive thought and the personal growth model. The developmental and moral concerns of Froebel are brought into sharper relief by the psychological testimony of G. Stanley Hall, the social criticism of E. Holmes and Norwood and Hope and the practice of Caldwell Cook. The place of literature, fiction and narrative is further defined within a context of personal growth and there is a move towards the progressive version of the cultural heritage. The third topic, starting with a firm statement of the skills model as prescribed for Elementary Schools in the Code of 1903, is the change in attitudes within this sector of education. A distinct liberalisation of Board publications will be noticed, in the

face of changing social conditions and progressive criticism. With this will be seen a change in the presumed function of literature and fiction which will provide a framework for the more specific accounts in Part 2. The aim in Part 2 of the chapter is to look closely at matters specifically to do with fiction in the context of the versions of the cultural heritage discussed in the Introduction. Practice in schools outside the Elementary sector will be examined with a view to understanding what sorts of prescription were made within the traditional view of the cultural heritage. Prescriptions for the elementary sector will be looked at, together with firm statements of the function of fiction which become progressively more child-centred through the work of Norwood and Hope and Charlotte Mason.

Throughout the enquiry so far the problem of the moral nature of fiction has been referred to. In Part 2 an attempt will be made to trace the various positions taken up during the period concerning the place of "trash" and "bloods" in the child's reading, noting positions more or less associated with the traditional and progressive views of the cultural heritage. Finally, by examination of the work of Hayward, there will be reference to another ambiguity in fiction which is difficult to resolve in the school - the aesthetic problem.

Part 3 will deal with the Newbolt Report and the work of George Sampson. These works bring together many ideas and form a synthesis which is foreshadowed by the work of Quiller-Couch who is to be examined first.

Part 1 - Underlying models for literature in schools

(a) Quiller-Couch - a whole view of literature

The work of Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch is important for many reasons. As a leading founder of the Cambridge English Tripos, his attitude to literature is highly influential both in Universities and Schools. As we shall see, his view encompasses a traditional view of the cultural heritage as well as a view of the child-centred or progressive theories which owes much to Edmund Holmes. His consequent rejection of the practices associated with the Revised Code, which he sees springing from an assumption of Original Sin in the child, influences strongly the work of the English Association which becomes of great importance in this enquiry. By dealing with children's reading in the Elementary Schools as a part of his course of lectures On the Art of Reading, he implied that the study of English Literature was not indivisible: that the activity in the Elementary School was different only in degree and certainly not in kind from that in the University. The statements above will be discussed in turn.

First is the fact that Quiller-Couch's influence pervades much of the thinking to be examined in this section. Fowler is plainly influenced by him: in the subsequent discussion of the rival claims of the affective and the cognitive in literature, Quiller-Couch's statement of the affective is the most complete and all others either lead up to it or refer back to it. Much of what he says finds practical expression in the Newbolt Report. Just as example of F.R. Leavis and his followers makes Cambridge the fountainhead of theory and practice in the thirties and later, so Quiller-Couch's pervasive influence makes it a rather more diffuse fountainhead in the years leading up to Newbolt.

Secondly is the fact that the very inclusiveness of his view places him in an important position. At first sight, Quiller-Couch is allied closely with the traditional view of the cultural heritage. He assumes a heritage which stretches from Greece and Rome and thus allies himself with the classics which he still believes to be central.

... always our literature has obeyed,
however unconsciously, the precept
Antiquam exquirite matrem, "Seek back to
the ancient mother"; always it has
recreated itself, has kept itself pure
and strong, by harking back to bathe in
those native - yes, native - Mediterranean
springs. (1)

The classical tradition is the more important: Quiller-Couch sees any vernacular, Anglo-Saxon tradition as being secondary. In this he implies rejection both of linguistic study which based itself on the Anglo-Saxon and also - again by implication - an approach to English Studies which involved a stiffening of disciplined study, approaches to which were mainly cognitive. In this he shows himself opposed to the styles of English developing in most universities as Palmer and Tillyard make clear.

... literature being written in language,
yet being something quite distinct, and the
development of our language having been
fairly continuous, while the literature of
our nation exhibits a false start - a break,
silence, repentance, than a renewal on right
glorious lines - our students of literature
have been drilled to follow the specious
continuance while ignoring the actual break,
and so to commit the one most fatal error
in any study; that of mistaking the
inessential for the essential. (2)

(1) Quiller-Couch, Sir A.: On the lineage of English Literature (On the Art of Writing, C.U.P. 1916). Edition used, Pocket Edition, 1923: p. 144

(2) Ibid: pp. 144-5

Quiller-Couch accepts the classics as a central culturalising agency:

... these classical authors ... in the European civilisation which we all inherit, conserve the norm of literature; the steady grip on its essential, the clean outline at which in verse or in prose - in epic, drama, history or philosophical treatise - a writer should aim. (3)

However, he disapproves of the arid treatment of the classics typical of the older public schools: while English literature is in the classical tradition, it is, nevertheless, an English literature and should be valued as such.

... the strict classical argument gives itself away, as well by its intolerance as by its obvious distrust of the genius of our own wonderful language. (4)

Literature is to be studied for its own sake and because it is a living tradition.

... literature cannot be divorced from life ... you cannot understand Chaucer aright, unless you have the background, unless you know the kind of man for whom Chaucer wrote ... literature being so personal a thing, you cannot understand it until you have some personal understanding of the men who wrote it ... the writing and speaking of English is a living art to be practised and (if it may be) improved. (5)

These statements lead inevitably to the formula of English Tripos papers - "Literature, life and thought". While such statements influenced English studies far beyond the University, we shall see also that misunderstandings of them were perpetuated in the name of literature study. For example, in the next section the work of

(3) Ibid: p. 166

(4) Ibid: p. 97

(5) Ibid: pp. 105-6

Pringle, which attempts to bring a method to literature, may be seen as a gloss on Quiller-Couch's statement (though it preceded it by ten years), while the Principal of St. Mary's Hall, Liverpool, reduces literature purely to the affective (6).

The third count on which Quiller-Couch's importance may be estimated is that of his remarks concerning children's reading. He outlines and comments on Holme's ideas of child development (7) while, at the same time, he rejects theories of the communal origins of art (8). In doing so he takes a modified progressive stance, for in rejecting "Dr. Gummere" he also implies scepticism towards G. Stanley Hall and the Culture Epoch Theory. Nevertheless, he quotes Aristotle's account of the formation of poetry and settles on the twin instincts for imitation and harmony as being at the root of its appreciation. These are the twin instincts he finds in children. The capacity for liking literature is present in all children. It is most urgent that it is brought out in the elementary school child. Quiller-Couch takes a pragmatic view. He sees "culture" and "development" going together. "Culture" is not instilled by any notion of fact, body of knowledge or stiffening rigour. Appreciation is affective.

... Till clomb above the eastern bar
The horned moon, with one bright star
Within the nether lip.
Must you tell them that for the moon
to hold a star anywhere within her
circumference is an astronomical
impossibility? Very well then, tell it.
But tell it afterwards, and put it away
quietly. For the quality of Poetry is
not strained. Let the rain soak; then

(6) See below: pp. 75 - 76

(7) See below: pp. 99 - 104

(8) Quiller-Couch, A: Children's Reading (11) (On the Art of Reading - C.U.P. 1920 - Ed. used 1951, pp. 55-56)

use your hoe, and gently; and still
trust Nature; by which, I again repeat
to you, all spirit attracts all spirit
as all matter attracts all matter (9).

This type of affective criticism is common throughout the period. It will be noted in much of the work of the English Association and will call forth remonstrances by writers who feel it is going too far (10). It will show itself as a concern for pure "feeling". In this way there will come a polarisation between "thought" and "feeling" - a division nowhere asserted by Quiller-Couch. Here, however, it is important to make the following point. First, the type of appreciative, affective criticism typified by Quiller-Couch, the English Association and the Newbolt Report will be supplanted by the new rigour of the Cambridge School. The polarisation between "thought" and "feeling" of the period up to the Newbolt Report will thus become largely obsolete. Secondly, just as such appreciative criticism did not depend on any theoretical underpinning - unlike the work of the Cambridge School - so neither did any application of it to the school situation. Borrowings from progressive theories by those who take the side either of "thought" or of "feeling" seem pragmatic and incidental, as we shall see.

Nevertheless, Quiller-Couch's remarks indicate that in the parallel division between "culture" and "*growth*", the affective leans towards "*growth*". However, any division between "culture" and "*growth*" is a tenuous one. Quiller-Couch's whole position depends on the notion of transmission of culture. Thus culture is to him a living tradition: his remarks on children's reading, therefore, assume a great importance. He rejects the "rule of

(9) Ibid: p. 66

(10) See below: pp. 83-84

the nursery in the last century" which relied on "Original Sin".

It

... tended not to educate but to repress (11).

Instead,

... the better way with a child is to draw out, to educate, rather than to repress ... (12)

Each child has

... what we might call the instinct of growth (13).

This instinct shows itself in what ...

Aristotle would have called mimatic (14)

As already stated, Quiller-Couch refers much to Holmes. In doing so, he shows that his remarks, in this instance, are squarely in the Progressive tradition. The notion of imitation or mimesis will show itself plainly in the work of Caldwell Cook (which Quiller-Couch was most likely well aware of in Cambridge) and later in the writings of progressive theorists such as Nunn, Jacks, Wheeler and A.N. Whitehead. Yet his concern for culture and its transmission, his concern for the elementary school child and his plea to the present undergraduate and possibly future teacher puts him very much in the tradition of Arnold.

Of the futures of elementary children condemned to the life of the poor, he says:

You have given Robert a vote ... and soon you will have to give it to Margaret. Can you not give them also, in their short

(11) Ibid: p. 45

(12) Ibid: p. 47

(13) Ibid: p. 47

(14) Ibid: p. 47

years at school, something to sustain
their souls in the long Valley of
Humiliation? (15)

Quiller-Couch's attitudes synthesise many elements to be examined
in this period 1902 to 1921. His over-arching view may provide a
context for the often disparate assertions which will follow;

- (b) "Thought" and "feeling" - the debate between traditional teachers
The need for a stiffening discipline within the study of literature
lies mainly behind the notion of "thought" in the study of literature
in schools. This "stiffening" element may take the form of language
study - as in the classics or early degree-level studies in
English. Or it may take the form of a codification of literature
into a body of knowledge which can itself be learnt. This seems to
be a continuation of a classical tradition - though of a sort
strenuously denied by Quiller-Couch. An example of this is made
by Pringle (16). He believes that growing literacy leads to a drop
in reading standards. In this he is at one with the HMI's to be
examined in Part 2. However, his argument is not a social one and
his plea is - despite its title - for increasing rigour and a re-
assertion of the traditional view of the cultural heritage.

No doubt two or three generations ago there
were many who could not read but those who
did read classical authors; whereas now we
have an immense and ever growing public
which reads, but does not read literature. (17)

Pringle wants literature to be rationalised into a body of knowledge,
and content, at the same time as pleading for aesthetic appreciation.

(16) Pringle, George C.: (Rector of the High School, Peebles) - The
Teaching of literature; a plea for its Aesthetic
Appreciation. Journal of Education, Vol. 25

(17) Ibid: p. 259

Thus he draws a distinction between "the principles of literature" as material for teaching and:

..... the processes by which men and women come to love literature for its own sake (which) must be investigated and the results formulated and applied as pedagogic principles. (18)

What are these principles? "The direct for the indirect", says Pringle. "The concrete for the abstract". For literature, this means

... reading, memorising, repetition, recitation and composition on an immensely greater scale and with much greater variety of method than obtains at present, even in elementary schools (19)

This is a very energetic expression of the idea that mere "exposure to literature" is beneficial. It is to be doubted how effective it would be in promoting its aesthetic aims. Pringle's viewpoint is set within the skills and cultural heritage models as defined by Dixon. His text-centred approach is in the classical tradition.

A statement of the opposing insistence on "feeling" was made by the anonymous Principal of St. Mary's Hall, Liverpool (20):

Certainly not the sole appeal, and perhaps not even the main one, is to the intellect; there is a large and important share to the emotions. Now my point is that, though young children cannot wholly understand, they are quick to feel; that our business, therefore, is to awaken feeling, to set the sympathetic chord vibrating as early as may be; and that, in so doing, though we cannot be said to be "teaching" literature, we are unmistakeably helping the formation of the

(18) Ibid: p. 259

(19) Ibid: p. 259

(20) The Principal, St. Mary's Hall, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool. The Teaching of English to Young Children, Vol. 25, Aug. 1905, pp. 529-531.

literary temper of mind, and facilitating
real literature teaching later on. (21)

Notions here remain vague and imprecise. "The sympathetic chord" has little of the force of Arnold's "electric chain". While there is a certain understanding of the child's developmental needs in the assertion that "real literature teaching" can only come "later on", there is less certainty in the blanket assertion that children are "quick to feel" without complete understanding. While the Principal's approach is far less rigorous than Pringle's, it assumes by implication faculty psychology. Pringle believes that there is a capacity for understanding which can be brought into play by exercising itself on literature; the Principal believes that a capacity for feeling may be exercised in a similar way.

These, then, are, in simple form, the root concepts to be discussed. During the period under discussion the debate on the place of literature was carried out mainly within the English Association and the pages of The Journal of Education. The English Association, formed in 1906 by F.S. Valentine and G.E.S. Coxhead (both schoolmasters) undoubtedly fulfilled - until the publication of the Newbolt Report - a similar function to that of today's National Association for the Teaching of English. The attitude which developed owed a lot to Quiller-Couch and certainly went far beyond the simplistic notions of Pringle and the Principal of St. Mary's. From the start, the Association's bias was literary: Fowler's own first pamphlet (No. 5) referred to below set its tone - largely following the lead of Matthew Arnold. The Association's effect was largely outside the elementary system - inevitable, given the public

(21) Ibid: p. 530

school, grammar school and University background of its members and contributors. Nevertheless, its influence, for example in the setting up and writing of the Newbolt Report, was great. Its attitude was summed up by J.H. Fowler in one of its earliest publications, English Literature in Secondary Schools (22). He said that the start of the new Association gave a new opportunity for schools

For repairing their long neglect of our national literature (23).

This gives an early idea of the evangelising attitude of the Association: it also shows that a main tendency of Fowler - if not that of the whole of the Association - was towards the traditional version of the cultural heritage. The love of literature had not disappeared entirely, he says. But this is because of Ruskin, Carlyle, Arnold, Professors of English Literature and University Extension Lecturers, the best journalism, the publishers of the Temple classics. But, says Fowler, one can give praise for its survival

least of all to the schools. (24)

The argument Fowler develops is strongly akin to that of Quiller-Couch. He is concerned to guard against certain dangers: he is, in spite of his energetic opening, largely an apologist. He rejects the study of the history of literature, thus disagreeing with Pringle. He also wishes, however, to guard against sentimentalism, implying rejection of the entirely affective. He sees sentimentalism as implying a revolt against anything like

"a high standard of accurate and scientific scholarship". (25)

(22) Fowler, J.H.: English Literature in Secondary Schools. English Association Leaflet No. 5, 1908.

(23) Ibid: p. 1

(24) Ibid: p. 1

(25) Ibid: p. 4

He does not wish to see literature in isolation - it is not a thing apart and should not be too much the concern of specialists (26). His most telling point however, was against materialism: in effect against those who insisted on the cognitive, the transmission of a body of knowledge through a discipline. He felt the situation warranted his saying there was nothing

... unpractical or unmanly in valuing literature most for its power to enlighten and to uplift. (27)

There is undoubtedly an Arnoldian ring to this statement. Nevertheless, though there is a rejection of the need for the cognitive element, and an assertion of literature's uniqueness and centrality, there is also a dilution of Arnold's central concepts concerning literature. Thus Fowler's notion of the "power to enlighten and to uplift" is derived from Arnold - yet indicates the simplification that was made of him within the skills and cultural heritage models. It reflects to a great extent Shayer's notion of the "Moral" fallacy and is certainly a less sophisticated position than that of Quiller-Couch. The influence of the leaflet was great - as evidenced by the fact that, of all the frequent English Association leaflets, this was by far the most often reprinted.

The importance of the leaflet was to give a rationale to the teaching of literature. Fowler, within the limits of his position within the skills and cultural heritage model, strikes a careful balance between "thought" and "feeling", the cognitive and the affective. Nevertheless, the confusion persisted. Within the English Association, moves towards the affective continued. Fowler's "power to enlighten

(26) Ibid: p. 6

(27) Ibid: p. 7

and uplift" excluded, in the eyes of many, the notion of aesthetic appreciation itself. Such appreciation tended to be seen in opposition to ideas of English as "the poor man's classics", the passing on of the cultural heritage, the "refining power", which were legacies from Arnold. Aesthetic appreciation appeared not to be part of the Arnoldian synthesis - a point made by Bertha Skeat -

Artistic appreciation needed to be studied
to a far greater extent. (28)

However, "feeling" and "artistic appreciation" were left largely undefined outside progressive thought. Perhaps the most ambitious attempt to define the place of artistic appreciation in schools outside progressive thought was made by Kendall (29) though he was not thinking exclusively of literature. He attempts a distinction between the "morality" and "beauty" of a work of art in terms of the reaction of the reader/beholder.

We speak of "being the better" for the reading of a great poem, or we find that a drama has an "elevating" effect but we do not specify whether the betterment is in one part of our composite nature or the whole (30).

In this respect, Kendall notes what appears to be a paradox.

People note with surprise that some man "of refinement and culture" has fallen into vicious habits or been guilty of ungentlemanly conduct; but on the other hand they are not apt to believe that anyone whose life is given up to the professional pursuit of art will be specially disposed towards normal correctness of living. They even suspect him, as an advocate of "Art for Art's Sake",

(28) The English Association - Bulletin No.9, 1909, p. 42

(29) Kendall, Guy: The claim of beauty in education: Journal of Education,
Vol. 3, Pt. 1, Sept. 1911: Pt. 2 Oct., 1911.

(30) Ibid: p. 635

of an indifference to morality.
They do not consider the "artistic
temperament" to be naturally associated
with high moral ideals. (31)

This confusion of thought would seem to be brought about by the acceptance in the minds of Kendall's "people" of several fallacies: first, commonly-held social stereotypes; secondly, the Platonic view of the artist (a view fostered, in the late nineteenth century, by the artists themselves); thirdly, a misunderstanding of Romanticism; fourthly - and most importantly - an implied acceptance of faculty psychology. Kendall speaks of the wholeness of the response to a work of art in what might almost be a restatement of Keat's dictum "Beauty is truth, truth beauty ..."

... Beauty and moral goodness, though
not directly interdependent at any
particular point, may yet be allied. (32)

Even so, Kendall sees the emotional element in art and literature as being uppermost and any direct moral implications as inferior.

... The true function of art being to
give expression to the emotions --- its
significance for conduct was secondary
and derivative. (33)

Nevertheless, beauty and moral goodness (as opposed to direct ethical instruction) are to a certain extent dependent on each other, for

... as they have a single source, it
is possible that a man who is aware of
the common origin will feel art and
conduct to be twin ideals, to neither
of which can he be false without slighting
the other. (34)

(31) Ibid: p. 635

(32) Op. cit: p. 636

(33) Ibid: p. 665

(34) Ibid: p. 665

Another echo of Keats - this time the doctrine of "negative capability"-is heard here:

True art cannot be immoral, nor should
it have a distinctly ethical purpose
in view. (35)

Kendall sees the need for a whole environment to be aesthetically pleasing and thus itself an indirect moral influence. His artistic antecedents are less Pater and the late nineteenth-century aesthetes than William Morris and the pre-Raphaelites. He sees the element of beauty in education as countering the "malign", "the adverse home environment", "an unscrupulous press". (36)

This article makes an important statement. It recalls G. Stanley Hall in its claim that education depends on a whole environment and McPherson in its insistence on the totality of the response to art. It puts on a sounder footing the pleas for emotional and aesthetic education which, when seen in terms of an opposition between "thought" and "feeling", lead merely to arguments about precedence of aim. In these respects Kendall leans towards a progressive mode. Nevertheless, in his emphasis on the primacy of "high moral ideals" and his fundamentally text- (or object-) centred approach, Kendall shows that he is more at one with the traditional mode. There is little hint of an awareness of the needs of personal growth: rather "beauty" in education becomes more of a sort of conditioning. There is a social awareness which interestingly foreshadows the Cambridge School in its concern for value and fear of, for instance, "an unscrupulous press". The element of Romanticism is strong. However, it is a Keatsian romanticism, based largely on the notion of the work

(35) Ibid: p. 665

(36) Ibid: p. 665

of art itself. The romanticism providing the impetus for the Progressives derived from Rousseau, Wordsworth and Coleridge and emphasised the beholder as much as the thing beheld. Arguments (in spite of Fowler and Quiller-Couch) tended to polarise around the notions of thought and feeling. A statement of the case for the cognitive as opposed to the affective, was made as follows (37). In commenting on a seeming drift to the affective, the anonymous contributor bewailed a consequent lack of discipline and rigour.

... we educate our children just enough to make them enjoy emotion, but not enough to enjoy thought ... What is wanted is the development of the capacity to read what requires mental effort, and the desire to read, not merely for enjoyment, but also for instruction. But in schools literature is too generally regarded as a source of pleasurable emotion. Fiction and poetry are the staple diet; not mental effort, but interest, is the object aimed at, and in many cases this principle is carried to such lengths that teachers hesitate to call upon the pupils to make much serious effort lest it should weaken the interest of the book. Hence children, when they leave school, read nothing but the Daily Mirror and the penny shocker ... the mistake many teachers make lies in thinking that the cultivation of a sense for style is the important thing, whereas what is really wanted is a sense for what is great in feeling and action. Such a sense can be the outcome only of the whole upbringing, not of lessons in any particular subject.. (38)

The set of attitudes expressed here is interesting and its separate strands need teasing out, partly because they show something of the influence of those who believed in faculty psychology and "mental training"; partly because they give a clue to what might have been ^{happening in} the actual elementary as well as the secondary schools. The writer assumes the truth of faculty psychology: he talks of

(37) Occasional Notes: The Journal of Education, Vol. 32, July 1912,

p. 446

(38) Ibid: p. 446

"capacities": he assumes that "mental effort" (presumably for its own sake) is an "object to be aimed at". He assumes also that "pleasurable emotion", "interest" and "cultivation of a sense of style" are, first, the main aims of teaching literature, and secondly, themselves debilitating influences on children. This is Plato's view of the artist. Thus, he inverts the normally-held argument by assuming that this indulgence, as he sees it, in literature will lead to "the Daily Mirror and the penny shocker", while (presumably) "mental effort" will lead to "what is great in feeling and action" - which not only does not reside in "any particular subject" (obviously meaning the teaching of literature) but also, by implication throughout, does not reside in literature itself either.

The writers' main target seems to be the English Association, and indeed, the Journal of Education noted in 1914 J.H. Fowler's remarks at the 1914 annual conference of the English Association in which - recognising that a separation of thought and feeling in literature and a concentration on feeling alone would simply lead to uncritical gush - he criticised a prevalent and too-pronounced emphasis on enjoyment and aestheticism in English. The Journal commented:

We run some risk of substituting shallow impressionism for serious study. We are quite sure that Mr. Fowler's warning is needed. Enjoyment ought not to be the sole end of reading, nor the stimulation of feeling the sole aim of the teacher. (39)

This Occasional Note was answered next month by a letter from

(39) Journal of Education: Vol. 34, Sept. 1914, p. 608

William Platt of the Home School, Grindleford, Derbyshire, saying that the fact that his pupils enjoyed Shakespeare and Milton would not be accepted by him as

... a proof of my failure as a teacher.
On the contrary, I glory in it as my
highest success. (40)

The Journal of Education evidently felt some clarification of its position was needed, lest positions should polarise through mutual misunderstanding. It asked in the same month for a definition of "appreciation" - was it "woolly", or did it contain the stiffening discipline thought to be needed in all educational activity?

In a word - does appreciation include the power to weigh and judge as well as the power to enjoy, the capacity to reject as well as the capacity to absorb? (41)

This passage really opens up a new dimension - that of discrimination between the good and the bad. It also - if it is to have meaning - must assume that the teacher's own choice of books may be at fault, for if the earlier advice of the Headmaster of Eton were to be followed, the question should not arise. (42) This particular argument was not yet finished with, because in January, M.E. Day of the Pontefract High School for Girls attempted to answer the Journal's question as to what was appreciation (43). Books such as Southey's Life of Nelson, Anson, etc., which were frequently recommended because of the fancied need for correlation between subjects may well be rejected by pupils because teachers

... have been fighting a great evil -
that of making literary works into
mere textbooks. (44)

(40) Journal of Education: Vol. 34, Oct. 1914, p. 698

(41) Journal of Education: Vol. 34, Oct. 1914, p. 698

(42) See below: p. 137

(43) Journal of Education: Jan. 1915, p. 39

(44) Ibid: p. 39

The writer asserts a "project" method of study to foster the other side of appreciation. This is "understanding" - which does not have to be of facts. Explanation, if properly used, is not antagonistic to appreciation, but can be made to deepen it. Thus, in some way, a synthesis was beginning to form in the minds of practising and thinking teachers which was to find expression in the Newbolt Report - and this synthesis, as one might expect, was worked towards in publications by the English Association. The first is Pamphlet No. 43, in May 1919 (45), in which one paper (The Teaching of Literature to children under fourteen by Miss L. Chadwick, Headmistress of the Central Girls' School, Oxford) is useful for our purposes as it does make an attempt to bring together some of the strands we have already noted. At first there are echoes of Wordsworth as well as Arnold; literature is a "humanising power", a subject of "general culture" - and it is uniquely fitted to "train the inward eye" (46). The writer notes that there are some

... who say that the main aim of the study of literature is downright enjoyment. (47)

To a great extent this is true - but there is more.

Those of us who are practical teachers will feel that literature, to the rank and file, must be taught. (48)

The word "taught" here goes largely unexplained - but something of what is intended is strongly implied by the next point. Who is to choose the literature? This question implies the existence of another question: what are the criteria for "good" literature for

(45) The Teaching of English in Schools - A series of papers edited by Edith J. Morley. English Association, May 1919.

(46) Ibid: p. 18

(47) Ibid: p. 18

(48) Ibid: p. 19

children? The possible moral and social - as well as aesthetic - effects of "bad" literature (usually fiction) are in fact not dealt with by Chadwick - presumably because she did not feel that her girls would be prone to them. She can gloss over possible dangers feared greatly by writers subsequently to be examined.

In literature, more than in any other ordinary school subject, the value of the teacher's personality is a very real one. (49)

This is a point of crucial importance and is reminiscent of Hayward, also subsequently to be examined. The writer then elaborates on what should take place in the school:

There should be much freedom and much discussion ... we cannot really deal with literature without dealing with morals, because literature deals with life. (50)

In all this, the teacher's personality is of great importance:

The early years are important in teaching literature. The interest of young children must first be aroused by stories that appeal to them. One of the members of my staff is able to hold the children spellbound while she tells them the story of Beowulf, or stories from the Canterbury Tales or the Faerie Queene. It is wonderful what they remember. (51)

Here we have the teacher elevated to a very high position indeed: a guide and interpreter. The influence of Hayward, to be examined later, may be detectable.

I feel it matters not a great deal what our choice (of literature) is, but that it matters very much indeed how we

(49) Ibid: p. 20

(50) Ibid: p. 22

(51) Ibid: p. 22

present what we choose. The teacher of literature should not be merely an instructor. He is one of whom it should be truly said that he "allured to brighter worlds and led the way." (52)

The paper attempts to unite appreciation and critical discipline in terms of the personality of the teacher. It is also noteworthy that no attempt is made to prescribe books. Choice is left to the teacher and presentation is all. It must be said that this article does not get to grips with the "enjoyment" problem - that if "enjoyment" is the sole criterion, the "weeds of literature" are as worthy as the masterpieces. The problem was not dealt with either in a more important English Association publication prepared by a committee under the chairmanship of Sir Henry Newbolt (53). One would, therefore, expect a certain continuity between it and the 1921 Newbolt Report. This 1919 publication made the immediate point that - in spite of all the Association's evangelising - English was still badly taught because the teachers were not qualified.

The "irreducible aims" of any English course should be, first

... a command of the mother tongue and
knowledge and appreciation of literature.
(54)

And secondly, "advanced courses" to give "genuine and humane" education to older pupils. These aims are very much in the tradition of English as Classics. "Knowledge" goes hand in hand with "appreciation": the "genuine and humane" education seems almost a bid to supplant classical studies. The two stages which are most

(52) Ibid: p. 23

(53) Members of the English Association - The Essentials of English Teaching - Longmans, Green 1919

(54) Ibid: p. 4

important for our purposes are (in passing) stage 1, up to 11 years, and stage 2 (11-14). For stage 1 are recommended Fairy-tales, legends, myths ("Classical, Celtic and Teutonic") from good translations as well as Marie Edgeworth's tales, Alice, The Water-babies and Mrs. Ewing. Narrative poetry, too, is recommended. (55)

Some influence of Hall as well as Froebel may be detected here.

For the 11-14 stage there is a greater emphasis on poetry and drama, and fiction is mentioned only in passing.

The Study of Literature - This should include the reading of poems and a more definite study of simple metrical forms by such means as the examination of examples, exercise in verse-making and the reading aloud of certain selected passages. At this stage, the drama will make a special appeal to the pupils and occasional attempts should be made to present, without elaborate accessories, selected scenes from plays. The children might also be encouraged to throw into dramatic form, either by means of impromptu or written dialogue, the substance of any story or narrative poem read. Suitable short prose texts should also be read in class.

Apart from the periods for composition and literature, time should always be allotted to reading aloud by the teacher who will naturally take this opportunity of introducing the class to the best prose and poetry. (56)

A possible influence of Caldwell Cook is noticeable in this passage: guarded though the expression is, many of his practices are mentioned. This also accounts for the lack of emphasis on fiction - as we shall see, Cook seldom mentions it, although attitudes to it are always implied in what he says. Nevertheless, the committee also recognised a need for a stiffening discipline in the use of books:

(55) Ibid: pp. 5-6

(56) Ibid: p. 6

Definite training should be given in the use of books, e.g. the discovery of the main ideas in poems, paragraphs, chapters, etc., and in the clear and concerted expression of the ideas thus obtained. (57)

Thus, within its confines, the English Association encompassed a number of justifications for literature and fiction which were to some extent synthesised in their own publications. In these two final publications before the 1921 Report we have "aesthetic appreciation" and "humane education" meeting on equal terms.

We have attempted to see a process by which the rival claims of "thought" and "feeling" were brought together outside the main-streams of progressive thought. Certainly the partial synthesis made by Chadwick and members of the English Association became an important element within the Newbolt Report with its unequivocal assertion of the centrality of English. Such prescriptions as we have seen mark a certain move away from the traditional view of the cultural heritage. As we shall see, those who asserted the primacy of thought and the cognitive in literature were by no means silenced after the publication of the Newbolt Report. Nevertheless, Shayer's notions of the "classical" and "Moral" fallacies have within this period been, to a great extent, supplanted. The partial synthesis achieved, however, lacks the definition and insight later to be given by the Cambridge School. Quiller-Couch supplies the most complete statement of literature's place to be found during this period.

(c) Progressive approaches

In referring to the development of progressive thought during the nineteenth century, we have noted the influence of Rousseau and Wordsworth, both of whom stressed the innocence of the child and his potentialities for growth and development through directness of experience. However, this experience must not be that of corrupt adult society itself. We have also noticed that - in the writings of Froebel particularly - the notion was expressed that myth and legend as a form of narrative art was particularly suitable for children because it was the product of a society at a primitive, thus innocent, stage; it reflected innocence and, by virtue of its enactment of what Jung would later refer to as "archetypes", an elemental and uncorrupted morality; it also reflected the child's own individual development since the development of the individual was a microcosm of the development of the race. Therefore, there existed a type of narrative which did not have the moral and social ambiguity attached to the novel as an art form. It would seem that, in progressive thought, the nature of the traditional version of the cultural heritage will not be a topic of interest. Nevertheless, the types of narrative prescribed and the reasons for their use begin to form a recognisable version of the cultural heritage held to by progressive thinkers. One recalls Froebel's assertion that knowledge of myths and legends fostered a sense of continuity. Progressive thinkers viewed literature from three different perspectives: the psychological, in which literature is seen as a necessary adjunct of development; the social, in which literature is seen as a means of awakening the child to an understanding of an inimical industrial society which seeks to see him as a unit of production; the practical, where

progressive theories are put into operation and a particular element of the narrative art is seen as conducive to growth, with important implications for future discussion. The psychological element will be represented by discussion of McPherson and G. Stanley Hall; the social by Holmes; the practical by Caldwell Cook. However, before these writers are considered, an idea of what constituted progressive practice at the time in literature may be gained from Willocks (58) writing at the very outset of the period. Willocks first gives a number of objections to the teaching of literature to children. Pupils do not know how to read efficiently; the development of children is disparate, so literature cannot be a class activity; some commonly prescribed books have advanced ideas; early literature has a language difficulty; of modern literature, Willocks states:

... (it) is full of questioning, of unrest, of problems, in short, which are merely incomprehensible to the stupid and disturbing to the bright. (59)

These objections have to do with practices associated with Elementary codes and views of children associated with the skills and cultural heritage models. More importantly, there is behind the objections themselves an assumption that the individual child's growth is important. Coupled with this is the wish to shield the child from a corrupting world. Willocks continues by asserting that old books demand that a background be filled in for the pupil. The undeveloped mind might only partly understand great literature. A chronological approach might present children with genres they are not ready for. Children needing ballads may have to read plays in the interests of chronology and understanding of literature as a body of knowledge

(58) Willocks, J.P.: Literature as a School subject: Journal of Education, Vol. 25, Feb. 1905, p. 154.

(59) Ibid: p. 154

if they follow the sort of progression recommended by Pringle.

Willocks interestingly says

Ancient coarseness of phrasing is
frequently not expunged from cheap
copies. (60)

If there is no chronological approach, then:

... elusiveness of memory has to be
counteracted. (61)

The last objection gives a good insight into many teachers' pre-
suppositions.

The best teaching alternates the
teachers' talk with practical work
on the child's part. This seems
difficult in literature, where
"exercises" are frequently hard to
concoct. (62)

This is a comprehensive list of objections. It is to be noted that
nearly all of them take the form of shielding the child from
literature's unpredictable and powerful force - but regarded as
harmful only to the child - an attitude which has implications for
the development of a specific literature for children.

Willocks looks at the child developmentally, from 5 to 19. The
lower school - kindergarten, transition, 1st, 2nd and lower 3rd
forms - he sees as "the wonder world". There is a love of story
almost for its own sake.

... animal epics, folk-tales from India,
Russia or the Far West, told to the child
as far as possible in the oldest renderings
for these catch the atmosphere of the childish
mind; moreover, they are full of humour, and
often, too, of a pathos that never descends into

(60) Ibid: p. 154

(61) Ibid: p. 154

(62) Ibid: p. 154

sentimentality; make the child feel humour
and learn the springs of real tears and
you will have done him priceless service. (63)

This is a plain reference to the "culture epoch" theory - that the
development of the child parallels the development of the race. The
emphasis on myth and legend is very significant. Willocks advocates
also a method which bears strongly on methods which spring from
Hall's Recapitulation Theory -

The class's part in the lesson may be
found in telling the tale once again,
bit by bit, verbally, or in answering
questions as to what each would have
done in similar case ... this kind of
lesson should alternate with the reading
lesson - where indeed the child may either
read or write. (64)

In the Middle School - 3rd and 4th forms - Willocks says:

We find the pupil launched into a new
sea of interest - that of personality.
He will now be identifying himself with
the heroes of his poems and stories.
Character here takes, to a great extent,
the place of the world of story. (65)

Again, the work associated with this period consists of:

Retelling incidents, descriptions of
scenes and characters and atmosphere:
all these supply material for practical
work. (66)

In the Upper School, Willocks sees the introduction of the third of
the great themes - story, character, thought - of literature.

... thought, the problem, the question
asked and the more difficult answer given. (67)

There is an assertion of the relevance of literature to the
individual:

(63) Ibid: p. 154
(64) Ibid: p. 154
(65) Ibid: p. 154
(66) Ibid: p. 154
(67) Ibid: p. 156

... to the bright the questions have
already come; of the dull, life will
ask them. (68)

Willocks concludes with a statement of the necessity - given the situation - of "microscopic study" for examination purposes - which "used to be the be-all and end-all of literature". (69)

This is a very detailed, prescriptive article (though no specific recommendations of books are made). Willocks uses available psychological testimony: he assumes the truth of the culture epoch and recapitulation theories (very early for an English writer). The stress is on the child's activity; the work ensuing from the contact with the stories presupposes an effect which foreshadows Caldwell Cook and Nunn's mimesis - re-creation of the original creative act. The effect of literature, subdivided into "story, character and thought", is spoken of in terms of relevance to the individual child. Willocks does not refer to the simple opposition of the cognitive and affective reflected in the "thought/feeling" duality we have noticed in other contemporary writers. Nor are the notions of "enlightenment" and "uplift" mentioned: Willocks exhibits a shift away from the values of the traditional version of the cultural heritage. Nor is there any hint here of the notions of separate capacities in the individual - the hallmark of faculty psychology and the seeming presumption of non-progressive writers so far examined. Rejection of this presumption is a sine qua non of progressive thought, and the subsequent psychological redefinition which provides the framework for it is couched in terms which expand the work of Froebel and certainly provide theoretical backing

(68) Ibid: p. 156

(69) Ibid: p. 156

for the practical approach of Willocks.

McPherson (70) endeavours to take the study of literature away from faculty psychology and the attendant cognitive/affective duality.

When it is said that the study of literature in schools may possibly be a means of training a boy's intellect but cannot cultivate his imagination or feelings - to say this is to commit the serious psychological error of making an abstract separation of "mental faculties" when no real separation exists. There is no concrete state of mind that consists merely of reasoning or merely of imagination or merely of feeling; though we may distinguish between different aspects of consciousness, yet they do not operate apart from one another - the mind is a unity. And in a work of literary art the intellectual, the imaginative and the emotional elements of human nature work in particularly close association and harmony; the artist puts himself into his work, himself considered not as congeries of distinct faculties but as a whole-souled being, as compact of conception, of imagination, of feeling - each of his faculties being to the other and all blending and harmonised in the finished product of his art. No other subject included in the school curriculum presents the pupil with material that is so "rammed with life" - so penetrated and inspired by the united action of all our faculties; and it is just the close association in it of intellect, imagination, and feeling that constitutes the special value of literature as a school study. (71)

McPherson emphasises the concomitant coherence and unity in any work of art - the intellect's "special function" is to "impart suitable form and design to a work" and the business of teaching literature is to lead the pupil to "perceive the unity of thought and structure in an imaginative work". (72)

(70) Journal of Education - J. McPherson - The Psychologic Basis of Literary Study in Schools - Vol. 28, April 1906., p. 254.

(71) Ibid: p. 254

(72) Ibid: p. 254

Embedded in this theory is a range of responses far more subtle than those posited by the nineteenth-century and later writers we have noted. Some such definition of the literary process - which is in many ways quite Coleridgean - one can infer was accepted by all the writers we shall look at subsequently in this section.

It would be very surprising if McPherson did not know the work of G. Stanley Hall, whose Adolescence (73) was published in New York in 1904 - though not in Britain until 1908. An important part of his thought - already referred to as the "Culture Epoch" theory - was that the stages of development of childhood paralleled the stages of development of the human species. As we have already seen, it accounted for much recommendation of myths and legends (a "primitive" love of story) and the subsequent recounting, retelling, of these stories and the discussion and communal oral activity which would surround such activities. It is clearly a development of Froebel's view of the place of stories and story-telling. This 9-13 stage at which story-telling and the communal activity which arises from it should be practised is, in Hall's eyes, vital to mental health. The normal, mechanical grind of the school is inimical to it. From the first, contemplation can ensue.

If the school is slowly becoming speechless in the sense, if it is lapsing in all departments towards busy work and losing silence, repose, the power of logical thought, and even that of meditation, which is the muse of originality, this is perhaps the gravest of all these objects of decay. If the child has no resources

(73) Hall, Granville Stanley: Adolescence, its Psychology and its relation to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education. 2 Volumes Appleton (N.Y.) 1904.

in solitude, cannot think without the visual provocation, is losing subjective life, enthusiasm for public, social, ethical questions, is crippled for intellectual pursuits, cares only in a languid way for literary prose and poetry, responds only to sensuous stimuli and events at short range, and is different to all wide relations and moral responsibilities, cares only for commercial self-interest, the tactics of field sport, laboratory occupations and things which can be illustrated from a pedagogic museum, then the school is dwarfing, in dawning maturity, the higher powers that belong to this stage of development and is responsible for mental arrest. (74)

This is an important paragraph, for it expresses perfectly the premises Edmund Holmes started from. Caldwell Cook, who deals largely with this age group, also based his practice on what is stated here.

The "higher powers" of which Hall speaks are subsequently elucidated in more detail, especially with respect to the place of literature and, especially, story-telling.

Interest in story-telling rises till twelve or thirteen, and thereafter falls off ... partly because youth is now more interested in receiving than giving. (75)

Thus this age group must be regarded with care because:

... the pubescent reading passion is partly the cause and partly the effect of the new zest in and docility to the adult world, and also of the fact that the receptive are now and here so immeasurably in advance of the creative powers. Now the individual transcends his own experience and learns to profit by that of others. There is now evolved a penumbral region in the soul more or less beyond the reach of all school methods, a world of glimpses and

(74) Ibid: Vol. 2, p. 465

(75) Ibid: Vol. 2, p. 472

hints, and the work here is that of the
prospector and not of the careful miner.
(76)

The final image of the teacher's function is a striking one. What Hall sees as the beginnings of possibilities both of sympathy and empathy in the child might be stifled by the tactless teacher and inappropriate methods. Earlier he had said -

... the drill methods of the preceding period (up to ten years) must be slowly relaxed and new appeals made to freedom and interest. We can no longer coerce a break but must lead and inspire if we would avoid arrest. Individuality must have a longer tether. Never is the power to appreciate so far ahead of the power to express, and never does understanding so outstrip ability to explain. (77)

Already the stress on the responsibilities of the teacher is noticeable. So too, in much the same strain, is the later condemnation of examinations which is combined with a statement of what is to Hall the feature of literature which marks it out especially.

... examinations in English ... are very likely to be harmful, and recitation and critical notes an impertinence, and always in danger of causing arrest of this exquisite romantic function in which literature comes in the closest rapproch to life, keeping the heart warm, reinforcing all the good motives, pre-forming choices, and universalising its sympathies. (78)

Hall's main disciple in Britain as far as English is concerned is Smith (79) whose work leans heavily on him. The concepts of growth and development asserted by Hall and Smith defined the main elements of progressive thought. They were opposed to both the duality of

(76) Ibid: Vol. 2, p. 472

(77) Ibid: Vol. 2, p. 453

(78) Ibid: Vol. 2, p.

(79) Smith, Arnold: Aims and Methods in the teaching of English: 1915

thought and feeling of the traditional version of the cultural heritage and also the suppositions behind the Elementary Codes. On both psychological and social grounds they were at odds with dominant modes of education, especially within the elementary sector. Thus, when Hall uses his striking image of the teacher: "the work here is that of the prospector and not of the careful miner", he is proposing a function at odds with that associated with the Elementary School teacher. In this he would be in agreement with Holmes, whose critique of Elementary Education is, as we shall see, in progressive terms. (80). Holmes spoke from a position of knowledge and insight as an ex-Inspector. The first part of his book itemises the sort of education he saw in practice, which accords well with what we have seen Hall criticise. His chapter titles summarise his argument perfectly: "Salvation through Mechanical Obedience!" "Education through Mechanical Obedience". He relies on Arnold's dualism (as expressed in Culture and Anarchy) between Hebraism and Hellenism, on Arnold's concept of "machinery" and the confusion of information and knowledge. He is at one with Froebel, Montessori, et al, in seeing distrust of the child at the root of Western Education. He sees the ethos of the schools as being the application of rules for their own sake. And, like the progressive educators, he wishes to see the self-activity of the child excited as the centre of education.

Activity is good for the child, and rest,
which is the complement of activity, is
good for the child, but the combination

(80) Holmes, Edmond: What is and What might be: a study of Education in general and Elementary Education in particular. Constable, 1911.

of inertness with strain is good for
neither his body nor his mind. (81)

An understanding of literature, of books, is a result of such
activity and trust.

The child who cannot read to himself,
cannot study a book, cannot master its
contents. It is because the elementary
school child cannot be trusted to do any
independent study that the oral lesson,
or lecture, with its futile expenditure
of "chalk and talk" is so prominent a
feature in the work of elementary schools.
(82)

The second part of the book (which is organised as a mirror-image
of the first - itself an interesting exercise in form) is sub-
titled The Path of Self-realisation - which here leads through
education to salvation. "Egeria"s" ideal school in "Utopia" holds
that Education is growth and that "the child's better and higher
nature is his real nature; (83) that the dramatic and communicative
interests, together with observation and reflection to satisfy an
artistic instinct are vital concomitants of this growth".

Literature - especially narrative literature - is at the heart of
this growth.

The school has a good library of books
which are worth reading, both in prose
and in verse. These the children read
in school and out of school, and are
thus brought into communication with
other minds, with other times, with
other lands. (84)

The narrative interest also shows itself in the expression of the
dramatic instinct. There is aroused -

An interest in literature, by the acting,

(81) Ibid: p. 125

(82) Ibid: p. 126

(83) Ibid: p. 161

(84) Ibid: p. 161

with improvised costume, of passages from Shakespeare's plays, or scenes from Scott's and Dickens' novels. (85)

One of Holmes's main justification for fiction is its part in the growth of the child: the concept of literature put forward by McPherson and its centrality to growth asserted by Hall both find echoes in this work. Another of his main justifications echoes a cry we have become used to hearing - the spread of cheap and trivial literature and the especial proneness of the elementary-school product to it; a tendency which will be looked at subsequently in more specific detail.

The reason why they take so readily to this garbage is that they have lost their appetite for wholesome food. They are not interested in healthy literature, in Nature, in music, in art, in handicraft - in any pursuit which might take them out of themselves into a larger and freer life; and so they fall victims to the allurements of a literature which appeals to their basest, more sensual, and more selfish instincts - the very instincts which growth (in the true sense of the word) spontaneously relegates to a subordinate position and places under effective control. It is the inertness, the apathy, the low vitality of the average child of fourteen, which is the cause of his undoing. His taste for false and meretricious excitement - a taste which may lead him far along the downward path - is the outcome of his very instinct to live, an instinct which, though repressed by the influences that have choked in natural channels, cannot resign itself to extinction and at last, in its despairing efforts to energise, forces for itself the artificial outlet of an imaginative interest in vice and crime. (86)

This extract looks forward very plainly to the "Play-way" and back to Hall: its ancestry in fact, stretches back to Rousseau and its

(85) Ibid: p; 176

(86) Ibid: pp. 234-235

influence forward to the Cambridge School. It also assumes that the mere "exposure" to literature recommended by the nineteenth-century Inspectors was inadequate: that the whole soul must be engaged in the process. Holmes makes explicit the implied analogy with plant growth in a subsequent passage.

Apart from the fact that vigorous growth, whether in plant or animal or human soul, is in itself a sure prophylactic against the various evils to which growing life is exposed, the Utopians are guarded against the danger of demoralising books by their many-sided interest in life. (87)

Nor, Holmes insists on the same page, are they prone to "social discontent." In Holmes's eyes, Egeria successfully made her own small Eden, just as, one supposes, Caldwell Cook made his. Here one recalls Quiller-Couch's strictures on Elementary Education. Holmes's importance for us, then, lies in his rejection of the underlying suppositions of the skills model on the basis of its being inimical to growth. In this major respect he is in the progressive tradition and his views on literature for the child are also part of that tradition. They are in accord with the work of Caldwell Cook (88). In many respects - allowing for the fact that he was dealing with pupils of high ability in a favoured environment at the Perse School, Cambridge - Cook does, in fact, reproduce Egeria's small Eden. He does not think in terms of the presentation of literature: "contemplation" in Hayward's sense or "exposure" in the Arnoldian sense is far from his purview:

... because doing comes before saying, or, coming after, is greater nevertheless. I do not deny the poet the highest place in

(87) Ibid: p. 235

(88) Cook, Caldwell: The Play Way: an essay in Educational Method
Heinemann 1917

the hierarchy of men of power; but
I put him first as a maker, a creator,
which supposes things still to be, and
not as a recorder, a mere repository of
a gleaming part (89).

Not that Cook's complaint was against books:

Our complaint is against that pedantic
misuse of books which represents the
greater part of what is called education
at the present time (90).

The central pivot of Cook's method is imitation, which is different
certainly in degree if not in kind from the sort of communal
composition expected in the Recapitulation theory. "Imitation" is
used here in the Wordsworthian or Aristotelian sense:

Thus the source of all art is imitation in
the fullest sense, not copy, but identifi-
cation. We know that in appreciating a
poem one is a poet oneself. But why?
Because the piece only lives by being
played over again and again for ever
by players who have the true feeling for
it at heart. But in order to earn the
high title of Play, the appreciation must
be not only felt but expressed.

And this hath now his heart
And into this he frames his song
As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation (91).

For the purposes of this enquiry (one may take it as axiomatic that
Cook subscribed largely to Hall's developmental theories) the most
important section is that in Chapter V of The Play Way, dealing with
Ilonds and Chap-books. Cook notes:

Most of our Ilonds have been wholly
imaginary, but sometimes the boys take
their subjects from a book read in class.
The Ilond is then a kind of epitome in
illustration. (92)

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- (89) Ibid: p. 9
(90) Ibid: p. 10
(91) Ibid: pp. 141-170
(92) Ibid: p. 152

The connection between this activity and the Brontë sisters' "Gondal" or the "sub-creation" theory of Tolkien are obvious: Cook here has lighted on an important creative principle (especially for the novelist) and also an important clue to the child's own creativity. The section on "Play-making" which succeeds the "Flonds", and which deals with the children's own activities with dramatisation of stories also has important things to say about the child's formation of literary standards. Cook's notions of values in children's reading have a place in the discussion concerning moral and aesthetic problems to be undertaken in the next sub-section.

The boyish craving for exciting adventure, undirected, is content with cheap, sensational stories, such as those connected with crude horrors and what is called "raw" crime. But, discreetly guided, it finds equal stimulus, and eventually a fuller enjoyment, in good literature. But in introducing the boys to those things which are of highest worth, the master must still cater for their interests. Here lies the virtue of the master's method and selection. He must see that hunger is not dulled, but rendered obedient to taste; real to judgment. (93)

Cook clinches his point with a comparison of the Playway method with English Examination papers.

Cook had fair influence on the Committee compiling the 1921 Report. His is the fullest statement of the implication for method of the psychological bases for the study of literature we have here examined. These representatives of progressive thought, therefore, have drawn attention to the centrality of aesthetic appreciation and artistic form; they have asserted the moral and aesthetic influence not only of art but of the whole environment and they have seen education as being essentially child-centred. Two of them have claimed a special place for narrative fiction in this scheme of things and have drawn

attention to a need for critical discrimination. A case has been made for a creative, mimetic approach to literature as a means of fighting the attraction of the bad which is endemic in the very system of education which seeks to combat it. There is a clearly different tradition developing from that of the more traditional writers previously examined. Also, questions of the moral and aesthetic nature of literature and fiction have been raised and these will be dealt with in more detail in the next sub-section.

Through the Newbolt Report will appear a certain synthesis of what the progressives say and what the English Association says. As already stated, Caldwell Cook will be seen to be an important figure in this partial synthesis. Standing behind him are Holmes and Quiller-Couch; behind all of them are Arnold and Froebel.

(d) The Skills Model and the Elementary Schools -
Developing Ideas

The underlying philosophies of Elementary School provision, as far as they affected the place of literature and fiction, have been previously dealt with. It is important, however, to note that the passing of the 1902 Education Act did not alter the assumptions generally made about the place and nature of the Elementary Schools. The realisation of their central importance and the need to incorporate them far more into a truly national system became stronger as the period 1902-1921 progressed. The culmination came after the First World War and the subsequent publication of the Newbolt Report. Before this, the schools were an easy target for progressive writers such as Holmes, Adams and Norwood and Hope, as we shall subsequently see. Examination of relevant prescriptive publications of the Board will show at first an emphasis on skills for their own sake; later, there will be a distinct move away from the skills model. With these ideas in mind we can look at the Provisional Code for 1903 (94) to ascertain what was taught under the heading of English. As did previous codes, this Code expresses what can best be described as an irreducible minimum. Thus Article 15, dealing with English as part of the "course for instruction in schools for older scholars" says:

English, by which is to be understood
reading, recitation, writing, composition
and grammar in so far as it bears upon the
correct use of language. (95)

The familiar emphasis on skills and correctness again presupposes

(94) Board of Education: Provisional Code of Regulations for Public Elementary Schools and Training Colleges with Schedules. HMSO 1903.

(95) Ibid: p. 4

the methods to be employed. The inclusion of recitation - which, as we have seen, in its time represented a great step forward when urged by Matthew Arnold and his colleagues - nevertheless again assumes that literature will have its effect merely if the reader (or learner) is in contact with it.

The requirements for reading (for examination purposes) in Standards III, IV, V, VI and VII again show that in effect little had changed during the last years of the nineteenth century.

Standard III -

To read a passage from a reading book.

Standard IV

To read a passage from a reading book or history of England.

Standard V

To read a passage from some standard author, a reading book or history of England.

Standard VI

To read a passage from one of Shakespeare's historical plays, or from some other standard author, or from a history of England.

Standard VII

To read a passage from Shakespeare or Milton, or from some standard author, or from a history of England. (96)

A note following these schedules underlines what seems a frankly mechanistic purpose in their setting up.

Reading with intelligence will be required in all the Standards and increased fluency and expression in successive years. The Inspector may examine from any of the books in use in the Standard and in Standard III and upwards, from any book or passage suitable for the purpose which he may select. The intelligence of the reading will be tested partly by questions on

the meaning of what is read. (97)

Literature is given no official place beyond that of training reading fluency and comprehension: while the models chosen certainly reflect the traditional version of the cultural heritage, one can see no reason why "cheap, trashy literature" (98) should not be followed avidly by elementary school children. There is only the very sketchiest comprehension of any developmental aspect: the pupils' reading activities in and outside school were neatly polarised. There is no conception of the idea expressed by Norwood and Hope (99) and Adams as well as Ballard (100) and Sampson that a coming-together of home and school experience may form taste in literature. The assumption on the part of the compilers of the Suggestions seems to be that the mixture of "useful knowledge" and "elevation" to be found in histories of England, Shakespeare's History Plays, Milton or a standard author was itself enough to make the pupil proof against "trash". The view that the traditional version of the cultural heritage in itself had the power to perform this service seems to have been an assumption frequently made by the holders of the "exposure" to literature" view, as we shall see in other contexts. The Provisional Code for 1903 appears to perpetuate Elementary School practices of the previous century. Nevertheless, in practice, there seems to have been a move away from the strictly functional approach implied in the Code - at least as far as official prescriptions were concerned. The unease of Inspectors and others concerning the inadequacy of the traditional version of the cultural heritage in forming good reading tastes, together with

(97) Ibid: p. 47

(98) See below: p. 136

(99) See below: p. 129

(100) See below: p. 142

the supposed social threat of cheap literature catering for mass literacy, will be examined in more detail in the next sub-section, when questions of morality and values in fiction are discussed. This unease, however, was undoubtedly a main factor in the distinct shift in tone, attitude and prescription in the next major publication of relevance by the Board of Education.

The Suggestions of 1905 (101) seem to take up some of these themes. An early paragraph on the function of the school marks a shift away from the 'functional' ideal.

The purpose of the school is education in the full sense of the word; the high function of the teacher is to prepare the child for the life of the good citizen, to create or foster the aptitude for work and for the intelligent use of leisure, and to develop those features of character which are most readily influenced by school life, such as loyalty to comrades, loyalty to institutions, unselfishness and an orderly and disciplined habit of mind. (102)

The moral qualities here enumerated spring directly from those suggested by the classical ideal: here again is an implication that vernacular literature constitutes "the poor man's classics." However, the emphasis on "citizenship" is noteworthy; as also is the insistence on function of the teacher as a transmitter of these values. Noteworthy also is the mention of the right use of leisure, and remembering Dr. Smith's remarks (103), one might expect general reading to receive some extended treatment. Certainly general remarks on the place of reading take up points already made.

A facility in reading and writing should not be regarded as an end in itself, otherwise

(101) Board of Education - Suggestions for the consideration of teachers and others concerned in the work of Public Elementary Schools, 1905

(102) Ibid: p. 7

(103) See below: p. 136

children assume that reading is a tiresome exercise and that writing is a form of handicraft valuable only to clerks and accountants ... reading is a means of increasing the stock of words at command, of acquiring new ideas about men and things in the present and the past, a resource for leisure, for illness, for old age, an essential not merely to success but to pleasure and interest in life. (104)

Again, there is a move away from mere functionalism in reading and writing: the second half of the quoted passage marks a distinct shift in view from the 1903 Suggestions. Nevertheless, there is still a hint that "useful knowledge" is a desired end. There is a lack of any moral and aesthetic dimension, surprising when one remembers the strength of the fear of inferior literature. A subsequent passage on reading gives a more detailed impression of what is in the compilers' minds.

The selection of reading material is as important as the method of using it. The number of books read in a year should not be limited to the two or three prescribed by former Codes as a minimum ... the reading books should contain stories and passages of literary value only, descriptive, narrative or declamatory. One at least of the books read by each child should be a continuous whole, and studied thoroughly both from the point of view of subject matter and from that of the elements of literary form.

Other reading books may well contain varied selections in prose and verse. The teacher should read selected passages of literature as a regular part of the curriculum; these should be followed by conversation on them between him and his class, and so far as possible the children should be encouraged to read suitable books by themselves at home. (105)

The compilers continue by asserting the value of help which could and should be given by the National Home Readers Union and the

(104) Ibid: pp. 7-8

(105) Ibid: p. 37

Public Libraries to extend the reading habit. The plea of Turnbull H.M.I., to be discussed subsequently (106), was here taken up as book provision was seen to be of importance. Yet still there is no justification beyond assertion of "literary value", here given no definition beyond "descriptive, narrative or declamatory." The virtues of thorough study of "subject-matter and literary form" are asserted: this again seems to hark back to the ideal of "the poor man's classics." Nevertheless, the importance of the teacher's reading aloud, of class discussion and private reading of "suitable" books also takes a large place. Even so, the treatment of literature is not detailed. Justification beyond comprehension, understanding of ideas and increase of vocabulary must be inferred from the introductory general remarks on education. "Literary value" remains an unexamined concept. Also, no specific help is given. Geography, History, Nature Study, Arithmetic (and even the schools Savings Bank) all receive Appendices with specific suggestions, book lists and curricula. English receives none.

However, the Board of Education issued its suggestions at regular intervals, normally with one or two sections re-written. The section on the teaching of English was considerably expanded in 1912. In it, one can detect a movement away from the skills model, a continuance of the apprehension of a wider significance of the Elementary School noted in the 1905 Suggestions and - most importantly - an apprehension of and an attempt to incorporate some elements of developing progressive thought. These new Suggestions for 1912 (107) repudiate many previous methods. In its section on the work in Senior Classes, when talking of Differentiation of

(106) See below: pp. 136-7

(107) Board of Education: Suggestions for the consideration of teachers and others concerned in the work of Public Elementary Schools, 1912,

Methods in Reading, the compilers first can say:

Reading aloud has, in the past, assumed a place and taken a form in the elementary school which it would never have had save for the obsolete system of individual examination. (108)

Then, having made the point that most children will be able to read efficiently enough by the age of ten, they say:

... as a general rule, children above 10 years of age should be afforded frequent opportunities during school hours of reading in the way in which grown persons read, that is to say, silently, and for the purpose of study or of pleasure. (109)

This passage is significant because it marks a change of direction on the part of the Board from its Provisional Code of 1903, and a considerable development from the Suggestions of 1905. For, when the compilers come to deal with choice of books, they are no longer hampered by the need to choose "standard authors" for reading aloud and oral comprehension. However, they still see a need for the traditional reading book.

It will still be necessary to employ, in the first place, a suitably graded class-book or manual of reading, designed primarily to increase the child's power of understanding the power of literature. (110)

The passage continues much in the style of the note quoted above in comment on the 1903 schedules. However, subsequently, more is said about the place of silent reading and the teachers' role in its encouragement.

The sole aim of the lessons described in the last section is to give children a liking for

(108) Ibid: p. 33

(109) Ibid: p. 33

(110) Ibid: p. 33

good books and the power of reading them intelligently and quickly. They should have access to books of continuous narrative such as they can understand and enjoy. The choice of such books for children demands considerable experience, sympathy and judgment. Everyone who has tried knows how difficult it is to find out by questioning children in elementary schools what books they really like or dislike, and yet a book which children do not like or do not come to like is of little use to them. Moreover, in choosing books account must be taken, not only of the differences of taste among children who come from different types of homes, but also of the differences in the tastes and abilities of individual teachers. (111)

This is an important passage. It gives to private reading a higher status than ever before officially acknowledged. It values books for their own sakes - there is no hint of the "correlation" of subjects that was such a feature of the previous decade, fostered to a certain extent by the Board, and leading to reading purely for information (using books in an "applied" way). The passage also admits that the child's interest and liking must be of the greatest importance in choosing books. It testifies to their awareness of the importance of home and cultural background of the child - and also the predilections of the teacher, recognising that what teachers dislike will probably be taught badly. Nevertheless, despite its forward-looking nature, it has a sort of liberal diffidence (itself a new note in Board of Education publications) and fails to be prescriptive. The weakness is that the Board, in making Suggestions to teachers and others in Elementary Schools, was not dealing with a class of people with the humane, literate background of, say, the HMI's. Those to whom the remarks were addressed were not necessarily equipped to bring to the choice of school

reading books these qualities of "experience, sympathy and judgment." There is a reference to the language and culture barrier, which also inhibits choice:

The popularity of the Waverley novels is as indisputable as their literary merit, yet very few practical teachers would deny that most children in Elementary Schools find it difficult to get behind the veil of Sir Walter Scott's style and language, which is alien to anything of which they have experience, and to enter into the spirit of his romances. Much of the best of Dickens' work cannot be appreciated by the very young and inexperienced. (112)

The compilers nevertheless warn against the evils of simplification and the use of abridged editions, and conclude the section in a way which indicates awareness of the critics of the Elementary system such as Norwood and Hope.

There is more danger of mistaking information for education in the early stages of teaching literature than in any other subject, and for a child of 13 or 14 years of age in an elementary school the development of a love for reading, and of a rudimentary power of discrimination, in a very wide sense, between good and bad books, is far more important than the mechanical and inappreciative "knowledge" of any particular masterpieces of English literature. (113)

Again, there is a step away from the examination system of the pre-1902 schools living in the shadow of the Revised Code. Discrimination is offered as a justification for wide reading - though the terms "good" and "bad" here remain unexamined. However, what is most important is that the Board of Education itself accepted the principle that the knowledge of the subject matter of any book was not the most important aspect of literary study in schools.

(112) Ibid: p. 35

(113) Ibid: p. 35

Nevertheless, the question, "what books?" remained. The compilers have said that not all classics are suitable for all children; they have said that choice is a difficult thing for the teacher. However, part of the diffidence may well come from a realisation that there are really very few books which would easily fit into the category "good" and yet be able to be understood by the children. Some attempt to lay down criteria for such a choice is made in the next section.

The books, then, chosen for individual reading should deal, in the main, with human action and with motives which can easily be understood; and the story element should predominate. (114)

There is a hint here of a developmental approach: the insistence on story is noteworthy, especially in the light of the succeeding remarks.

Fables and legends, tales of romance and adventure, with which the lower classes should have become familiarised, should be continued, though in more elaborate form. (115)

This hint of progression through from the infant stage indicates that the writings of Froebel and Hall had not gone unremarked at the Board of Education: the stages of fable and legend through to conventional narrative paralleling stages of development owe something, it would appear, to Hall. When, however, the compilers come to making actual suggestions, they are much more tentative.

Probably longer stories, such as Kingsley's "Water Babies" or "Heroes" will be more suitable than collections of shorter stories, though these need not be excluded. In addition, the children should read, in the

(114) Ibid: p. 35

(115) Ibid: p. 35

course of the year some good novels, e.g. "Robinson Crusoe", "Masterman Reedy", "Tom Brown's School Days" - books which are not merely sound in literature, but are well suited to the capacities of children.

In the higher classes, they may also read books of a more serious character; simply told later of travel and adventure, easy biographies and the like. (116)

The tentativeness is perhaps inevitable. The notion of "soundness" in literature implies a dependence on the traditional version of the cultural heritage, necessarily watered down, as well as a fear of the possible moral dangers of books which do not have this "soundness". The recognition of a child's developmental needs is made; but with it seems to go an acceptance that no specific literature suitable for children in the elementary school is available.

Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that in the next issue of the Board's Suggestions (in 1923), even the publication of the Newbolt Report did not make the 1912 Suggestions - in the eyes of the Board - obsolete. The reader's attention, as will be seen, is drawn to some of the Report's more relevant paragraphs. Otherwise the 1912 Suggestions for English are left intact. It is certainly true that they show a development since 1903. One may, as already hinted, question their actual usefulness to the generality of contemporary Elementary school teachers. However, the work of W.J. Batchelder, who deliberately set out to interpret the Suggestions for teachers, will be examined in detail in the next sub-section. Meanwhile, it is sufficient to note that within developing notions of the place of the Elementary School there came an impetus towards the synthesis created in the Newbolt Report as important as those provided by the English Association and the progressive writers.

Part 2 - Fiction as a Particular Form

(a) Prescriptions within the Traditional Version of the Cultural Heritage - Secondary Schools

We have noticed Fowler's statement that the fact of literature's survival was due

... least of all to the schools (1).

We are also familiar with the emphasis in many schools within the secondary sector on the cognitive rather than the affective. Language study and "rigour" were stressed - English as a version of the classics.

With these ideas in mind, it is instructive to look at what literature was studied in schools outside the public Elementary sector. One of the first actions the English Association took was to investigate what was actually happening in the schools in the name of English. Its first pamphlet (2) dealt with a cross-section of boys' secondary schools in England and Scotland. The main finding was that literature was relegated almost entirely to study of standard authors. School 1 of the Public Boarding Schools offered Longfellow, Scott's poetry - and in prose, Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare, Dicken's A Christmas Carol and Bullen's Voyage of the Cachalot. School 2 (in which "Memoranda for Masters" said: " ... the boys' main attention should be directed to character, sentiment and style") offered its fourth form no prose at all (except Addison and Macaulay's essays) but much Shakespeare, Milton and Tennyson (3).

(1) See above: p.

(2) English Association Leaflet No. 1 - Types of English Curricula in Boys' Secondary Schools. 1907.

(3) Ibid: p. 4

The first Grammar School at age 13 offered two periods of literature a week - novels read were Ivanhoe, The Black Arrow and Westward Ho! (4). The second Grammar School mentions no texts.

Of County and Borough Schools, the first notes no texts at all (5); the second gives its third form The Lay of the Last Minstrel and A Reading Book (!) - as well as Stead's Books for the Bairns (6).

The picture was much the same in the Scottish Schools. The English Association presents the evidence without comment. However, the inference is clear enough that prescriptions remain within a watered-down version of the traditional view of the cultural heritage. However, two years later, in the English Association Bulletin No. 8, there is a report on English teaching by the heuristic method in Liverpool schools ("heuristic" here seems to have a vague meaning, merely denoting an absence of rote-learning, recitation, etc., and a lot of silent reading) (7). What is most interesting is the list of books studied. Before Form 2 appear Stories from the Faerie Queene, Robin Hood, The Man born to be King, Alice, and Ruskin's The King of the Golden River. In Form 2 is the usual reference to Arthurian and Norse legends as well as Kingsley's Heroes, The Water Babies and Hereward the Wake. The Lay of the Last Minstrel and Tanglewood Tales also appear.

From Form 3 there is an increase in poetry (The Deserted Village, Sohrab and Rustum, Marmion and The Lady of the Lake, Ayton's Ballads, The Ancient Mariner and Book 1 of The Golden Treasury), and much

(4) Ibid: p. 10

(5) Ibid: p. 11

(6) Ibid: p. 12

(7) English Teaching in the Schools of Liverpool - Bulletin No. 8, The English Association.

Shakespeare. Most of the texts recommended for Form remain - novels to be mentioned by name are A Tale of Two Cities and Treasure Island, as well as Gulliver's Travels. Form 4b get some Scott (Quentin Durward and The Talisman) and Goldsmith's The Vicar of Wakefield, as well as more Shakespeare and a considerable increase in narrative verse, while the succeeding year has some historical narrative (Hakluyt and Southey's Life of Nelson) as well as Crauford. The Primary Schools have lists very similar - except that Ballantyne and Conan Doyle (Micah Clarke), Kipling and Mrs. Craik appear.

One notices a great similarity with the lists of Batchelder three years later: nevertheless, there is a lot more variety and - given the period - originality in the lists than is shown in the Boys' Schools' curricula referred to earlier.

The Report by the Headmasters' Conference on the teaching of English which the English Association reported (8) indicates recommended texts for preparatory schools, taking the boy up to the age of 13. Bearing in mind the speech of Lyttelton, Head of Eton (9) which appears together with it, one may presume that these prescriptions constitute the "good" and "the first-rate".

Stage 1 - (Prose) Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare, Stories from The Iliad, The Odyssey, The Aeneid and Herodotus, The Faerie Queene and King Arthur. Also novels by Stevenson.

Stage 2 - (Prose) Novels by Scott - also Kingsley's Westward Ho! and The Heroes.

(8) English Association - Bulletin No. 9, 1909

(9) See below: p. 137

Stage 3 - Robinson Crusoe, The Vicar of Wakefield and A Tale of Two Cities.

Stage 4 - Froissart, Southey's Life of Nelson, Macaulay's Life of Goldsmith (10)

It is noticeable how the works of Stage 4, with a historical bias, cater for the wish for "ordered thought", and fact - a hint here of the correlation of subjects and the practice of using literature as "textbook", as castigated by Chadwick (11). The prescriptions we have noted, therefore, may be regarded as typical of the traditional view of the cultural heritage, with the exception of some progressive elements incorporated within the prescriptions for girls' schools. The remarkable similarity we shall note between contemporary prescriptions within traditional thought and those within progressive thought will be seen to indicate a lack of a viable literature for children at this stage.

(b) Prescriptions within the Elementary Sector: towards a Progressive view of the Cultural Heritage

There is need to look at prescriptions for books made within the Elementary sector and attendant justifications for their use in the light of the movement away from "the Revised Code Mentality". The writers to be examined in this respect are Batchelder, Norwood and Hope, and Charlotte Mason. The first is strongly prescriptive while the third, with views on the place of literature rather outside the mainstream of thought, proposes a power for it as an educative tool stronger than most.

(10) Ibid: p. 22

(11) See ~~above~~ p. 86

W.J. Batchelder (12) has been mentioned, and as he states in his Preface, wrote his work specifically to help elementary teachers carry out the Board's comparatively ambitious ideas in the 1912 Suggestions. The work is highly specific, both in theory and practice. Its whole temper is that of an underlining of all that is said in the Suggestions. How far what he proposes was put into practice is debatable - but we shall see that his recommendations for reading, though comprehensive, have a familiar ring.

Batchelder saw English at the centre of the curriculum; some of his early remarks have a force which adumbrates those of Sampson. His opening remarks indicate once again a familiarity with Hall and Hayward and a sympathy with the aims of the English Association. English is

... that portion of the scheme of education which is concerned mainly with the cultivation of the intellect and the emotions, and which plays a great part in the development of the moral principle ... much of the ethical teaching of the school must always centre about the instruction in the mother tongue. (13)

This claim - for a moral and emotional as well as an intellectual education through English - is remarkable in what is, after all, essentially a method book for elementary teachers. It foreshadows the Newbolt Report clearly. In the Introduction he gives his clinching paragraph to justify reading - very much in the same tone as the earlier extract.

Reading should come to be a source of pleasure and culture as well as profit; and the school furnishes an introduction to a new and beautiful world, the realm of literature, of which Wordsworth wrote:

(13) Ibid: pt. 1: p. 1

"Books we know
are a substantial world, both pure
 and good;
Round these, with tendrils strong as
 flesh and blood,
Our pasture and our happiness will grow."
 (14)

No matter that the modern reader may catch a note of forced (and possibly false) aestheticism here: the important point is that Batchelder meant it, and his method book - though safely conservative in many ways - does make serious efforts to help elementary teachers carry these ideas into practice.

In dealing with fiction, he first recommends story-telling to infants (a sort of oral composition and recapitulation); he says, "It will be noted that the assistance of the scholars is invoked wherever possible." He advocates legends and myths for succeeding forms, and here once again the influence of Froebel, Herbart and Hall is evident. As he continues, there is evidence of some sophistication in his position. First, he dismisses the practice of reading round the class - and the teacher's "pattern" reading except insofar as it can help the child's understanding of literature.

The teacher's pattern reading, to illustrate sentence accent and pronunciation, will also be mainly superseded, except when, as noted, it is made to serve the higher purpose of inculcating a love of literature, and a taste for general teaching which may at the moment be beyond the scholars' power to read by themselves. (15)

He asserts the desirability of the child's reading every day for individual study and pleasure, and then moves on to a further justification for fiction.

(14) Ibid: pt. 1, p. 8

(15) Ibid: pt. 2, p. 8

The children will begin to read with some understanding narratives setting forth human motive, and examples of diverse characters and the various forms of action that have their sources in motive and the difference in character. By this means the child will gradually gain a wider knowledge of human nature: he will begin to form definite ideas about human life and the influence of environment and mental habit upon it. This should give him a new power of ordered thought, in addition to that of speech; and he will begin to understand the springs of human conduct which have hitherto been a sealed book to him. (16)

There is much in this passage of note. It constitutes Batchelder's main justification for the teaching of fiction - yet, unlike the introduction, there is no mention of appreciation of beauty, no reference to aestheticism. The emphasis on character reminds one of the then very highly influential Shakespearian criticism of A.C. Bradley. His assertion that the child will gain understanding by contemplating the situations fictional characters encounter has a more modern ring. Yet he mollifies those commentators who distrusted all teaching for "mere aesthetics" (17) - the phrase "a new power of ordered thought", especially when preceded by the conditional "should", indicates perhaps that Batchelder felt he was not on firm ground and needed to state a more traditional reason. Batchelder is on firmer ground when he treats the moral component of literature - books are read to "exemplify some point of moral instruction" (18) - such as "service through character". Batchelder sees this as educationally unsound on several scores. First is simply that children do not find it interesting. Other reasons follow.

(16) Ibid: pt. 2, p. 9

(17) For a typical example, see above p. 75

(18) Ibid: pt. 2, p. 16

Reading matter should certainly be selected with an interest in its ethical value, though it should be indirectly and not formally treated. When the child's interest has been awakened in the characters and incidents for the narrative's sake, then it is possible by free discussion to establish the ethical points of the narrative. There is no obligation to apply the moral personally even then - only to trace its relation to the characters depicted. If the child imbibes the moral in relation to the story, it is probable that he will be directly influenced in the crises of his after-life by the ethical teaching he has absorbed unconsciously. (19)

Batchelder here is making very high claims indeed for the moral effect of literature - claims which have taken a central place in subsequent justifications for its teaching. Already we see a distinct subtilisation of the familiar "refining power" - though what is here is only a fairly logical extension of poetry as Arnold's "criticism of life". Certainly any argument for literature's moral power which does not compromise its aesthetic wholeness must be carried out on these lines: the teacher assumes the artist's "negative capability". It is remarkable that such statements can be made relatively unequivocally by a man who in other aspects of his English teaching was much more obviously of his time in his insistence on composition from models and other such practices. Batchelder shows emancipation from Shayer's notion of the "Moral" fallacy.

One of the main reasons for choosing Batchelder's book for careful treatment is that he not only speaks to the elementary school teacher in the context of the Board of Education circulars about what literature is for, but he also gives a very comprehensive list of what books should be available, and this list is worth looking at in some detail.

For Standard 3, the class-library recommendations include: Norse Legends, Old Norse Tales, King Arthur's Knights. This emphasis on myths and legends marks a transition from the lower classes where they are even more heavily represented - again with an influence of Froebel, Hall, "Culture Epoch" and the "recapitulation theory." Novels include Coral Island; children's stories mentioned are Alice in Wonderland and some Mrs. Molesworth. Information books (including historical narrative) consists of S. Crompton's Life of Columbus and By Meadow and Stream. Standard 4 (where our age-group starts) is treated as follows:

The Waterbabies (retold)
The Arabian Nights (retold)
With Nature's Children
The Heroes (Kingsley)
The Rose and the Ring
King of the Golden River
Tanglewood Tales
Sylvie and Bruno
Parallels from Nature (Mrs. Galty)
Nat the Naturalist
Uncle Tom's Cabin
Robinson Crusoe
Settlers in Canada
Poor Jack
Little Savages (Marryatt)
Martin Rattler
Robin Hood
Twenty-thousand Leagues under the Sea
The Child of Caves (Verne)
Sir Ludar (Talbot Baines Reed)
Little Wanderlin (Keany)
Eric (Farrar)
Two Little Waifs (Mrs. Molesworth)
The Rambles of Three Children (G. Mockler)
Stories from Chamer
Gascoyne (Ballantyne)
(20)

This list bears out his contention elsewhere -

The use of classics and standard-authors
must be subordinated to the capacity of the
child rather than to the taste of the teacher.

In this matter the influence of the homes, the environment of the children and the intellectual progress of the class must be earnestly considered ... Generally speaking, the books for silent reading, as differentiated from the books selected for study in class, should present fewer difficulties of vocabulary and meaning than the latter. (21)

Certainly the list moves away discernibly from the traditional version of the cultural heritage. Obviously there is a regard for the developmental needs of the child. Standard 5 is given a list much in the same strain, though with more emphasis on "versions" of classics.

Animal Story Book Reader (Andrew Lang)
The White Rat (Lady Barker)
Animal Stories (Nelson)
A Wonder Book (Hawthorne)
Life of Stanley
The Little Duke
The Book of Golden Deeds (Charlotte Yonge)
The Rob Roy in the Baltic
Two Years before the Mast (Dana)
Cape Town to Luanda
Tales from the Fairy Queen } Harrap
King Arthur and his Knights } ed.
Tom Brown's Schooldays
The Last of the Mohicans
Feats on the Fjord (Martineau)
Hereward the Wake (abridged)
Erling the Bold (Ballantyne)
Masterman Ready
The Black Arrow
The 5th Form at St. Dominics
Martin Rattler
The Young Fur Traders (Ballantyne)
Hans Brinker (M.M. Dodge)
The Lamplighter (M.S. Cummins)
The Story of Eppie (from George Eliot)

(22)

The standard of difficulty - though not the emphasis on strong narrative and action - changes with the books recommended for Standards V and VI. Scott now makes an appearance (Ivanhoe,

(21) Ibid: pt. 2, p. 19

(22) Ibid: pt. 2, p. 32

Quentin Durward, The Talisman). Hawthorne (Tanglewood Tales) is still represented. Bulwer-Lytton and George Eliot (The Mill on The Floss) appear, as do Thackeray (The Newcombes and The Virginians), Dickens (Tale of Two Cities), Conan Doyle (The White Company - and not Sherlock Holmes!). There is still a lot of Stevenson and Kingsley. Lorna Doone appears - as well as the inevitable Man-eaters of Tsavo; Jock of the Bush-veld, Wanderings in Syria and other "outpost of Empire" works. Also it is noteworthy that Mrs. Craik's John Halifax, Gentleman figures prominently on the list.

Lest it should be thought that Batchelder would make a different choice for class readers, it is noteworthy that later on he talks of literature work in class and gives, as illustration, a list of the same authors - Ballantyne, Marryat, Henty, Verne, Cooper, Haggard, Blackmore - as well as Scott, Dickens, Lamb, etc.. He says:

It is desirable that some books should be studied in detail in class, in order that a love and appreciation of the beauties of literature may be awakened. (23)

and:

Literature should not be subordinated to the fancied demands of either the history of geography course, and it is often preferable to choose books from the standpoint of literary value than to try to correlate specially with these subjects. (24)

Batchelder's book, then, represents the best advice currently available to the elementary school teacher which was not critical of the system. While in harmony with the Board of Education publication it, nevertheless, contains many strong and useful statements of its own.

(23) Ibid: pt. 2, p. 72

(24) Ibid: pt. 2, p. 73

There is a certain synthesis between progressive thought (especially in early use of myth and legend) and the work of Fowler in an attempt to compromise between the cognitive and affective. In the notion of "indirect ethical teaching" there is statement of a theme which will be considerably developed. Batchelder's work on literature shows itself to be part of a stream not exclusively concerned with the schools: for example, he seems to be influenced by Quiller-Couch as well as Fowler.

In his prescriptions, Batchelder - within the limits of works available - moves away from the traditional view of the cultural heritage. Where "classics" appear, they are placed with a thought for the child's developmental needs. Even so, seen in the context of the rest of his work, Batchelder is conservative when compared with Norwood and Hope, Holmes, Cook, Hayward and Ballard. He lacks their moral and social urgency. Norwood and Hope (25) writing earlier than Batchelder, foreshadow Holmes in their social concern and Mason in their urging of the place of literature:

Since the age of Industrialism the conditions of labour have gone steadily against the spiritual, which is the artistic influence in man ... it is becoming plain that Industrialism as we know it, carries inherent in itself the seeds of rebellion ... the workers are disquieted in soul. Their aesthetic conscience has been killed but the ghost refuses to be laid. (26)

Norwood and Hope see imaginative literature as a vital ingredient in reviving the aesthetic conscience. Like Holmes, they see the elementary system, with its emphasis on the mechanical, as inimical

(25) Norwood, C., and Hope, Arthur H.: The Higher Education of Boys in England John Murray, 1909

(26) Ibid: p. 175

to education as well as socially inferior to the secondary system in a potentially disastrous way. They point out, after Robert Race (27) a vast social and material gulf between elementary education and secondary education (28) and call for a readjustment of the curriculum.

The terms "elementary" and "secondary" ...
have no well-defined, fixed meaning (29)

The extent of this "gulf" is indicated by the sorts of books children are required to read. The Elementary School child should have the same opportunities as the Secondary child: a reading habit should be fostered, without books being seen as means of study only.

Keeping a simple aim in view all the time,
we shall not attempt to do more than create
a liking for what we take in the classroom,
and suggest further and wider reading which
can be carried on through the school, or
local, library. (30)

The simple aim of "liking" is at odds with the traditional view of the cultural heritage. More specific recommendations are as follows:

Two authors fulfil in an especial degree
our requirements for boys; Shakespeare
and Scott, and these should be the staple
of the curriculum of every boys' school.
We must remember that literature is the
interpretation of life, and draft our
scheme so that it feeds the interests
of the boy as he grows from childhood.
He is at first keenly interested in stories
of deeds, and of great men of action, and
this interest gradually develops into the
love of romance and tales of adventure.

(27) Race, Robert: The Reform of the Elementary School

(28) Op. cit: p. 506

(29) Ibid: p. 510

(30) Ibid: p. 340

Therefore, with the smallest boys, Hans Andersen and Kingsley's Water-Babies will do for a start, to be followed by Kingsley's Heroes and by heroic legends of Greece and Rome and the North. There are plenty of poetry-books from which a wise selection can be made. Only, let there be no notes, plenty of reading aloud and oral work between master and class and no examination. As the boy approaches and passes twelve, the age of Scott begins. A novel of Stevenson will form an easy introduction, and Kenilworth, Ivanhoe and Quentin Durward may follow. Marmion and then the cantos of action in The Lady of the Lake provides excellent poetry, combined with Macaulay's Lays, old ballads and some of Campbell's poems. From thirteen onwards the boy develops to the appreciation of dramatic action, and Shakespeare can be begun. (31)

In this passage the progressive concerns with activity and oral work are stated. "Liking" and the plea for catholicity in acceptance of the child's out-of-school reading are asserted. Books must be chosen for the child to suit his developing capacities without following any historical or chronological system. In this, there appears a rejection of the traditional view of the cultural heritage. Andersen and legends of the North for "the smallest boys" recall Froebel and Hall - though the question arises of whether "heroic legends of Greece and Rome" might not be interpreted by contemporary readers as a plea for a surrogate classical education.

Nevertheless, the emphasis on Scott and Shakespeare and the progression to them through Stevenson seems at first sight odd. It refers us back to the traditional view of the cultural heritage and the prescriptions for secondary schools already examined.⁽³²⁾ When the statement calling for a "re-adjustment" of the curriculum is recalled, one wonders whether, in spite of their social criticism,

(31) Ibid: p. 341

(32) See below: p. 119

Norwood and Hope regarded the secondary curriculum as itself something to be aspired to, with differences of method and outlook to suit the socially-deprived elementary child as the main change. However, it may also be said that the stress on "interest" and "action" leads to involvement in narrative on the part of the child; thus the emphasis, despite the prescription, is child-centred rather than text-centred, and Norwood and Hope find themselves within the progressive consensus. Certainly the point is reinforced that any progressive version of the cultural heritage lacked a specific children's literature of worth, thus calling for new interpretations of items generally accepted within the traditional view. Norwood and Hope have justified fiction in terms of "interest", "liking", a view of the cultural heritage and - more generally - a need to revive the "aesthetic soul". These aims are overtly progressive. Nevertheless, fiction is a part of the process: nowhere do they see it as exclusive. Holmes and Cook, among other progressive writers, also see the narrative and literary form as important but only as one of a number of aesthetic and educative interests. Charlotte Mason, within the progressive consensus, goes considerably further (33). In the context of urging that Continuation Schools in Britain should follow the philosophy envisaged by Bishop Grundtvig in Denmark, she first of all deals directly with literature as a social and cultural agent.

Our (PNEU) idea is that, by pretty copious reading, links of common interests might be established, that the schoolroom might do at least as much for the general life as does the cricket pitch. (34)

(33) Mason, Charlotte: A liberal education for all: the scope of continuation schools. Parents' National Education Union: 1919

(34) Ibid: p. 14

The potency claimed for reading is illustrated as follows:

I do not hesitate to say that the constantly recurring misery of our age, "Labour unrest", is to be laid at the door, not of the working man, but of the nation which has not troubled itself to consider, among other things, the natural hunger of mind and manner of meat such hunger demands. (35)

This claim, interestingly enough, is a very close echo of that made for the actual social results of Egeria's school in Utopia by Holmes in What is and What Might Be. However, while Egeria damped down the propensities to "social discontent" of the Utopians by means of direct experience leading to "growth" and the development of a Herbartian "many-sided interest", Charlotte Mason's claim is much more specific: that they (the PNEU) have established

that any person can understand any book of the right calibre (a question to be determined mainly by the age of the young reader); that the book must be in literary form ... that they master a few pages so thoroughly that they can "tell it back" at the time or months later ... that they throw individuality into this "telling back" so that no two tell back quite the same tale; that they learn incidentally to write and speak with vigour and style and usually to spell well. Now this art of telling back is EDUCATION and is very enriching ... we have performed THE ACT OF KNOWING (36).

There are many points of interest in this passage (it must be admitted that the means of the PNEU's "establishing" these principles remain very vague). First is the insistence on "literary form", an insistence which becomes even more specific when one realises she is talking mainly about story ("the same tale"). Secondly is the fact that this process seems to entail a distinct formalisation

(35) Ibid: p. 9

(36) Ibid: p. 13

of oral composition - and as such is a very late statement of it indeed. Thirdly is the statement that skills are an incidental by-product of the central experience of literature embodied in the reinforcing activity of "telling back". However, the dominant impression one carries away is of a position veering dangerously towards a panacea. In any case, the claim was greeted with some scepticism. The Journal of Education took her claim as constituting an attack on the function of the teacher - and also drew attention to its very exclusivity: the necessary concentration was not natural to the majority of children - nor even the majority of adults. Thus:

... individual reading is given its due
and proper place in the education of the
young. (37)

- but only if a lot more is given as well. Charlotte Mason's reply was quite unequivocal:

Now what I venture to claim as a "discovery"
is that attention - instant, concentrated,
intensive - is not a carefully acquired
habit, but a fully developed power, present,
I think, in all normal children and even in
those who are stigmatised as backward or
deficient. (38)

The progressive insistence on "trusting the child" is obvious here. Together with her social concern and her desire to emancipate the "working man" from "labour unrest" by means of something which foreshadows A.N. Whitehead's "nervous energy" (39), Mason shows she is firmly in the tradition of Romantic progressive egalitarianism of Norwood and Hope, and of Holmes already mentioned, as well as Nunn, Jacks, A.N. Whitehead, Wheeler and Clarke, to be examined subsequently. The difference lies in her insistence on the peculiar

(37) Occasional Notes August 1919, pp. 515-6 Journal of Education

(38) Mason, C: (letter to) Journal of Education, Vol. 37, Sept. 1919,
p. 596

(39) See below: p. 188

fitness as an educative tool of "literary form" through "telling back" reinforcing the natural "concentration" of the child.

In their differing ways, therefore, the writers examined have asserted particular functions for literature/fiction outside the secondary sector of education. They all have in common (though in varying degrees) a belief in fiction's liberating power and a general emphasis on the affective rather than the cognitive. Nevertheless, prescriptions have a great similarity with those noted for non-elementary schools. This indicates that at this period, moves away from the traditional version of the cultural heritage had to be seen largely in terms of teaching method, function and purpose of literature and social concern about the nature of the schools. The progressive consensus brought a view of the wholeness and unity both of the child and the work of art. This view being child-centred rather than text-centred, was opposed to the notions of faculty psychology and the cognitive/affective duality noted in Part 1. Nevertheless, a progressive version of the cultural heritage in terms of a prescribed literature was not yet worked out. However, the emphasis given by progressives to myth, legend and that element of fiction which has "wild blood in it" (40) points towards the eventual formation of such a literature.

(40) Townsend, J.R. A Sense of Story Longman 1972, p. 12

(c) Fiction : the moral and aesthetic dilemmas

The Moral Dilemma

We have noted the unease concerning fiction as a form in its own right. On the one hand there is a fear of the debased and corrupted literature of an over-sophisticated society, a fear which has been a feature of progressive thought from Rousseau and Wordsworth onwards. On the other hand, holders of the traditional view of the cultural heritage have assumed that mere "exposure" to "great" literature will protect the child from "trash". Added to this has been noted a fear that such "trash" provided for a newly-literate public would lead to a collapse of the values of traditional society. It will be seen, therefore, that the place of fiction in schools is likely to be defined with far less precision at this stage by writers than the places of drama and poetry. Fiction could encompass a wide range of morality and feeling: it could reflect values in a way the more specialised forms of drama and poetry could not; of all literary forms it was the one most closely associated with the whole range of society, depicting all classes and likely to be read by all classes. During these years immediately before the Newbolt Report, the main lines of the moral debate become clear. Early expressions of the two main lines of argument follow. The first is couched in terms of the traditional version of the cultural heritage and gives cogent expression (a) to the need for discrimination on the part of the teacher, and (b) to the fear of the power of popular literature. In the last HMI's reports to be published, Turnbull says:

As the power to read becomes more and more widely spread, the necessity for

guidance in choosing what to read
becomes more and more urgent. (41)

The attitude implied is that the informed teacher alone can guard against the degradations of popular journalism. This attitude seems a simplification of Arnold's position, and is expressed clearly by Dr. Smith.

There is the very serious responsibility resting upon the teacher of endeavouring to direct his pupils' reading into the right channels. There is no denying the fact that this is the day of reading cheap, trashy literature ... the Hooliganism in our large towns is, I believe, due largely to the fact that what is read is what ought not to be read. I am glad some teachers are taking steps to remedy this growing and pernicious practice. (42)

These last remarks betray an interesting and in many ways significant attitude. Smith, for example, almost seems to regard "the right channels" of literature as the last defence against chaos: he imputes a power to "cheap trashy literature" which even the strongest opponent nowadays of the mass media might find it hard to agree with. There is also implied a fear of the effects of universal education and a fear, in effect, of the mob - which again leads to the implication that "the right channels" are those which guide the scholar into responsible citizenship. Whether this concept of "responsible citizenship" resembled more the sort of idea which led to the teaching of "political economy" in the mid-nineteenth century elementary schools than it did the ends of education as proposed by say, Charlotte Mason is open to question. Nevertheless, Smith's statement bears witness to the fact that the

(41) Board of Education - Inspectors' Reports, 1901-1902, p. 14

(42) Ibid: p. 14

Inspectors at any rate were in no doubt of the potency of the printed word and the crucial importance of reading skills and the use to which they were put. These extracts as a whole give expression to the preoccupations of all the Inspectors concerning reading and literature: that it had to be more than a mechanical exercise; that evil results would follow if it were not fostered with works of quality, and (here by implication) mere exposure to writing of high quality would somehow have the desired effect.

The notion of "exposure" to literature producing critical discrimination was not confined to the Elementary Sector. Lyttelton (Head of Eton) addressed the English Association in 1909 on the notions of "good" and "bad" literature and ways of inculcating the "good". He does not, presumably, expect his pupils to be turned into "hooligans" by "bad" literature, as does Dr. Smith. "Bad" literature can spoil a taste for the "good".

We live in an age when there is the greatest abundance of bad literature that ever was known in any country in the world ... What do you do in music? Give a child, as soon as he can play at all, nothing but first-rate music and he will never want to play the bad ... There is not the slightest reason why he should not have good literature in exactly the same way. Whatever else we have got at the present time, we got an enormous amount of good books for children. The first thing to do is to read aloud to the child till the child grows to love it, but be certain that what you do read aloud is good. (43)

This notion of forming taste in the child, with its assertion of

(43) The English Association. Bulletin No. 9, 1909, p. 9

the primacy of reading aloud, places the onus on the discriminating teacher: taste will form itself if the selection is good. The notions of "good" and "bad" remain undefined: the presumption is (in spite of the assertion of "the enormous amount of good books for children", an assertion not generally made at this time) that Lyttelton is thinking in terms of the traditional version of the cultural heritage. He is convinced that in literature "bad money drives out good" and the pupil must be kept away from the unworthy literature. This view, then, expressed variously by the HMI's and Lyttelton, is one dominant strand in the moral debate. It is to find later expression in the Newbolt Report: nevertheless, until its redefinition in sharper terms by the Cambridge School, giving a critical background and an account of the values implicit in notions of good and bad, it seems to lose ground to the progressive view, which seems much more in accord with changing views of society in general and the Elementary School in particular - as indicated by the Board of Education Suggestions for 1912. The progressive view of the moral dilemma in fiction and the place of the child's own outside reading depends much more on active method and a wish to "trust the child". At first sight there may seem to be a comparatively uncritical catholicity - largely because the so far undefined methods urged are "active and "creative", looking forward to Stanley Hall and later on to Holmes, Cook and Hayward. An example is as follows (44). Although Burrell is referring more to the idea of story-telling, many of the claims here made have relevance to our purposes.

(44) Principal Burrell - The art of story-telling. The Training College Record, Vol. 1, No. 2. Feb. 1902, pp. 92-96.

By those who believe in it the following claims ... are gravely put forward: that it is one of the best ways known to man of teaching and encouraging the young. That it discourages (in this nation at least) all sham passion, all exaggeration, all taught "expression"; and that it encourages simplicity and honesty of thought and voice.

That it interprets literature and leads to a real love of literature.

That it finds out and develops the beautiful, the quiet, the artistic side of a child's life and is in deadly opposition to all that is bold, blatant, coarse and vulgar.

That it demands from teachers and from children who practise it a great deal of memorising of fine passages which remain in perpetual treasure. (45)

This passage is interesting in that it assumes that "exposure" to literature is effective, as shown by its recommendation for memorising of "fine" passages. Here it implies the "elevating" side of literature. However, it also mentions the "artistic side of a child's life", an aspect hitherto neglected but later to come into prominence. Activity is implied. The children themselves practice the story-telling as well as the teacher. This is, as we have seen, a method typical of the proponents of "growth". Nevertheless, there is a stress on the moral as well as the personal potentialities of story-telling - the influence of Arnold is equally well seen in the passage. It is one of the many synthesising extracts we shall see, in which elements of "growth" and "culture" lie side by side. It is noteworthy, too - in the light both of Dr. Smith's remarks and also of much subsequent discussion - that Burrell has a very catholic range of sources for stories; magazines, popular writers are urged, as well as classics, fairy tales and myths. (46)

(45) Op. cit: p. 94

(46) Ibid: p. 96

Thus, on the one hand, Burrell asserts fairy-tale and myth as subjects for re-telling, thus showing an affinity with progressive thought, as well as classics. On the other hand, however, the inclusion of magazines and popular writers indicates that Burrell believes the school should incorporate the outside experience of children into its active methods. This feature lies at the heart of the progressive view and makes Burrell's early statement an important one. Nevertheless, within the emerging progressive consensus there was a genuine dilemma, expressed by Adams (47).

... there is an external browsing that is not under the teacher's control, at any rate in day schools. Here emerges the problem of the penny dreadful. This kind of reading has to be clearly marked off from prurient stuff. The penny dreadful as such is usually merely sensational and silly. The injury it does is not positive so much as negative. It does not usually do actual harm but merely takes the place of better stuff. The new teaching has not quite made up its mind here. There are teachers who say they can easily tell which of their pupils read this kind of literature, not from their depravity but from their wider vocabulary. Besides, there are all degrees of penny-dreadful. When all is said, Treasure Island is only the best of the genre, and the master's Sherlock Holmes and Greenmantle belong to the same group as the pupil's Alone in the Pirates' Lair and Caradoc the Briton ... the question remains whether sensational stories should not be tolerated because they encourage the reading habit and lead to higher literature. Ruskin, of all ken, is called in as a witness on the side of the dreadful, since he preaches that we ought to be sincere in our artistic admiration and that we ought to present to the public we wish to train something within its reach but just a little bit higher than it would of its own initiative seek out. The recapitulation theory is also pleaded in defence and it is maintained that the penny dreadful marks a stage through which it is natural that we should pass on our way to higher things. (48)

(47) Adams, John: The New Teaching Hodder 1918

(48) Ibid: pp. 70-71

This is a very complete statement and echoes of it will be frequently heard. First is the idea that there is a literary ladder: that the penny-dreadful leads to Stevenson; second is the developmental notion that the penny-dreadful is a stage to be gone through. Behind the idea of the teacher as arbiter (though here sympathetic and prepared to build on to the child's experience). Adams shows that he accepts the arguments he has put forward on behalf of the "new teaching" in his dismissal of the classics:

But many books have no attraction at all for the young and to force them to read works of this kind forms no part of the scheme of the new teaching. (49)

Implicit in this attitude is the shift made by progressive writers from class and text to the individual child. Adams, on behalf of his "new teaching", rejects the traditional version of the cultural heritage, a rejection already implied by Norwood and Hope:

Some of the titles (previously prescribed) will undoubtedly distress the earnest teacher who is anxious that his children should read good literature but it is not to be expected that the young who have the reading synthesis skill before them should exercise a nice discrimination in the choice of books. (50)

The main omission, it would seem, from the progressive consensus, is an account of value. The nearest approach has been an assertion of the moral (as when Adams differentiates between the penny-dreadful and "prurient stuff"). However, Adams has not been concerned to estimate the power of the "prurient stuff" beyond assuming that it is the teacher's job to shield the child from it.

(49) Ibid: p. 72

(50) Op. cit: p. 481

However, in speaking of Charlotte Mason, P.B. Ballard (51) in a discussion of children's reading, has this to say:

If there is anything in Miss Mason's theory that textbooks fail to teach because they are badly written, and that knowledge, if put into literary form, slips easily into the mind and stays there, then the influence of a (morally) bad good book, if I may so put it, is more pernicious than the influence of a bad bad book. (52)

This is a significant point. Ballard is partly endorsing Mason's point but also making a distinction. Mason assumed an educative influence; Ballard more subtly assumes a suggestive influence for literature. However, there is the implication that moral evil can exist within aesthetic worth (the "bad good book") which he does not develop. This is a pity, for the idea of "the worm in the lily" would be interesting to work out in terms of the rest of his argument. For Ballard rehearses many arguments which will become more familiar later with the work of Jenkinson and others. Language and thought are but two aspects of the same thing:

(The teacher) should give his pupils words, and give them in abundance. And the best way to give them is through reading. (53)

He notes the influence of environment: he firmly rejects the dangerous idea that working-class boys

have in fact everything the others have except language. (54)

It is wrong because, despite observations by non-working class commentators:

they are sharp merely as sparrows are sharp. (55)

(51) Ballard, P.B: Teaching the Mother Tongue Hodder 1921

(52) Ibid: p. 95

(53) Ibid: p. 81

(54) Ibid: p. 82

(55) Ibid: p. 82

There is a serious deficiency in their backgrounds which must be made up by the teacher;

Their teachers have to supply them with ideas as well as words. And ideas as well as words are found abundantly in books. (56)

But prevailing methods of education, still rooted in the mentality of the codes, militate against this: only in some elementary schools has there been an emancipation into something better.

In the best of these schools reading has ceased to be a lesson and has become a pursuit. (57)

This is obviously an important distinction, and Ballard has evidence (58) to show how in many cases the teaching of reading method has actually stopped the pursuit of reading.

It is at this point that Ballard makes a significant departure from the arguments of most of his predecessors. He has to contend with the twin dilemmas of difficulty and worth. Scott and Dickens are liable to put the young readers off books for ever. So there must be some formal contact with literature in the classroom besides silent reading;

Although I advocate the more generous supply of easy books, I would by no means exclude the highest and the best literature on the plea that it is difficult ... But it is rarely suitable for unaided study. (59)

Nevertheless, the teacher's function is to be that of a guide.

... in the literature lesson proper the pupils must be led to read for themselves rather than left to read for themselves. (60)

(56) Ibid; p. 82

(57) Ibid; p. 84

(58) Ibid; p. 86

(59) Ibid; p. 88

(60) Ibid; pp. 88-89

The teacher's guidance is an active thing. It must ideally lead to discrimination and assertion of values. But these values are not exclusive; they are built up on a foundation of the child's own reading - comics, cheap detective stories, "bloods", magazines, which he analyses and, like Adams, finds wholesome.

Speaking generally, the boys' papers of today are always full of adventure, are often blood-curdling, and are sometimes silly. But they are never immoral ... As for girls' papers, nothing could exceed their scrupulous propriety ... if we object to these stories at all, it seems to me that we can only do it on aesthetic grounds. (61)

The argument ends with two statements - one, in contradiction of Lyttelton, that in the formation of taste bad money does not necessarily drive out good; the other (and this is the first significant occasion in this study on which a very important justification occurs) that books have a cathartic and therapeutic effect. For the first argument he says:

I personally hold the view that this surreptitious reading is, on the whole, a benefit to the school; not because it is surreptitious, but because it is reading. It makes the child familiar with words and the printed page; it extends his vocabulary and gives him a sense of syntactical structure. In fine, it is a form of literary education. (62)

For the second, he says:

In these thrilling stories, certain deep-rooted impulses find a healthy vent. The old doctrine of catharsis applies: the bosom is cleansed of much perilous stuff that stirs within the breast. The intelligent youth goes through the process and comes out the other end. It is a tenable theory that

(61) Ibid: p. 92

(62) Ibid: p. 97

those who read rubbish when they are old
are those who did not read rubbish when
they were young. (63)

This is an important argument in many respects. We shall see it asserted, rejected and subtilised a great deal during the rest of this enquiry. It is a development of the progressive views outlined by Norwood and Hope, and by Adams. Its future course may be foreshadowed in the following way. Ballard's acceptance, like that of Adams, of "bloods", detective stories, etc., is couched in restrictive terms. "But they are never immoral ..." "Greater" literature can be immoral. The main opponents of his attitude, the Cambridge School, would reject this justification as inadequate. A "simple" morality may be found in the most "fantasying" of stories. In any case, to the Cambridge School such stories would be products of the debased mass values of an industrial society. In effect, therefore, Ballard's argument, as a development of progressive thought, could only be countered by a subtilisation of the earlier fears of "trash" and "hooliganism" of the HMI's. Ballard's acceptance of the reading of bloods "because it is reading" is later agreed with by many writers and teachers. His justification on the grounds of "catharsis" foreshadows the arguments of Pickard (64) and to a lesser extent, Harding (65). It also receives a very similar restatement at the end of the period of this enquiry by Hindle (66). However, it also makes an interesting contrast with Jenkinson because the process thus intimated makes no distinction between "helping to grow up" and "compensating for the difficulties of growing up". (67)

(63) Ibid; p. 98

(64) See below: p. 393

(65) See below: p. 397

(66) See below: p. 436

(67) See below: p. 256

There is no conception in Ballard of the differing functions of fantasy outlined by Lewis (68). There is, therefore, an absence - which would be crucial for the Cambridge School - of any assertion of values in literature apart from the moral. Nevertheless, Ballard's work strongly suggests necessity for a coming together of school and the outside world, so that the experience of "bloods" is not seen as directly inimical to the literary experience offered by the school. This progressive concern will henceforward be found a dominant one: it is a staple of the Newbolt Report, and is regularly re-stated by writers to be examined subsequently, from Sampson (69) to Bardgett (70). It is even to be stated forcefully in publications influenced largely by the Cambridge School (71). The provision of a literature of value specifically for children is seen gradually to be the only way in which the progressive view and that later to be expressed of the Cambridge School can be synthesised, so that the school can provide "the bridge between the classics and rubbish." (72)

(68) See below: p. 335

(69) See below: p. 161

(70) See below: p.

(71) See below: pp 241 - 247

(72) See below: p. 271

The Aesthetic Dilemma

When writers we have so far dealt with have referred to literature's aesthetic qualities they have either done so in terms of undefined "appreciation", "feeling" or "beauty". Kendall, with all his insistence on the wholeness and unity of works of art, has had recourse to the moral beauty of expressed sentiment in literature. McPherson has referred to the unity of a work of art in providing its aesthetic appeal.

However, fiction presents a difficulty in form as well as in morality. Just as the novel admits of many kinds of morality and is thus difficult to admit into the classroom without (great) qualification, so its form has various elements which are themselves difficult to weld together in terms of aesthetic appreciation. As Raban says: (73)

... all elements of a poem ... can be contained in the mind simultaneously. Only then can the various parts be seen to interact. A poem divides naturally into the brief units of line, image and stanza ... A novel, on the other hand, divides most easily into the longer units of the paragraph, the episode and the chapter. Our interest is generally sustained, not by images and rhythmic repetitions, but by the organisation of events in the narrative. The verbal quality of a novel is best described, not in terms of the striking image or occasional distortion of syntax, but by the continuously maintained effect of the overall tone. (74)

If one abstracts the various elements of the novel form - plot, narrative, character, moral fable, etc. - one is not left with any single quality - say, the Keatsian "beauty" predicated by Kendall -

(73) Raban, Jonathan: The Technique of Modern Fiction. Arnold 1968

(74) Ibid: p. 16

which can be "appreciated". The "continuously maintained effect of the overall tone" Raban mentions is a quality which suffuses the whole and is difficult to isolate. Ninety percent of language in most extended works of fiction is purely functional.

All the while literature is accounted for in terms of the traditional view of the cultural heritage, the precise nature of its aesthetic appeal and its formal elements matter comparatively little. The notions of "uplift", "enlightenment", "fineness of thought and action" are sufficient. However, a child-centred approach rather than a text-centred approach and a concern for the effect of the work of art on the child as an agent in its growth paradoxically mean that questions of form are more important. The notion of the novel as a form to be accounted for as an educational instrument will be developed throughout this enquiry. Matters of presentation are inextricably mixed with matters of form. These pre-occupations are first seen in the work of F.H. Hayward, speaking as an ex-L.C.C. Inspector most familiar with Elementary Schools. The first of his works we shall examine (75) was published in 1909. Hayward is primarily a Herbartian; he is at pains to point out that such a systematic approach to education, with its desire to cultivate the various faculties of the child, is not inimical to any "interest" theory. Hayward feels it is a mistake to speak of these faculties - memory, imagination, observation, reason, will - as separate. Nor will any separateness show itself in the curriculum - for Hayward, Herbartian education is character-forming. Character is rooted in ideas; all action is "rooted in the circle

(75) Hayward, F.H.: The Primary Curriculum - edited and in part written by: Ralph, Holland & Co., London 1909

of thought". Education is the leading-on to "many-sided interest" - which interest depends on apperception, which implies prior ideas in the child's mind. Education is "an aesthetic revelation" (or presentation) of the universe. Froebel's "self-activity" was thus, to Hayward, the same as Herbart's "many-sided interest". (76)

Concepts such as "discipline", "training", etc. should be estimated in the light of the supreme educational categories. "Formal training" is especially suspect, as it is based on the "faculty" psychology. (77)

This indicates Hayward's position in the developing progressive consensus. Nevertheless, we shall note that his treatment of literature is - though more practical - less full of insight and understanding than, say, Cook's or Ballard's. Perhaps it was that he knew elementary school conditions too well to be able to counsel any more than the making the best of a bad job.

The selection of literature means, in practice, the selection of reading books. (78)

This at first sounds a self-evident statement: however, Hayward is really saying that the formal reading lesson should go and that the emphasis should switch to silent reading. As far as this selection is concerned, the lower standards

Should be regaled on ample and very miscellaneous material. The mythical and legendary element may be prominent in the form of stories of Greece and Rome, of Kelt and Norseman, of King Midas and King Arthur. (79)

Again, the expected influence is present. However, his prescriptions for the upper standards are somewhat surprising.

(77) Ibid; p. 4

(78) Ibid; p. 47

(79) Ibid; p. 47

Upper standards may need vivid selection from great historians, biographies of great thinkers, scientists, adventures ... accounts of great invention, nor in dry detail, but in rich, romantic or at least suggestive guise, and accounts of great travellers and discoverers. (80)

The fact is that (as we shall see) - of all the literary genres, Hayward did not quite know what to make of the novel. Also, in The Lesson in Appreciation (81) we see that, in spite of his early disclaimers about separation of faculties, he certainly seemed to make a distinction between aesthetic beauty and ideas in literature. He seems to have had little idea of the concept of artistic form which is odd when one considers his insistence on "form" in lessons.

As far as prose is concerned, Hayward was more interested in ideas expressed and subject-matter to comprehend. In The Primary Curriculum, when saying that the teacher's questions should elucidate thought and not meaning, he says

I am convinced that we greatly underestimate the intelligence of children. Give them a subject-matter worth thinking about and they will think - often with surprising success. (82)

He goes on to show how literature can be directly used for moral instruction - gambling and Bassanio, drink and old Adam in As You Like It. His final words in The Primary Curriculum on the subject of reading again indicate his bias.

Possibly reading will have to "trifurcate": there will have to be (1) much private reading along the lines already suggested - reading for the purpose of acquiring knowledge;

(80) Ibid: p. 48

(81) Hayward, F.H. The Lesson in Appreciation. An essay on the Pedagogies of Beauty. Macmillan 1915

(82) Op. cit: p. 56

(2) much free oral composition, in which clearness, correctness and fluency will be expected, just as they are now expected in the "reading lesson"; (3) much elocution or recitation, with books available all the time. (83)

The Lesson in Appreciation, (which, though published later, may be examined here), as befits an author who is a Herbartian, is a magnificent piece of schematising, in which the teacher is given a dynamic, almost entrepreneurial role. He is the provider of stimuli, the stage manager of his material, the impresario. There is no doubt that Hayward has much to say on the effective presentation of aesthetic elements in art. Much of the detail of aesthetics he understands well. However, again in his treatment of the novel, we find the same hiving off of structural, problematical and moral elements away from a view of coherent unity and wholeness. For example, he says that detective stories could be used for "improving the tools of thought generally" (84); that the "problem" element in novels, or

... those portions ... purely problematical, intellectual or informational may be treated in the same way as science or information is treated ... (they are) valuable auxiliaries to the more formal school instruction. (85)

There is a fair hint here of Hayward's willingness to use the novel for other purposes; the following passage indicates that - though he frequently acknowledges debts to Hall, and though his whole purpose is aesthetic education - he does not fully share Hall's view of the "exquisite romantic function in which literature comes in the closest rapport to life." (86) For Hayward, aesthetics

(83) Ibid: p. 313

(84) Op. cit: p. 172

(85) Ibid: p. 173

(86) See above: p. 95

in literature are mainly stylistic and rhythmic felicities which can be "appreciated" - a function necessarily not a universal one, as the following passage shows:

So large and complex a form of art as the novel appeals to other faculties than that of appreciation. But when a passage or chapter occurs in which the aesthetic factor is prominent, the teacher should take care to observe the rules emphasised in the earlier pages of this work. (87)

Nevertheless, though one may question Hayward's view of the aesthetic nature of prose fiction, his earlier section ("the rules emphasised") of the previous passage shows he has a keen awareness of many of the values implicit in it and their possible place in the development of the child. In the presentation of any work of art for aesthetic enjoyment, the teacher must be careful of "the first impress"; he must rid himself of all distraction; he must stage manage the appearance of a central "red-letter" lesson. (88)

The teacher's technique comes first chronologically; the pupil's appreciation is second; the vital stage of appreciation of the artist's technique comes third. The second stage alone - the ridding of all distraction - is again important in this system because Hayward shows himself to be in the developmental tradition influenced by Hall. For, he says, life can be divided into five or six periods - aesthetically promising or unpromising: the period of adolescence - after the age of eleven - is here regarded as a period of repose, where there are potentialities for contemplation. In this context, absence from distraction is vital.

Though his Herbartian insistence on scheme and method might well -

(87) Ibid: p. 175

(88) Ibid: p. 20

in this context - earn criticism from Caldwell Cook and possibly Holmes, Hayward is very much in the progressive tradition. He grapples with the nature of the novel form in the context of method, presentation and the function of the teacher. By later standards - the Cambridge School and Harding, for instance - his efforts to account for the novel's form are crude and perhaps even unnecessary. Nevertheless, they illustrate well the relative complexity and ambiguity of fictional literature in relation to other forms, they point to future developments in notions of presentation and use and in these very preoccupations mark a distinct voice within the progressive consensus.

Part 3 - Synthesising documents - The Newbolt Report and the
Work of Sampson

(a) The Newbolt Report

The factors which led to the setting up of the Departmental Committee which produced the Newbolt Report (1) obviously have to do with the general conspectus of English teaching and, as such, are not our prime concern in this present study. Suffice it to note first, that the English Association was largely instrumental in the pressure to set it up (and influential members of it were also on the Committee), and secondly, that after its publication the English Association becomes virtually of no account as far as English work in schools is concerned: its character changes and it becomes almost entirely concerned with University English scholarship of a sort more typical of the days before the Cambridge School in the thirties. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile to attempt to see in what precise context were the attitudes expressed both in the Report and in George Sampson's English for the English (2) on the teaching of fiction. We can isolate several broad concerns. First, there was a growing realisation - seen by such as Norwood and Hope and Edward Holmes, and reflected to a certain extent in successive Board of Education publications - that elementary education, still stultified by the spirit of the Codes, was actively working against the "spiritual, which is the artistic influence in man". (3)

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- (1) The Teaching of English in England: being the report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Education to inquire into the position of English in the Educational system of England. (The Newbolt Report) HMSO 1921.
- (2) Sampson, George: English for the English: a chapter on National Education. CUP 1921. All refs. are to the 1970 edition, edited by Denys Thompson: CUP 1970.
- (3) Norwood and Hope: p. 175

Both Norwood and Hope, and Holmes, see this stultification as actually working against the preservation of a stable society ("Industrialisation as we know it, carries inherent in itself the seeds of rebellion"). (4) Secondly, was a further insistence that English held within itself many of the virtues of the classics (as seen in some Journal of Education and English Association articles). This attitude can be divided as follows:

First, the mounting pressure to free English as a University discipline from the shackles of philological study; secondly, an adaptation by the Public Schools for (it would seem) their own purposes - vide the remarks of the Head of Eton noted above (5) - of the Arnoldian insistence on literature as a refining and elevating power and a cultural heritage; thirdly, an increasing feeling that English literature as a cultural heritage was a potentially binding influence within a divided society. There was also a fear - especially earlier in the period - that the spread of trashy, poor literature through a class newly literate might itself have socially damaging and individually demoralising effects. However, there was also a process well under way to discount this fear and to see all adoptions of the reading habit as potentially useful - a conscious rejection of the theory often to be expressed, that in literature "bad money drives out good". Also, there was an insistence on the necessity for developing and educating the emotions through literature - with an attendant (and inevitable) rejection of this idea in favour of content and ordered thought. This, in turn, entailed the placing of the study of literature within a psycholo-

(4) Norwood and Hope. p. 175

(5) See above: p. 137

gical framework which sought first to put the aesthetic nature of literature into a psychological perspective as shown in the work of McPherson, and secondly, to place "literary" activities - story-telling and writing - in the process of growth within the child, as shown in the work of Hall, Cook and Adams.

These main headings, as a rationalisation of the material examined in the early stages of this section of the enquiry, indicate a great number of cross-currents of feeling. It would be difficult - even if it had set out to - for the Newbolt Committee adequately to synthesise them. Nevertheless, one must remember first that the Report was a uniquely influential document and that its main premise - that English should be at the centre of all areas of school work - would be wholeheartedly accepted by all the writers we have so far examined.

The Report quickly itemises the attitude to the nature of literature:

We must treat literature ... as the self-expression of great natures, the record and rekindling of spiritual experiences, and in daily life for every one of us the means by which we may, if we will, realise our own impressions and communicate them to our fellows. (6)

This marks an advance on the Arnoldian position: appreciation of literature is personal and active ("realising" and "communicating" our own impressions). This is a development from the idea of exposure to "refining" and "elevating" power. The statement also comes in the context of an argument that the place of art in society is something "not understood or appreciated in our country". (7)

(6) Op. cit: p. 21

(7) Ibid: p. 20

The report also insists on literary appreciation being untrammelled by any linguistic consideration. If English constituted the New classics, this recommendation did not imply any return to the mistakes made in classics teaching method. Grammatical study was to be firmly kept separate. That kind of cognitive exercise should have no part in English studies.

We are strongly of opinion that in dealing with literature the voyage of the mind should be broken as little as possible by the examination of obstacles and the analysis of the element on which the explorer is floating. (8)

Not only did this imply a break away from old methods of classics teaching but also from the worst ways in which elementary school teachers aped their "betters".

The compilers of the Report make a careful distinction between types of reading - seen in terms of two different types of human experience, itself a statement of the high place given to reading in the Committee's scale of values. Thus there are two types of experience -

... one bringing us into contact with facts, the other with the human mind. The experience we gain may be information - experience or character - experience. The latter of these is by far the more potent for good or ill, yet it is the former which the pastors and masters of childhood often regard with greater apprehension. (9)

This passage rejects the idea of "reading for content" expressed by, among others, the writer of Occasional Notes in the Journal of Education quoted above (10). Equally, however, there is an

(8) Ibid: p. 21

(9) Ibid: p. 336

(10) See above: p. 34

implied rejection of the idea of reading for emotional satisfaction - or, at least, an attempt to define the idea insofar as it applies to fiction. For here is a simplification of the ideas previously grappled with by Hayward in his attempts to modify the various aesthetic aspects of the novel - and also a restatement (though in a slightly different context) of the point made by Batchelder about the indirect ethical teaching which can be given by discussion of character and situation in fiction. (11)

The "potency for good or ill" already noted is developed further in its relationship to the nature of the child. The child's curiosity is irrepressible; the teacher's role as a censor is not as crucial as previously thought - his function as guide is.

... the spirit makes its growth from what it feeds on, not from what it rejects, and falls into sickness rather by weakness of its own power of assimilation than because of any deadliners in the food supplied by the common earth. (12)

Nevertheless - and here the Report returns to its earlier theme - the "potency for good or ill" of literature must be stressed over again.

Few influences in life are so subtle or so powerful as the invisible power of literature - what may be called the undertones of the printed voice. (13)

The young mind is impressionable - and the nature of the impression is important.

... what is most important here is not merely the depth but the outline or style

(11) See above; p. 124

(12) Ibid; p. 336

(13) Ibid; p. 338

of the impression. (14)

This leads to the question of how to counter bad literature. The compilers of the report here share Ballard's approval at least of the moral effects of comics, "bloods" and the like. There is an official acceptance here that lower moral and artistic worth of reading material does not detract from the reading activity itself and indeed, may well help to form the beginnings of a sense of discrimination.

We have in English an abundance of good literature interesting enough to arouse and satisfy the appetite of youth, and an abundant supply of it should be ready to hand in every school library. The taste of children is naturally good and it is more probable that if the first few years can be spent in good society the reader will have acquired the power of distinguishing between the better and worse companions, and will have formed a preference for the better (15).

Thus the building of good reading habits depends on library provision and silent reading, as long as the discriminating teacher can shield the child from the "weeds of literature". (16)

The Report's section on literature in elementary schools neatly encapsulates much of what has been said already.

The main objects of the literature lessons will be (i) increased command of the language, (ii) the acquisition of knowledge, (iii) appreciation and enjoyment of literature.
(17)

There is a need for intensive reading (and books, possibly of extracts should be kept for the purpose); books should be provided for the getting of information (encyclopaedias, atlases, Whitaker,

(14) Ibid: p. 338

(15) Ibid: p. 339

(16) Ibid: p. 257

(17) Ibid: p. 82

etc.): but, above all:

the children should discover the delight
of books. (18)

But this discovery, in the end, depends very much on the
personality of the teacher and the nature of his literature
teaching.

One sees, therefore, that the Report officially sanctions much
of what we have examined previously and does not invalidate the
psychological theories of Hall (in fact, practices based on
Recapitulation Theory such as the use of myths and legends recur
in the Report) or the "Play-way" practices of Caldwell Cook (who
was, in fact, a major witness and no doubt, an important influence
in the framing of the work). Thus the Report's influence lies more
in the fact that (whether by design or not) there is a pulling
together of several concerns and less in its statement of new
doctrine. It consolidated rather than innovated. What is important
and noticeable historically is that the Report is a development
certainly of the principles, if not the practices, laid down by
Matthew Arnold.

(b) George Sampson

George Sampson's book covers much of the same ground in much the
same spirit as the Newbolt Report. His thesis - anti-vocational
(in the narrowest sense) - is summed up in two propositions:

(1) That the elementary schools are by far the

(18) Ibid; p. 82

most important schools in the county;
and

- (2) that English is by far the most important subject in the elementary schools. (19)

Sampson (who was on the Newbolt Committee) bases his philosophical position firmly on Arnold (just as in the report).

We are still a nation of Barbarians, Materialists and Philistines. The only change since Matthew Arnold's time is that the classes have become a little more mixed. (20)

English alone is able to bind this still disparate society together -

... it is (for the majority) the only language learned, and thus the sole means of linguistic study and access to literature, the sole means by which the people can be placed in contact with the embodied feeling, thought and experience of mankind. (21)

The last phrase gives the clue to Sampson's attitude to literature and thus the teaching of fiction. Prose is important as poetry (22), the Bible should be used to a greater extent in school reading (23), and, in dealing with novels, he is against the "teaching" of the text (he disapproves of most "heavy-handed" literature teaching) and sees the teacher's function as one of guidance - not getting between the child and the text (24). His main stress is on silent reading and - importantly here - the recognition of the boy's private spare-time reading as being a worthy activity in its own right, thus echoing Ballard. Sampson draws a distinction between the respective worths of adult and children's popular literature.

(19) Op. cit; p. 34

(20) Ibid; p. 42

(21) Ibid; p. 60

(22) Ibid; p. 116

(23) Ibid; p. 116

(24) Ibid; p. 121

The stories produced for boys are vastly better than most of the novels produced for adults. (25)

The same principle of not insisting on the exclusive values of literature must be carried into the classroom -

This is certain, that if you make boys read The Fair Maid of Perth when they would rather be reading Ivanhoe, you will make them dislike Scott altogether.
(26)

Sampson accepts entirely the proposition that experience with the less good in literature is not necessarily harmful and may well promote discrimination. He justifies fiction in schools by reference to its potential for uniting a divided society.

There is, however, another section on the nature of story itself which must be examined. Sampson takes his cue from Caldwell Cook when he speaks of the story, the play and the possibilities of dramatic and narrative composition.

It is towards the story and the play, and not towards the essay or composition that the creative activity of children can be most profitably directed. (27)

Collective composition of both plays and stories are activities which promote creativity, understanding and, most important:

an outbreak of individual composition,
which is just what we want. (28)

Reading also must give the individual boy support in his own written expression;

(25) Ibid: p. 119

(26) Ibid: p. 118

(27) Ibid: p. 90

(28) Ibid: p. 92

Let his reading help his writing: for, consider, what mental stock has a boy of twelve or thirteen? If he is an elementary schoolboy, that is, a boy from a poor and probably bookless home, what general mental stock can he possibly have? What has he seen or read or heard or done? He has had no adventures, has rarely been away on holidays, and has spent in the streets near home what leisure has been left from school and errand-getting, and odd jobs. Nowadays, he has the pictures, and instead of cursing them solemnly as most pastors and masters seem to do, we should bless them as a tremendous means of opening and stocking his mind ... If the boy wants to write, let him begin with the help of his betters. Give him something to imitate. (29)

Sampson urges the advisability of asking boys to write "in the style of" other authors - as a means of understanding. The passage quoted is interesting because of its insistence on the dependence of writing or reading and vice-versa, its liberal acceptance of the elementary pupil's own culture and its insistence on the necessity for the widening of the pupil's day-to-day experience.

Between them, therefore, the Newbolt Report and English for the English do appear to perform the twin functions (whether envisaged or not) of summing up and to a great extent synthesising what had gone before as a way of pointing out new directions for the future. In their insistence on the centrality of English, their catholicity of taste in literature, their insistence that there could be no divorce between school and home and that the school had to work sympathetically with the culture the pupil brought, they set down propositions which every subsequent writer - whether he agreed or not - had to take into consideration. They exhibited a pragmatic fusion of different philosophical and psychological strands of thought - the attitudes of Arnold, the need for a uniting culture

and English performing the highest function of the classics exist side by side with the social urgencies of Norwood and Hope and Holmes, and the views of growth of Hall and Caldwell Cook. The report and Sampson's book gave direction to discussion during the succeeding years. We will see that in the next period to be discussed, the direction of the argument changes, the Arnoldian synthesis tends towards separation and - slowly but inevitably-the acceptability of children's private reading are developed and examined in much more detail, with crucial results for the proposed use of fiction in schools.

CHAPTER 3 : 1922-1944

CHAPTER 3 1922-1944

(a) Introduction

Because it crystallised thought, one effect of the Newbolt Report is to enable subsequent movements to be more easily identified. Its recommendations for fiction in schools combine concern about personal growth with a more progressive concern about its relationships with the cultural heritage. Its compilers reject both the notion of skills and the traditional view of cultural heritage as desirable goals in themselves. One may, therefore, assume that writers who still assert the rightness of skills model and a traditional view of the cultural heritage are - whatever they may say in support of it - reacting against the Report.

Three main types of comment relevant to this enquiry develop after the Newbolt Report. Two are in line with its recommendations. The first of these is the progressive thought associated with Nunn, Jacks, Wheeler and A.N. Whitehead. The second is the literary-critical comment developed by the Cambridge School. The third (which will be dealt with first) cannot be said to be a coherent body of thought. It consists of successive restatements of the once dominant skills and cultural heritage models. It is mentioned, first, because its prescriptions are at once recognisable; secondly, because its spokesmen are all practising school teachers (albeit mainly in the Independent and Secondary - as opposed to Elementary - sectors); and thirdly, because one feels that - despite the strength of the other writers to be surveyed - it represents the norm in most schools of the time. A fourth reason is that the

attitudes expressed are far from dead, although they have been mainly subsumed into an unsophisticated version of the thought of the Cambridge School, asserting "rigour" and "standards" with no understanding of the accompanying literary and social criticism.

In Part 2, where fiction is treated as a specific form, the broad implications of the progressives on the one hand, and the Cambridge School on the other, begin to come together. The culmination of this process is the work of A.J. Jenkinson, Extended examination of his work will form the conclusion of this chapter.

Part 1 Underlying Models for Literature in Schools

(a) The Reaction against Newbolt

One of the main - and perennial - objections to the study of English literature at any level is that it is a "soft option". The "Novel-reading Tripos" is but one pejorative term. Despite the insistence on its primacy by Arnold, and even by the contributors to the Newbolt Report, much subsequent occasional and extended writing by English teachers and practitioners bore witness to this dilemma. Literature could be accepted as a "heritage", for its "refining power", for its "great thoughts". But such a practice as silent reading in school time was "indolent". A prose text had to be dealt with in terms of "systematic study". No feature of education could usurp the centrality of the classics which did not share their rigour and their linguistic discipline. No feature of English studies could be accorded primacy which did not directly transmit essential skills.

Thus J.H. Fowler makes a strong statement about silent reading when he draws attention to the virtual neglect of the novel form in the

1924 Suggestions for the Teaching of English in the Secondary School (1).

The line taken about novels as classwork may seem to some teachers unusually severe. "It is difficult, at any rate, after the first term or two, to justify spending time on reading novels in school." It is to be observed that the Board is not condemning the study of novels as a part of the English course. What it deprecates is the reading of them in school hours, an indolent proceeding, as a rule, both for teacher and class. (2)

We have noted Fowler's previous energetic championing of the cause of English in schools: thus his dismissal of the reading of novels as an "indolent proceeding" is at first sight surprising.

Presumably the contact of reader with writer in the act of reading is the same whether the novel is read in school hours or out of them. It is certainly the central contact on which all study of literature depends. The point may be made that Fowler is thinking in terms of the public school, with a higher likelihood of pupils with literate backgrounds who read for pleasure and pastime.

Certainly he continues by making the point that advantages accruing from reading will show themselves outside the classroom - for example, in reading and discussion in debating societies. Nevertheless, he shows himself out of sympathy with the Newbolt Report:

... the children should discover the
delight of books (3)

and also with Sampson:

If he is an elementary schoolboy ...
from a ... probably bookless home, what

(1) See below: p.200

(2) The Journal of Education Vol. 56, December 1924. P. 802

(3) See above: p.160

general mental stock can he possibly have?

(4)

Reading and discussion in debating societies imply qualities to be fostered which are more reminiscent of the ends of education prescribed by the Clarendon Report (5). Certainly such activities in a Debating Society will enable the pupil to "bear his part" in company. The quality which Fowler assumes is missing from the "indolent proceeding" of reading novels can be inferred from his comments on Sir Walter Scott:

Are we making enough use of him in the schools? He is not merely one of the glories of English Literature; his "criticism of life", conveyed without undue moralising, can hardly be surpassed outside of Shakespeare (6).

Despite the quotation from Matthew Arnold, Fowler's prescription seems entirely based on the traditional version of the cultural heritage. Once again are implied the classically-derived notions of "difficulty", "stiffening", "rigour" - English literature as a study is, therefore, closely allied still to the classics. The divergence between Fowler's sentiments on the one hand, and Sampson's and the Newbolt Report's on the other, is thrown into sharper relief by the findings of subsequent surveys of children's reading (notably that of Lloyd-Jones and Owen (7)) which show children of this period specifically rejecting the standard classics such as Scott.

Fowler's attitudes often recur. Atkins, noted previously for his assertion of the need for system in literary study (8) rejects the

(4) See above: p. 168

(5) See above: p. 25

(6) Op. cit. p; 802

(7) See below: p. 212

(8) See above: p. 8

very centre of the Newbolt Report by further stating that literature must not remain the odd man out in the curriculum through not having at its base a systematic body of knowledge.

... is there any other subject in the school curriculum that is not treated with some sort of system ... We proceed more or less by establishing the main principles and by developing these fundamental ideas as we advance. (9)

Admittedly Atkins assumes the centrality of literature and admittedly, his plea is for a new pedagogy rather than an old classicism: nevertheless, his plea sorts oddly with the Newbolt Report and is strongly reminiscent of that of Pringle noted earlier (10). However, the "old classicism" in the context of a girls' private school is repeated strongly by Colquhoun, writing with all the signs of an authority beyond that of her own school. Though she pays lip-service to the "great storehouse of English literature" (11), she advocates the retention of detailed grammatical study; for literature, she assumes that by the age of 13 or 14 girls will know fifteen plays of Shakespeare "with all the most poetic passages by heart" (12) together with a lot of poetry. No fiction at all is recommended (13). Fiction is, therefore, a luxury or soft option: this attitude to it (implied by Colquhoun) is expressed succinctly by Reynolds (14). Reynolds' subject is examinations and, therefore, he is thinking

(9) Op. cit: p. 417

(10) See above: p.74

(11) Colquhoun, Miss B.S.: The Teaching of English in Girls' Preparatory Schools. Journal of Education Vol. 59, No. 7, July 1924, p. 516.

(12) Ibid: p. 520

(13) Ibid: p. 524

(14) Reynolds, E.E.: Examinations in Literature Journal of Education Vol. 59, No. 1 January 1929

specifically of children above the age group in question: however, what he says has, for the secondary and grammar school, relevance for younger children as well:

Fiction presents a different problem (from other forms of literature). Here we are dealing with a form of literature written mainly for pleasure; the story is the thing that matters. The training of the understanding does not come so clearly into play: it takes very little concentration to follow most plots and the interactions of character cannot be fully appreciated by immature minds. (15)

"Story" is thus equated with "pleasure". The "understanding" is not a quality which can be fostered by contact with "story". It is also worthy of note that Reynolds, dismissing plot as something needing "very little concentration to follow", does not consider the proposition that plots are formed entirely by those very "interactions of character (which) cannot be appreciated by immature minds." It was a feature of literary study - presumably stemming from a misunderstanding of Aristotle - that plot and character were separate entities; a feature which lent itself ideally to the rejection of fiction as a serious literary form. Once again, it is to be noticed, "pleasure" (in the guise of "story") is regarded dismissively. This dismissal is echoed by "Scrutator" writing in the following year (16). Once again, the remarks are aimed at the School Certificate age-groups, but in content and attitude have reference to younger children. The theme by now familiar enough in this section recurs - that enjoyment in itself cannot be a part of the educational process.

When fiction is used in school - and there is every reason why it should, provided that only

(15) Ibid: p. 11

(16) "Scrutator" English in the School Certificate Journal of Education
Vol. 60, No. 1 January 1930.

acknowledged masterpieces are used - care should be taken that something is learnt from it, not in the way of a moral lesson but in intelligent appreciation of a work of art. All great and wholesome fiction and, indeed, all literature that is worthy of the name, will convey moral lessons, just because it is an interpretation of life, but it is generally best to allow it to convey such lessons silently. But literary lessons are only absorbed silently and unconsciously by a small proportion of readers. The chief drawback to the use of fiction in schools is that so few schoolmasters know how to make it a real education. They are afraid, perhaps, of spoiling the children's enjoyment if they have anything to do with the book beyond reading it. (17)

While Reynolds felt the novel was too easy for serious use in schools, "Scrutator" regards "the acknowledged masterpieces" of the genre as too difficult to be appreciated to the full by most readers. There have to be "literary" lessons as well. Here, Fowler's earlier statement is thrown into sharper relief. The "criticism of life" Fowler notes in Scott finds expression here as the "interpretation of life" which directly leads to the "moral" as opposed to the "literary" lesson. The one is "absorbed silently" (presumably implying "indolent" silent reading in class); the other needs to be taught, at any rate to most pupils.

Under the heading of "literary lessons" the exercises suggested include;

... the turning of a scene or the novel into dramatic dialogue. Another is the composition of letters supposed to be written by two of the characters to each other. If the novel has romantic or poetic passages, there may well be made an excuse for composition in verse. (18)

It might well be argued that Caldwell Cook's Ilands or Nunn's definition of mimesis - re-creation of the creative act (19) -

(17) Ibid: p. 522

(18) Ibid: p. 526

(19) See below: p. 186

are no more than what "Scrutator" is here recommending. The experience of the book is being extended and creation of a sort is taking place. However, one remembers Nunn's words

"Any attempt to compel imitation tends to defeat its end by provoking an attitude of resistance or of indifference". (20)

and realises that the exercises recommended by "Scrutator" are merely to prevent the novel from being "a soft option": that this educational tradition derives from the language and literary study of classical method. Reading for its own sake cannot be a "real education". Also, it is noticeable that in "moral" lessons which are inculcated through silent readings, the words "great" and "wholesome" appear to be synonyms and both are common to "literature worthy of the name": all points which indicate an acceptance of the traditional view of the cultural heritage.

It is difficult to extract from such statements a clear rationale. For example, at this time the Journal of Education was running a comparative series entitled Typical School Curricula and Timetables. For our purposes, No. VI is of interest (21). Having outlined the language section of the English syllabus (which is formal and grammar-based), Wood speaks thus of Literature:

... Its aim is to present this (English Literature) as a broad stream in the hope that they may realise its growth and to be prepared to receive modern works with sympathy; to learn to appreciate the excellence of their own heritage and be helped in their own expression. (22)

No doubt this is the utterance of a non-specialist briefed by

(20) See below: p. 186

(21) Wood, G.G.: (Headmaster, Brampton Co. Sec. School); A rural school: typical school curricula and timetables. No. V, Journal of Education Vol. 63, June 1931, p. 374

(22) Ibid: p. 376

his English staff. One notices the mixed metaphor (realising the "growth" of a "broad stream"); it is also difficult to understand what the author quite had in mind when he speaks of receiving modern works "with sympathy". The final sentence indicates a genuflection to concept of the cultural heritage. However, when one looks at prescriptions (and recognises the very formal treatment of language in the syllabus), one sees a strange mixture. Thus in one year (11+) Myths and Legends are dealt with. In year two are treated the beginnings of English Literature - ballads, Chaucer, Malory, Spenser and Shakespeare (one play). In year three, Shakespeare and drama are covered, plus a history of English literature. In year four is a study of poetry (five periods a week were for English). The nature of the treatment of the works is not itemised; however, two things may be noticed. First is that it is a scheme which would have been approved of by Atkins; second is that fiction is not mentioned directly at all. One can at least infer from this that it was regarded as a "soft option"; literature was transformed into a chronologically-based body of knowledge. It is probable that the vaguely liberal aims need not be taken seriously.

Certainly there is evidence of a bias towards a final examination in the syllabus: one may be sure that the methods employed from the first year onwards would be those employed in the certificate year. In this context it is useful to examine a set of three linked articles and their subsequent answers which appeared in the 1934 Journal of Education, once again dealing with independent and secondary schools. "Crag" indicts cramming and is against one

or two set books for study:

There is no time to develop his (the pupil's) faculties of criticism. (23)

He fears a lack of cultivation of the pupil. The remedy is simple.

As far as syllabus is concerned:

The only way to remove this menace is to let the schoolmaster have his own way almost to the point of complete control. (24)

Boas takes the opposite view. The fault, if any, lies not in the fact that there are set books, but in their choice. The generality of schoolteachers cannot be trusted to make this choice.

... the real English teacher is born and cannot be manufactured and, unfortunately, Nature has not at present supplied nearly enough to go round our schools. (25)

Walmisley attempts a compromise. He feels enthusiasm in the teacher for the set book can initiate fruitful study in literature. However, the general tenor of these articles seems to indicate that the set books of the examination syllabus dictated methods of study throughout the secondary schools: it is also noted that the literary ability of the teacher is here regarded as more important than the book - which again implies that the value of private reading was virtually discounted as far as school was concerned. Thus Boas, in The Replies Considered, sees the existence of a general literary culture outside the schools and fostered by outside agencies: he mentions

(23) "Basil Crag": An Indictment of Modern Methods: Boas, Guy: A Defence of Set Books: Walmisley, A.M.: Is the teaching of literature a failure: Journal of Education Vol. 66, Sept. 1934. P. 557. Same authors: The Replies Considered Journal of Education, Vol. 66, Dec. 1934, p. 744

(24) Ibid: p. 558

(25) Ibid: p. 559

... the fine standard maintained in matters literary and dramatic by the BBC ... the success of such publishers' ventures as Dent's "Everyman's Library", ... the high standard of modern book writing. (26)

However, there is no feeling that the secondary school teacher is himself one of these culturalising agencies: Walmisley confirms this as follows:

I cannot think that there is any widespread desire among the teachers of English literature for greater freedom than it is now possible for them to enjoy. (27)

The same Walmisley had already noted in an earlier issue that teachers "fight shy of the general literature syllabus".

Before the age of 11, the only classbooks needed are a good reader, of which there are plenty on the market, or a suitable English prose text (e.g. Jackanapes or Kingsley's Heroes), and an anthology of verse. (28)

Thus, before the age group of this enquiry, there was in the classroom little literary background to be filled in. However, as the 11+ course continues, we see that recommendations such as those of Dent quoted earlier (29) are repeated, where "sustained study ... close and detailed" is favoured and "interesting - even exciting ... narrative" is seen as subservient. The belief that fiction forms the "soft option" persists.

The main tendencies, then, of the passages selected for examination have been towards "close and systematic study" of prose passages rather than the reading and enjoyment of books. The needs of the School Certificate examination have dictated the treatment of fiction

(26) Ibid: p. 745

(27) Ibid: p. 747

(28) Journal of Education: Vol. 66, July 1934, p. 270

(29) See above: p. 12

throughout the secondary school. Fear of "indolence" and "soft options" produced attempts to turn literature into a "systematic study" of techniques and thus into a body of knowledge to bring it in line with other subjects. If any idea of the centrality of English has remained, it is one based on the subject as taking the place of classical study; thus the ideas of mental discipline (based presumably on by then totally exploded ideas of faculty psychology) which characterised study of the classics have permeated the study of English literature. Any feelings for English literature per se have been based on the traditional version of the cultural heritage; the forceful concept of humanising culture building up on behalf of, if not actually in, the elementary schools found, it seems, little place in the secondary schools as far as classroom practice was concerned (as far as the writers examined were typical - that they were not entirely typical will be demonstrated in the next section). However, a succinct statement of the attitude largely expressed in this section occurred as late as 1941 (30). R. Kennard-Davies regrets there is no twentieth-century literature of the stature of Carlyle or Ruskin who alone matched the Greek and Roman writers of the classics.

"Literature" as exemplified in their writings was not a graceful diversion for moments of leisure, but a training in thought and a preparation for life ... if our heritage of classical literature is to be abandoned as the foundation of our education, its place must be filled. (31)

This is a concise view of what might be termed the "hair-shirt" view of literature - which has been prevalent in the views expressed in previous pages and which has tended either to reject

(30) Kennard-Davies, R: (MCS Oxford); letter to the Journal of Education Vol. 72, July 1941, p. 298

(31) Ibid; p. 298

the study of fiction or justify its study for reasons which do not refer directly to the nature of its form. It is important to remember that this view persisted after the Newbolt Report.

It is not the purpose of this enquiry to follow this view further. It is sufficient to note that interpretation of the letter rather than the spirit of the Newbolt Report continued; that - especially within the independent and secondary sectors of the education system - assertions were still made in terms of the skills and cultural heritage models and the classical and moral fallacies.

(b) Literary discrimination and personal values - The Cambridge School

I.A. Richards's first impact was upon University English. However, what he says has extreme relevance to our purposes. When he says:

We pass as a rule from a chaotic to a better organised state by ways which we know nothing about. Typically through the influence of other minds. Literature and the arts are the chief means by which these influences are diffused. It should be unnecessary to insist upon the degree to which high civilisation, in other words free, varied and unwasteful life, depends upon them in a numerous society (32)

he assumes a notion of value in art which leads directly to what

Leavis says in Mass Civilisation and Minority Culture (33).

... In any period it is upon a very small minority that the discerning appreciation of art and literature depends ... upon this minority depends our power of profiting by the finest human experience of the past; they

(32) Richards, I.A. : Principles of Literary Criticism (1st ed.) Routledge and Kegan Paul 1926. p. 57

(33) Leavis, F.R.: Mass Civilisation and Minority Culture . 1930. Reprinted in Education and the University Chatto and Windus, 1943. pp. 143-171

keep alive the subtlest and most perishable parts of the tradition. Upon them depend the implicit standards that order the finer living of an age. (34)

Subsequently, progressive educators will be examined who see "culture" as a product of individual fulfilment and therefore potentially a possession of all - a product of nurtured growth. However, behind these statements of Richards and Leavis is the contention that literature is the very basis of culture and can be studied discerningly only by a very small minority. This opposition leads us back to the polarisation noted in Chapter 1 between growth and culture and provides a developed restatement of it. While the progressives will be seen to stand in direct line of descent from Froebél, they also exhibit, whether unwittingly or not, a relationship to Matthew Arnold. What they say, in effect, is that everybody has an "electric chain" which can be struck from within. They speak with the fervour of Arnold, the reforming HMI. The Cambridge School, on the other hand, concentrates on the "alien", the member of the elite who can discriminate for the multitude. In their work we have the tones of the sombre author of Dover Beach. Two aspects which to Arnold were complementary become now seemingly contradictory and a main subsequent theme will be to note how in practice the two opposed notions are brought together.

There could be said to be two results of the influence of Leavis and Richards as far as English in schools is concerned. The first was that - in upper forms of the grammar schools especially - discrimination displaced appreciation. The second (and more

(34) Ibid: p. 143

important for our purposes) was that it emphatically did matter what children read in their private hours. The effect of fiction on the understanding was a potent one. Literature was at the centre of our culture - but much contemporary fiction was the product of a hostile industrial society, exemplifying its values and implying a social judgment in its acceptance of them. For Leavis and Thompson industrial society was only different in degree from the world of "machinery" feared by Matthew Arnold. It had debased language, thought and feeling. If the minority were to keep the literary and linguistic tradition and conscience alive, the best that could be done for the rest was to enable some discrimination to be taught - within the language of advertising, etc. - and to guard against the worst depredations of economic and industrial society. Q.D. Leavis (35) works out this theme comprehensively. The rise of the printed word meant a move towards escapism as the staple fare for the mass reading public as the industrial revolution caused "the draining of the countries into the cities" (36). The course of publishing history over the nineteenth century inevitably led to "the disintegration of the reading public". Fiction is a cultural phenomena intimately related to the environment.

Changes in environment, then (using 'environment' broadly to determine all external acquaintances which determine the pattern of the average life), are seen to be primarily responsible for the kind of fiction the general public requires and gets. But the environment is ultimately responsible for a great deal more; it determines the extent to which the man in the street has access to literature, the market that the serious novelist can count on; that is to say, in the last event, the quality of living and the solvency of literature. (37)

(35) Leavis, Q.D. Fiction and the Reading Public Chatto and Windus 1932

(36) Ibid: p. 151

(37) Ibid: p. 207

The charge levelled by the Cambridge School at the environment is quite simply that it has become degraded and ~~that~~ the process Arnold noted in Culture and Anarchy has intensified. The "best-selling" novel has, in effect, become a branch of advertising. Culture and Environment implements these key ideas for work in the schools. (38) Here, the main preoccupations are with Advertising, the use of leisure, substitute living and the loss of the organic community. In the chapter Substitute Living (39) Leavis and Thompson note the potency of the novel for "day dreaming" and "fantasying" (40). With much support from and quotation of Fiction and the Reading public, they look at the popular novel and the preferences for happy endings which are caused by identification with the hero or heroine and which:

"... achieve a temporary and illusory satisfaction" (Author's quotation) - That is, they find compensation in Substitute-Living. Unhappily, if the routine of one's life does not call for any subtlety or fullness of living, then the kind of compensation one is capable of is apt to be correspondingly poor. If one's work allows no fulfilment of the personality, then the fulfilment one finds in substitute-living will most likely be pitifully unrelated to the possible conditions of mutual life. Since, moreover, such work unfits one for making the positive effort without which there can be no true recreation, 'compensation' tends to be much the same thing as distraction. (41)

This particular moral criticism hinges again on the authors' definitions of education: they regard advertising, the cinema, the mass-circulation newspaper and the popular novel as inevitable but

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- (38) Leavis, F.R. & Thompson, D: Culture & Environment Chatto and Windus 1933
(39) Ibid: pp. 99-103
(40) Ibid: p. 94
(41) Ibid: p. 102

"unexpected consequences of compulsory education". Compulsory education has helped, as the result of industrialisation, to kill the old organic society (typified by George Bourne's Change in the Village); what is needed is epitomised by the following extract which occurs after the quotation of a passage from The Brewers' Journal:

It is plain a modern education worthy of the name must be largely an education against the environment of which this passage is representative. (42)

This leads us unmistakeably to the idea of the educated elite and Arnold's "alien": the function of the teacher is ~~not~~ so much to prepare the child for society as to save him from it. The true literary culture is a minority one: a new mass-culture is not a substitute for it. Training in discrimination in close reading can help to save the pupil - and the future adult - from the evils of modern mass communication; however, the literary culture at its highest and most sensitive is kept alive by the educated and most sensitive elite. The need is most forcefully put by Q.D. Leavis. She describes the "levelling-down" process as follows:

... the workings of a number of tendencies which, having assumed the form of commercial and economic machinery, are now so firmly established that they run on their own and whither they choose; they have assumed such a monstrous impersonality that individual effort towards controlling than on checking them seems ridiculously futile. (43)

In the face of this threat, the "armed and conscious minority" (44) has two ways in which to work. The first is research into

(42) Ibid: p. 103

(43) Op. cit: p. 270

(44) Ibid: p. 270

"the cultural situation in as many fields as possible". (45)

The result would be both the identifying of books "designed to foster general awareness" (46) and

... the training of a picked few who would go out into the world equipped for the work of forming and organising a conscious minority. (47)

This is a further unequivocal description of the "alien" or the "clerisy". Q.D. Leavis's proposed function for this elite is, however, only partly that of contemplation and definition of values. First she hints that the elite may, in the face of the new mass culture, turn away from society - and effectively destroy it.

... the fully-formed and -set, when forced to face the findings of such a study as the present one, are for the most part merely paralysed or take refuge in anger or cynicism ...
(48)

The elite may be the only ones capable of defining the values: however, the values when defined are not their exclusive property, nor are those outside the elite barred from sharing them.

There is no reason why teaching and the teaching of English in particular, should be a pis aller for the intelligent, as it so generally is. (49)

Q.D. Leavis's estimate of the second function of the elite, "that of educational work in schools and universities", is interesting in that she does not think of a minority working on inert masses. Indeed, she says, "when the young are made aware of these forces they readily see the necessity for resisting" (50). In fact, it is the young themselves who may be "fired with the missionary spirit".

(45) Ibid: p. 270

(46) Ibid: p. 271

(47) Ibid: p. 271

(48) Ibid: p. 271

(49) Ibid: p. 271

(50) Ibid: p. 271

The idea that the elite has a responsibility to the whole of society and that the rest of society is capable of assimilating and acting on the criticisms of mass-culture thus made is an important one: it has far-reaching influences on later writers such as Holbrook, Bantock and Walsh. More immediately, it shows itself in the publication of English in Schools. We shall see in this the most important result of Q.D. Leavis's wish for "the training of a picked few ..." who would not see the teaching of English as a "... pis aller for the intelligent".

Pedley says, in English in Schools:

Independence of judgment, awareness of how our first thoughts and cheapest emotions can be exploited for nefarious ends, should be cultivated in school: they will not be cultivated elsewhere. (51)

As we shall see, he believes this "judgment" will be "cultivated" by reading prose - Eliot and Keats are for the minority. Pedley's statement will indicate the extreme influence of Fiction and the Reading Public: its analysis of fiction's place in society and the implications for the Cambridge School's notion of the discriminating elite is of crucial importance to this enquiry. We will note later an influence of Richards on the 1937 Suggestions: the urgent prescription for the role of the teacher made in the 1937 Suggestions (52) betray a possible influence of the Leavises and Thompson. However, the main effects of the way of thinking which has here been examined will be seen to be first, a renewed interest in what children actually do read and secondly, a growing feeling that in no sense can literature of books be "taught" to children in the age-group

(51) See below: p. 244

(52) See below: p. 235

in question - points which will become clear in the work of Jenkinson (53). However, the main effects of the Cambridge School can be seen as providing the major justification for teaching good fiction. It is no longer any kind of soft option, uneasily relaxing into entertainment. Taking their cue from the Cambridge School, subsequent writers find literary, aesthetic and psychological values specific to fiction and certainly after the 1941 publication of A.J. Jenkinson of What do Boys and Girls Read? there is no need in this enquiry to separate fiction from other forms of literature.

(c) Creativity and Progressivism - Nunn, Jacks, Whitehead, Wheeler

It may be objected that the progressive thought of Sir Percy Nunn, L.P. Jacks, A.N. Whitehead and Dame Olive Wheeler cannot be said to lead to a model of literature. However, although their major specific contribution was to development in thought about children's writing, these educators who were interested in creativity also effected approaches to literature in the classroom. Sir Percy Nunn's major work Education: its Data and First Principles (54) is one which pre-supposes the ideal of individual human development - the realisation of the individual's potentialities. Only through this self-realisation can a balanced and harmonious society come about. Nunn recognised the possibility of a clash between the needs

(53) See below: p. 258

(54) Nunn, Sir Percy: Education: its Data and First Principles: Arnold 1920 (all references are to the third edition, published 1945).

of society and the needs of the individual. Like Leavis, he opposed the values of an urbanised, industrial society. However, in Nunn's case, this was because they seemed to militate against the realisation of the individual as a personality. Yet society must make some demands.

... the question in debate is whether a child should be educated for himself or for the service of society (or the state) or for some combination of the two ends. (55)

The individual, however, remains pre-eminent: the ideal society is implied in the following passage:

Educational efforts must, it would seem, be limited to securing for everyone the conditions under which individuality is most completely developed. (56)

Nunn approves of Hall (though he criticises Recapitulation theory) and in the field of English teaching, reserves praise for Caldwell Cook. Freedom is essential for the child; but it is not an uncritical freedom.

Freedom, understood as liberty to follow, unchecked, any whim of the moment, is of little or no value; its ugly synonym is license ... Thus the forms through which a great composer expresses his musical ideas or a great poet his imaginative view of the world are examples of the highest kind of disciplinary control; so far from being hindrances to the free efflorescences of genius, they make possible the highest freedom it can gain. (57)

The argument is further developed, with particular reference to the present subject, in the Chapter Mimesis. Here, Nunn says:

Imitation is, in fact, but the first stage

(55) Ibid: p. 11

(56) Ibid: p. 13

(57) Ibid: p. 100

in the creation of individuality, and the richer the scope for imitation, the richer the developed individuality will be. Some corollaries of this truth are obvious; for instance, that children should be introduced through books to a wider and better company than they will meet in actual life. (58)

The teacher's function is to give the individual attention and (like Montessori) to remain an observer rather than an authoritarian figure, for:

Any attempt to compel imitation tends to defeat its end by provoking an attitude of resistance or of indifference - a fact which explains the failure of many well-meant efforts to make young people admire the proper things in literature, art and conduct. (59)

Mimesis, imitation, creative re-creation (all aspects, as we have noted, of The Play Way - especially the "Ilands") are essentially a part of aesthetic appreciation:

... appreciation is not the passive observation of the beauty incorporated in a poem, a statue, a painting or a musical composition, but an active reconstitution of the mental movement which produced it. (60)

This activity, which is part of growth itself, is purposive and external, leading to "constructive control".

Scientific and aesthetic activities are, then, modes of self-assertion directed towards the external world ... while science ... can attain its goal only by faithful submission to facts as they actually are, aesthetic control plays freely with facts for the sake of its own satisfaction. (61)

(58) Ibid: p. 158

(59) Ibid: p. 158

(60) Ibid: p. 240

(61) Ibid: p. 274

Nunn's emphasis is, therefore, creative and literature in the school aids in this "re-creation". This accounts for his admiration of Caldwell Cook and shows the relevance of his emphasis to the age-group in question, which Cook dealt with and to which Nunn gives the name of "wonder". (62) The same stage (roughly eight to twelve or thirteen) is called by Whitehead the stage of "romance" (63) which is succeeded by the stage of "precision". Whitehead's emphasis is on growth, therefore, just as is Nunn's: both also see the aim of education as producing members of a society as well as realised individuals, a society which has itself a pattern of continuity through the past and to the future. Whitehead says:

The essence of education is that of

Be religious:

Pray, what is religious education? A religious education is an education which inculcates duty and reverence. Duty arises from our potential control over the course of events. Where attainable knowledge could have changed the issue, ignorance has the guilt of vice. And the foundation of reverence is this perception, that the present holds within itself the complete sum of existence, backwards and forwards, that whole amplitude of time which is eternity. (64)

Whitehead goes further than endorsement of the traditional view of high culture here. There is a balance between practice and theory, between science and art, between activity and appreciation. All these elements go to make a full (and not "liberal") education: no element can be subtracted from it. Thus he says of literature and art:

... (they) should play an essential part in a healthily organised nation. Their services to economic production would be only second to

(62) Ibid: p. 271

(63) Whitehead, A.N. The Rhythm of Education 1922. (Reprinted in The Aims of Education Williams & Norgate 1929. (All References to new edition: Benn 1962) p. 28

(64) Ibid: (The Aims of Education) p. 23

those of sleep or food. I am not now talking of the training of the artist, but of the use of art as a condition of healthy life. It is, analogous to subshine in the physical world. (65)

This description is at first sight very close to that offered by Spencer, though Whitehead does not think of literature and art merely as pleasant extras. A further clue to his attitude comes later.

Art and literature have not merely an indirect effect on the main energies of life. Directly they give vision. The world spreads wide beyond the deliverances of material sense, with subtleties of reaction and with pulses of emotion. Vision is the necessary antecedent to control and to direction. In the contest of races which in its final issues will be decided in the workshops and not on the battlefields, the victory will belong to those who are masters of stores of trained nervous energy, working under conditions favourable to growth. One such essential condition is Art. (66)

It is noticeable that Whitehead has a different attitude to industrialised society. "Vision" can change it from a debasing process: there are elements of a moral crusade in the notion of workers with "trained nervous energy" deciding the "final issues" in "the workshops". The debasement assumed by both Nunn and Leavis is not necessarily inherent in industrialisation. "Vision" can transcend it. Though possibly an extreme statement, the emphases on leisure as being an integral and not an extra part of life and the need for any regeneration of society to be a matter of degree and not kind, show that Whitehead is at one with other

(65) Ibid: (Technical Education and its relation to Science and Literature) p. 90

(66) Ibid: (Technical Education and its relation to Science and Literature) p. 91

writers here quoted, both in his views of growth and its social implications. This attitude was largely repeated by L.P. Jacks (67) who reached a broadly similar conclusion by philosophical rather than psychological means. Thus, when he says:

Education is the long-sought "moral
equivalent for war" (68)

he is re-stating Whitehead's point about "workshops" rather than "battlefields". Again, Jacks sees the realisation of individual potentialities leading to the balanced man and thus to the balanced society.

The regeneration of man by an education
adapted to his whole nature is the
equivalent in question. (69)

The 'whole man' of the title has one major difference from the contemporary product of education, of whom it can be said:

Analysis is his strong point, synthesis
his weak one. (70)

Artistic, aesthetic and creative education have roles to play in the move to synthesis: Jacks does not necessarily grade creative activities except in their specific power to help different individuals to fulfilment.

Much the same conclusion was realised by Dame Olive Wheeler (71) in a work which greatly influenced the child-centred education movement. Thus she says:

The individual and not the subject, then,
should be regarded as the centre of the

(67) Jacks: L.P. The Education of the Whole Man (a plea for a new spirit in education) ULP 1931

(68) Ibid: p. 27

(69) Ibid: p. 30

(70) Ibid: p. 63

(71) Wheeler, Olive A: Creative Education and the Future ULP 1936

educational process. (72)

The work is psychologically based; the first passage relevant to our purposes is that which generalises from her own enquiry: An analysis of literary appreciation (73). Though this enquiry dealt purely with poetry it is relevant to our purpose insofar as it points to a way of treating literature in the classroom as well as positing a psychological basis for literary appreciation. Thus the general conclusion echoed Nunn's insistence that appreciation of a work of art involved "an active reconstitution of the mental movement which produced it".

Wheeler says:

... the general conclusion was deduced that when there was the keenest enjoyment of poetry, the three factors - vivid imagery, continuity of mood and meaning, rhythm - developed in harmony with each other. (74)

From this she deduces:

... the method of exposition is too critical and analytic and therefore, disturbs the continuity and imagery factors. (75)

As formal exposition is thus rejected, what should take the place?

... an image formation method in which justice is also done to the continuity and rhythm factors in appreciation. (76)

As an example, Shakespeare's song on Winter is taken -

... there should first be an informal discussion of Winter as a preparation for the relevant imagery ... Then would follow

(72) Ibid: p. 12

(73) British Journal of Psychology Vol. 3, Pt. 1, 1923

(74) Op. cit: pp. 17-18

(75) Ibid: p. 18

(76) Ibid: p. 18

a reading at such a rate and in such a manner that its psychological rhythm and its continuity would be preserved ... (then) ... a slower re-reading: finally the poem would be read straight through again. (77)

Whatever one's views on this proceeding and its efficacy, the aim is clear enough: discussion - of the subject and ways of looking at it before the needing of the poem are attempts to re-create the initial experience of the poet so that the main readings of the poem will constitute some sort of re-creation of the poet's own art of composition. Whether the practice involved here is sound is not at the moment our concern: what is important is that the notions of imitation, re-creation and thus understanding are very close, not only to Nunn but also to Caldwell Cook.

This particular aspect of Wheeler's work has been looked at in some detail because when she reaches more general points, we find her very much in the same line as previous writers. Thus the ends of education are to enable the individual to find his place in our present society: here she agrees with Whitehead:

It is to the living present that the individual who is being educated must adjust himself. (78)

The past is a means only of understanding the present: the present holds, as Whitehead said "the complete sum of existence, backwards and forwards, that whole amplitude of time, which is eternity". (79) The adjustment is made through the process of education which seeks to respect the individuality of each person. She quotes Rousseau, noting that Emile was instructed by being

(77) Ibid: p. 18

(78) Ibid: p. 26

(79) See above: p.197

taken outside society; and Bergson, who saw growth from within.

The élan vital of each human being should be respected (80). But each child exhibits social impulses as well: the élan vital makes him select physical, social, spiritual and cultural environments.

His formal education should be a direct aid to this selection. (81)

The same theme exists, then, that we have seen with Nunn, Whitehead and Jacks: the potentialities of the individual, when realised and guided by educative influences, form the society. Society is made for man, not vice versa. Wheeler's notion of the stages of growth again accords to a great extent with those of Nunn and Whitehead. While not quite accepting Hall's Recapitulation Theory, she nevertheless sees the period of childhood in question in this enquiry as:

More like maturity than the intervening period of youth, There is endurance, vitality and resistance to fatigue ... this is the period for regular and hard work for the acquiring of the tool subjects. (82)

She sees the need for a balance between bookwork and practical activities.

This can only be obtained if the approach to all work, even including literary studies, is practical, active and creative, rather than academic, passive and informative. (83)

The ruling ideas of the writers we have examined are in the realising of growth, individual fulfilment, creativity: the individual is educated to exist in the present; culture depends on this

(80) Ibid: p. 22

(81) Ibid: p. 25

(82) Ibid: pp. 138-9

(83) Ibid: p. 139

individual fulfilment and a proper balance being reached between the practical, academic, societal and creative aspects of the human personality. Literary appreciation, insofar as it has a place in this scheme of things, is itself creative and active: it depends on a recreation of and an entering into not only the experience recorded in the work of the writer/artist, but also the creative act itself. The inferences one can make from this position include the possibility that literary appreciation, if it involves an experience in the reader parallel with that of the artist, is not necessarily exclusive: that differences in levels of appreciation between, say, one of an educated elite and one not of such an elite, are of degree and not kind. Every reaction is valid because every human being is equally valid. This seems in direct contradiction of F.R. Leavis and his view of the "discerning appreciation" of the "very small minority". Obviously, this thinking informs several of the official Board publications to be examined below. For example, though the creative aspects of English teaching which can be seen developing in a straight line through Hall, Holmes, Cook, Nunn and Wheeler, are not made manifest, the references in the 1937 Suggestions to the need for equipping the elementary school pupil to enjoy leisure and to cope with a society which is expanding from them. . . . can be said to coincide with that very "nervous energy" referred to by Whitehead.

Part 2 - Fiction as a Particular Form

- (a) 1922-1928 : Fiction as both "cultural heritage" and
child-centred exploration
Board of Education publications concerning Elementary Schools

The survey of Board of Education publications and prescriptive method writers in this chapter is in two sections. The first section ends at 1928 - in that year the Board of Education produced two memoranda on the supply of books in Elementary and Secondary Schools. (1)

Realising that the Newbolt Report had appeared in 1921, the reader finds it something of a shock that the 1923 Suggestions produced by the Board of Education (2) are virtually a reprint of the 1912 Suggestions referred to above ^{except} at certain points where they refer the reader to particular paragraphs of the Report: thus for all intents and purposes they may be disregarded. However, one publication of the Board in the same year does give an intriguing hint of what was regarded as the best practice obtaining in Elementary Schools - the Official Handbook issued for the exhibition mounted for the 1923 Imperial Education Conference (3). This work is couched in layman's language and is intended for the general public: its sentiments are significant.

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- (1) For reference, see below: p.198 and p.202
(2) Board of Education - Suggestions for the consideration of teachers ...
1923 HMSO
(3) Board of Education - Official Handbook to the Education Exhibition
illustrating the work of Public Elementary Schools and Training
Colleges in England, in connection with the Imperial Education
Conference, 25th June to 7th July, 1923.

The main object of Reading in the Elementary School may be said to be the training of the children to use books intelligently, whether for pleasure or for profit. (4)

The choice of words here - "Training", "use", "pleasure or ... profit" - seems to indicate that, Newbolt Report and Sampson notwithstanding, there was still a generally accepted utilitarian bias to elementary education. And though the Handbook mentions the use, where possible, of small class libraries and local Public Libraries, the tone of the writing harks back to an earlier date altogether.

In the higher classes, the children should have no difficulty in reading not only the ordinary story books especially written for children, but also some of the easier standard English novels, whether abridged or unabridged, e.g. Oliver Twist, Westward Ho!, Silas Marner. (5)

However, the purpose of this publication must be remembered in any attempt to evaluate it. The first official sign that the sentiments expressed by the Newbolt Report and Sampson were accepted - and thus by implication Sampson's insistence on the Elementary School's being the most important in the country - came with the 1927 Suggestions. (6) Nearly all the Newbolt Report's recommendations are repeated quite uncritically. Early on is repeated the cry "Every Teacher (is) a teacher of English" (7). The attitude to literature is instantly recognisable:

Children from an early age demand genuineness and gusto in their literature. (8)

(4) Ibid: p. 16

(5) Ibid: p. 17

(6) Board of Education: Handbook of Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers and others employed in the Public Elementary School system HMSO 1927

(7) Ibid: p. 66

(8) Ibid: p. 71

The sequence of book presentation through the various stages of the child's career again is in the already established tradition: although the theory itself is not now acknowledged, the practices associated with Recapitulation theory are recommended.

Fairy Tales, legends and myths, stories about animals, as well as stirring incidents in the lives of great men and women, adventures and experiences of children - all these furnish an abundant supply of suitable reading matter, and, in one form or another, will be already familiar from oral recitals in the infants' class. (9)

When the child reaches the 11-13 Senior stage, when his reading competence is complete, he should have experience in the use of books.

Books should be used as a source of enjoyment, as a means of gaining information, and for the purpose of language study. (10)

Private reading should be for enjoyment and pleasure: the teacher should not condemn the child's own "low-grade" (11) private reading. The Handbook's compilers show they fully accept the case put forward by Ballard, Sampson, etc. when they say:

Reading simply as reading is to be welcomed in children as an asset of great possibilities. (12)

When dealing with types of books best selected for use at this stage, the Handbook's compilers show a distinct preference for fiction in terms reminiscent of Batchelder and Ballard as well as the Newbolt Report.

The books chosen should deal, in the main, with human action and with motives which can easily be understood, and the story element should predominate ... Probably longer stories

(9) Ibid: p. 81

(10) Ibid: p. 84

(11) Ibid: p. 85

(12) Ibid: p. 85

such as Kingsley's "Water Babies" or "Heroes" will be more suitable than collections of shorter stories, though these need not be excluded. (13)

Some novels are suggested - Robinson Crusoe, David Copperfield, Ivanhoe, Treasure Island, Westward Ho!, Tom Brown's Schooldays, Silas Marner, The Children of the New Forest (14). But this list is not meant to be exhaustive and the teacher is urged to experiment with his own preferences. The teacher in these experimentations should not be afraid to go beyond the usually accepted boundaries of literary choice - it is stated quite clearly that

"certain magazines also provide excellent material" (15).

Libraries are recommended as sources for private reading - not only for pleasure but also for information.

It is desirable that they should come to think of reading not only as a means of escaping from practical life, but as a means of coping with it in all its aspects. (16)

It is noteworthy that "reading for enjoyment" is discussed as "a means of escaping from practical life" - one must assume that the inference the contemporary reader familiar with the Cambridge School and its fear of "fantasying" might make is not intended. However, the insistence in so many sections of the Handbook of a generous supply of books did not happen in practice. Two publications of the Board drew attention to this shortage, which was not confined to Elementary Schools. Both of them recommended greater book provision; but for our purposes, this (in fact their main

(13) Ibid: p. 86

(14) Ibid: p. 86

(15) Ibid: p. 87

(16) Ibid: p. 94

finding) is less important than what they had to say about the books. (The report for Secondary Schools will be dealt with subsequently).

Report on Books in Elementary Schools (17) - in speaking of books for classroom, as opposed to library use - makes a plea which recalls Matthew Arnold's strictures on schoolbooks and hints at what must still have been the general state of affairs -

Our witnesses were, however, insistent that even the most elementary books should not consist either of great literature recast by an inferior hand, or of narratives and descriptions without literary merit; but that they should, in the earliest possible stage, take the form of carefully graded miscellanies of verse and prose of acknowledged literary value. The awakening of literary appreciation is incidental to the process of learning to read. (18)

It may at first sight seem a retrograde step for the main recommendation to be for miscellanies: however, it must be noted that the emphasis is on catholicity, on worth and on careful grading, while the old vices of abridgement and inferior "re-telling" are firmly rejected. Subsequently, the Committee pleads for school editions which should be without notes and unabridged (19).

Board of Education publications concerning Secondary Schools

There is a perceptible difference of emphasis in Board publications during this period for Secondary Schools from those publications for

(17) Board of Education - Report of the Consultative Committee on Books in Public Elementary Schools HMSO 1928

(18) Ibid: p. 31

(19) Ibid: p. 32

Elementary Schools. We have already noticed how the tone at least of publications to do with Elementary Schools before the 1927 Suggestions shows little difference from those at the beginning of the century and that only in 1927 do we find a general apprehension of the spirit as well as the prescriptions of the Newbolt Report. The first publication to do with schools outside the Elementary sector at first seem to share the same feature - though here the features familiar to us from before 1921 are those of the need for language study and the study of literature for "elevation" and understanding of the "heritage". Thus we should not look even to the highly important Hadow Report of 1926 for an unambiguous acceptance of the place of literature and fiction in schools. An interesting sidelight on literature in schools appeared in 1923 concerning the Report on the Differentiation of the Curriculum for Boys and Girls (20). Apart from circular 753 (The Teaching of English in Secondary Schools) published in 1910, this is the first significant Board Publication relevant to the present inquiry which deals with the non-elementary sector. There is little even so of direct relevance, except the noting of the fact that literature seemed taken more seriously and to greater effect in girls' schools than in boys' schools:

... in this subject the average achievements of girls were distinctly superior to that (sic) of boys. This result is largely due to the more assured position given to the subject in girls' schools, and to the larger proportion of really well-qualified women teachers and the better teaching that is consequently given.

(20) Board of Education - Report of the Consultative Committee on the differentiation of the curriculum for Boys and Girls respectively in Secondary Schools.
HMSO 1923

Girls attempt more general reading, have more retentive memories ... girls are more conscientious and better read, are neat and methodical, but are more ready to accept without question the teacher's point of view and, therefore, tend to reproduce rather than reason. (21)

This passage implies - whatever psychological differences there might be - a considerably stronger vocational and utilitarian emphasis in the boys' secondary school. It also reproduces the findings of Mary E. Matthews, who concluded that girls possessed greater capacities for appreciation, while boys possessed higher critical ability (22). They would certainly need to if the suggestions contained in the succeeding Suggestions ... for Secondary Schools (23) were universally acted on, for there is no change from the standard authors which had been recommended previously, together with a virtual ignoring of the novel form. (Fowler's reaction to this report has already been noted above). However, this publication has little significance beside the succeeding Hadow Report of 1926 (24). This document's references to the subject of this inquiry are very much in the spirit of the Newbolt Report - although in its references to literature it seems that the ideas of intrinsic worth, refining power and the cultural heritage are relegated to the background. Another aspect of the Arnoldian synthesis ("criticism of life") is brought to the fore.

In order to inculcate and develop a love of literature in his pupils, the teacher should treat it as a form of Art in which life has

(21) Ibid: p. 102

(22) Mary E. Matthews - Sex differences in the appreciation of English Literature. The Forum of Education, Vol. 3, 1923-24, p. 199

(23) Board of Education - Some suggestions for the teaching of English in Secondary Schools HMSO 1924

(24) Board of Education - Report of the Consultative Committee on the Education of the Adolescent: (The Hadow Report) HMSO 1926

been interpreted. The grammatical and linguistic sides of the study of literature, though important, should be kept in a secondary place in post-primary schools. This especially applies to the study of great creative work, more particularly poetry, which, being deeply tinged with emotion, cannot be fully appreciated without a certain emotional response on the part of the pupil. At the same time the grammatical side should not be neglected, and it devolves on the teacher to ensure that so far as possible, every pupil in the class has thoroughly mastered the meaning of the passages which are being studied. (25)

The balance between "a certain emotional response" and "the grammatical side" is, in fact, a very uneasy one. The compilers appear to be trying to reconcile two opposed aims in the teaching of literature (and fiction best epitomises the definition "interpretation of life" here given) and in so doing, satisfy two opposed sets of critics. Nevertheless, as we have seen already, the idea of an undefined "certain emotional response" was an extremely difficult one to justify.

The Hadow Report is more obviously in the tradition of the Newbolt Report when it deals with the teacher's role in the selection and presentation of literature:

The chief object in the teaching of literature is the communication of zest, and this is possible only if the pieces selected are those which the teacher can read with full enjoyment. (26)

Prescription of standard authors, then, is not favoured. Such an attitude towards literature in schools must place a heavy emphasis on silent reading outside the classroom and, indeed, the Report goes to some lengths to stress the need for class and school libraries and

(25) Ibid: pp. 192-193

(26) Ibid: p. 193

collaboration with local public libraries. In explanation, the compilers again try to strike a balance - on the one hand between the need for wide and largely uncensored private reading, on the other the need for practice in reading for information and the efficient use of books.

The private reading of the scholars will of course, vary according to their individual tastes, and it is obvious that within reasonable limits, they should be encouraged to read for their own pleasure. On the other hand, so far as school work is concerned, books must necessarily be the chief source of information for the pupils, who should accordingly be trained to use works of reference, and to select and collate the particular information required. (27)

The main aim of the Hadow Report was to show the need for the coming together of the disparate elements of post-primary education: one cannot look to it necessarily for curriculum innovation. Thus, while its positions concerning library and book provision and the role of the teacher are recognisable from the Newbolt Report, the selection on the nature of literature in schools is, in the context of what had gone before, reminiscent of the attitudes examined above. There is still emphasis on literature as a means of transmitting "skills" and as a medium of language study, with all its implications of "stiffening" and rigour. However, a subsequent publication (28) goes much further in its insistence on a specifically educational value for fiction.

... fiction is a main field of imaginative literature, and the school cannot afford to neglect it. Moreover, no collection of books is representative of human interests if it omits so important a sphere of the human mind. And,

(27) Ibid: p. 194

(28) Board of Education: Memorandum on Libraries in State-aided Secondary Schools in England HMSO 1928

finally, fiction is indeed the kind of literature that has the strongest appeal to most children at certain ages and is, therefore, the most effective means both of establishing the habit of reading and of influencing taste. (29)

Fiction, then, is pre-eminent in taste and habit-forming, and the most easily accessible literary form to children - a point to be made even more forcibly twelve years later by Jenkinson. These, however, are secondary, negative virtues: they justify the use of the form, but not the form itself. The writer of the memorandum continues by arguing that the reader's involvement in the reading material itself has a potent effect for good or ill - an argument which, throughout the period, is steadily gaining ground as a peculiar justification for fiction.

... in their imaginative reading, boys and girls are actively forming conceptions of life and standards of conduct that may have a determining effect on their career, happiness and worth to the world. With the right books and judicious guidance those conceptions and standards will modify themselves in the natural course of growth into the outlook of a mature and civilised adult. With the wrong books and advice, or with no books or advice, that development may be halved or distorted with terrible consequences.

(30)

This is probably the strongest statement of this line of argument yet encountered since Batchelder. Potentialities of great importance are ascribed to imaginative literature. In this context it does not matter that the writer was in part thinking of children older than the age-group specified for this present study. The contents of the library are of supreme importance: there is an unstated implication that the arguments which tend towards a liberal attitude towards children's

(29) Ibid: p. 15

(30) Ibid: p. 16

outside reading are not satisfactory. Fiction (like all art) is a transmitter of values. Here there is implied a liberal view of the cultural heritage model and an assumption about the demoralising effect of inferior fiction. It seems highly likely that the writer of this memorandum had read Richards (The Principles of Literary Criticism had been published in 1924). It is also noteworthy that - whether by accident or design - there is a different tone in these prescriptions for Secondary Schools from that in those for Elementary Schools. Though both agree in urging increased book provision, the attitudes expressed (as indicated in the quoted passages) at first sight seem difficult to reconcile as having been written at more or less the same time. However, the 1927 Suggestions for Elementary schools, incorporating the recommendation of the Newbolt Report, sustain the urgency of the Newbolt Report: those for Secondary Schools led the teachers represented above gently onwards.

Method writers - prescriptions and surveys

Method writers considered here dealt with fiction and other literature within a wide conspectus of English teaching. They both justify and prescribe and their practice can be seen as broadly within the spirit of the Newbolt Report. The impetus of this Report was to give rise to a number of publications which saw the urgency of its recommendations and the liberal spirit in which they were made. The writers to be considered were not writing for any particular set of schools: from Sopwith at Shrewsbury to Lamborn at East Oxford, a similar spirit prevails. Tomkinson (31) takes a view opposed to most of the writers examined in the previous section The Reaction against Newbolt

(31) Tomkinson, W.S.: The Teaching of English: A new approach
Clarendon 1921.

Education is the perfecting of the powers of body, mind and spirit; but it is to be remarked that whereas the school consciously makes provision for the bodily and mental needs of the child, his spiritual activities are either disbelieved in or distrusted ... authority has made no conscious attempt to enlarge, or even to explore, the spiritual kingdom of the child. (32)

At the outset, Tomkinson places himself in the tradition of Holmes and Caldwell Cook; he later, following the recommendations of the Newbolt Report, asserts his view of the centrality of English studies.

(English) ... enables the child to achieve a natural poise; humanises the entire work of the school. (33)

Literature is pleasurable; that is its main raison d'être in school.

Referring mainly to poetry, he says:

Literature ... will only take its rightful place as the most potent agent for culture in the school curriculum, the most delightful of "the studies that serve for delight", when the approach to it is made through the emotions, rather than through the intellect. (34)

Tomkinson is himself in the Arnoldian tradition. However, when he refers specifically to fiction he shows that his values are not exclusive: he does not recommend classics for the sake of their being classics but wishes for literary experiences to be within the capacities of the pupils.

All children will not read Scott. Good children will read his dialogue and incident. But most children can be got to read The White Company, Micah Clarke, The Black Arrow, Prester John, The Splendid Spur and a dozen others. (35)

(32) Ibid: p. 3

(33) Ibid: p. 3

(34) Ibid: p. 57

(35) Ibid: p. 73

Tomkinson's stance is very close to that of Sopwith at Shrewsbury School (36). Sopwith recommends little grammar teaching; composition is only to help the boy express himself, while literature is most important and most difficult. It is important because:

... it is from books that a man must supplement his own small experience of life, and from the first he should be taught to recognise those books from which he may learn the true and beautiful aspects of life. (37)

It is difficult because:

... the appreciation of literature is not intellectual but emotional ... is something felt rather than understood. (38)

This has implications for its presentation:

... nearly all works of literature ... should first be read through to the end, though the first reading should be preceded by such introductory comments as will enable the reader better to recognise and appreciate the qualities of the work. (39)

Sopwith provides a very catholic choice of books, with much emphasis on modern writers. He urges that masters should make out private reading lists for their forms. He prescribes no methods of literary study beyond the master's reading aloud:

Everyone who interprets literature must do it in his own way, for literature is essentially personal. (40)

However, he recommends as a basis for study McPherson's Study of

(36) Sopwith, S.S.: A Scheme of English Teaching at Shrewsbury School, with some preliminary notes: Shrewsbury, Wilding and Son, 1922. 2nd Ed. 1923 (References are to 2nd Ed.)

(37) Ibid: p. 9

(38) Ibid: p. 9

(39) Ibid: p. 9

(40) Ibid: p. 13

English Literature (41). Among books for out-of-school reading are The White Company, The Black Arrow, Hereward the Wake, Westward Ho!, and the Jungle Book (42).

Sopwith's attitude, therefore, is at one with the Newbolt Report. It is interesting that a fellow public schoolmaster does not share Fowler's condemnation of this "indolent proceeding". In fact, Sopwith's insistence on "emotional appreciation" suffers from the lack of this justification, and recalls certain statements from the English Association. Sopwith even leans towards the Wordsworthian attitude concerning children expressed by Greening Lamborn in Expression in Speech and Writing (43).

I regard the child always as a poet of
imagination all compact. ... the function
of imagination is not to create the non-
existent, but to see real things more
clearly than the realist. (44)

There are overtones of Caldwell Cook here - nevertheless, there is also a hint of that uncritical attitude towards English studies which Richards certainly did much to dispel. The same general attitude can be seen in the work of Finch (45). About literature in the classroom he is uncompromising.

We cannot teach literature itself. (46)

He accepts the notion of Ballard and Sampson that the child's private reading can help in the formation of taste, and that such

(41) See above, p. 97
(42) Op. cit: p. 13

(43) Greening Lamborn, E.A. Expression in Speech and Writing Clarendon
1922

(44) Ibid: p. 33

(45) Finch, Robert: The Approach to English Literature Evans 1923

(46) Ibid: p. 9

taste will emerge when the child can juxtapose the "good" and the "bad".

I would not give twopence for the boy who has not undergone a full course of reading in "bloods". (47)

For such reading can form a foundation for "better" reading.

... longer and cleverer detective tales can be found in Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes ... a better and longer pirate yarn and treasure hunt will be found in Stevenson's Treasure Island. (48)

For, says Finch,

The only sane thing to do is not merely to recognise the existence of "Juvenile Literature" and the fact that 99% of our pupils are reading it, but to use it as a beginning. (49)

The process passes through "enjoyment" which is to Finch nothing to do with any "soft option".

If the reading of literature is not a delight, if it does not raise reading to a plane of enjoyment upon which the emotional and imaginative life of the reader is broadened, deepened and enriched, it is a sham and a failure. (50)

Methods, however, of reaching this stage varied. We have seen Caldwell Cook's creative methods taken up by Nunn: two writers and teachers who were close in spirit to both in their prescriptions of method were Guy Pocock and R.T. Lewis who, in two works of some importance (51) (52) outlined whole schemes of English work based on fiction and story. Both foreshadowed much later work done by

(47) Ibid: p. 13

(48) Ibid: p. 15

(49) Ibid: p. 109

(50) Ibid: p. 12

(51) Pocock, Guy: Exercises in English Dent 1924

(52) Lewis, R.T.: Composition through Story-writing Harrap 1927

the Rosens and other progressives of the 60's and 70's. Lewis's central position is that the imagination is best guided through a creative art parallel with that of the author. He refers approvingly to Cook's Iknds. (53). Thus he says in Composition through Story-writing:

The child who reads to write begins to read in a new way. He peeps between the lines into the author's workshop and sees words as the author's tools. So far he has read his story books once and hurriedly at that. The story alone interested him. Now, however, he returns to the pages, studies how the story is put together, sees how a certain effect is obtained, searches for material which he himself can use, pays attention to the structure and form, reads to learn instead of to be amused - reads, that is to say, actively instead of passively. (54)

This "problem-solving" literary approach, with the main reading activity being one of emulation, can, in Lewis's view, lead to a sense of discrimination:

"Penny dreadfuls", so called, interest the boy because he is interested in the story. It is not until he understands the author's craft that he can understand the good from the bad. (55)

Another writer who saw literature and reading at the centre of English work was F.H. Pritchard. His first relevant work was published in 1922 (56) and gave a practical groundwork to points made in his later (1926) The Teaching of English (57). Once again, the position is unequivocal:

(53) Ibid: p. 15

(54) Ibid: pp. 12-13

(55) Ibid: p. 13

(56) Pritchard, F.H.: Training in Literary Appreciation Harrap 1922

(57) Pritchard, F.H.: The Teaching of English Harrap 1926

... all English teaching should be based upon English literature. (58)

Fiction is at the basis of literature, for the 11+ child:

At first the story must be told, and told dramatically ... soon an interest in plot will be awakened. (59)

However, other elements of English will be introduced into this literary study -

The Language teaching should be based directly upon the literature that is used. (60)

These points are considerably expanded in the later English and the New Prospect (61), where Pritchard shows that his method depends very much on the intrinsic performance of the teacher (he recommends study of Hardress O'Grady) (62).

All eleven-plus teaching should be based upon English literature, and that an appreciation of its beauty and strength is best awakened by the regular reading aloud of masterpieces. (63)

The nature and timing of this performance is important:

It will be advisable in the first instance, I think, to select those passages which are conspicuous for their primary quality of movement. (64)

He recommends such extracts as The Flight in the Heath (from Kidnapped) or Captain Dodd's Flight with the Pirates (from Charles Reade's Hard Cash) and then makes a point which indicates he sees a necessary rapport with the children of the class as an audience.

(58) Ibid: p. 7

(59) Ibid: p. 9

(60) Ibid: p. 11

(61) Pritchard, F.H. English and the New Prospect Harrap 1930

(62) O'Grady, Hardress Reading Aloud and Literary Appreciation Bell 1914

(63) Op. cit: p. 10

(64) Ibid: p. 10

You have made a real, live community of your class by enabling them to share a thrilling experience. (65)

The study of passages is to be accompanied by language and comprehension questions: however, Pritchard has endeavoured to ensure that the children have entered into the spirit of the passage - have, in fact, enjoyed it. The two-fold aim of his work is expression and appreciation (66) and it is to be backed up by comprehensive private reading. Books recommended at 11 for this private reading include J.W. McSpaden's Stories of Robin Hood, Amy Course's Stories from George Eliot, S.H. Cox's version of Sir Gawaine and the Green Knight as well as Ivanhoe, Deerslayer and others. At the age of twelve the child reads Silas Marner as well such works as Stories of King Arthur (J.W. Cutler) and Famous Voyages of the great discoverers (Eric Wood).

At thirteen are recommended such works as Allan Quartermain, Tom Sawyer, The Vicar of Wakefield, as well as Stories from the Faerie Queene (L.H. Dawson), etc.. Myth and legend in retold versions and semi-historical works exist side by side with fiction.

Pritchard sees a wide range of authors as recommended for any class library - Mrs. Craik, G. Eliot, Hope, Kingsley, Marryat, Lamb, Lytton, Melville, Scott, Van Loon, Stanley Weyman and many others. He is not impressed by the status of the classics. That he was right not to be was hinted by what seems to be at the time the most sizeable and important survey of children's reading then made, by Lloyd-Jones and Owen (67).

(65) Ibid: p. 12

(66) Ibid: p. 57

(67) Lloyd-Jones, J., and Owen, E.T.: Books Children like Best
Welsh Outlook Press 1926

The compilers made two enquiries: one of pupils, one of teachers. The findings, as they are relevant, of the first enquiry are as follows:

1. That in any scheme for introducing books of world-wide interest to children, preference should be given to those involved with the spirit of activity and adventure.
2. That boys of ten to eleven like short stories with illustrations. It was also established ... that a class of backward boys averaging twelve and a half years of age read the same books as the average boy of ten years of age.
3. That the so-called "classics" - Scott, Kingsley, Dickens, etc., with which publishers of school books flood the market, make hardly any appeal to the average boy ...
4. That there is a gradual growth of the sensational fiction of the film order in the home library ...

(68)

In the compilers' view books supplied for school use did not comply with the children's needs. "Sensational" fiction tended to take their place. The remedy had to lie with the teacher himself.

Teachers with sound literary taste and judgment wield almost a decisive influence upon children's choice of books. A so-called "dry" book lying idle and unopened on the library shelf becomes in the hands of a skilful teacher a popular and a well-read book, and the method is often simple and apparently casual. Extracts are read without comment, but the art of selection and presentation is so subtle and convincing that the soul of the book is revealed. (69)

From this point the authors become prescriptive: the books recommended for the 11-13 age-group, springing from a judicious mixing of children's preference and teachers' selection, cover a

(68) Ibid: p. 7

(69) Ibid: p. 9

wide range. The list includes Folk Tales and Legends (Aesop, Norse Tales, Tales of the Round Table, William Morns), The Children's Bible, Travel (Mungo Park, etc.), Home and School stories (Tom Brown's Schooldays, The Fifth Form at St. Dominics, Eric), History and Biography, Nature Stories, Science, Poetry and Drama (Nelson's Pattern Plays), Adventure Stories (Children of the New Forest, Coral Island, Black Beauty, Martin Rattler, The Young Fur-Traders, Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn, Heidi, Round the World in Eighty Days, etc.), abridged classics (Ivanhoe, The Talisman, Hereward the Wake, etc.), original classics (Old Curiosity Shop, The Black Arrow, Treasure Island, Deerslayer, The Last of the Mohicans, etc.). (70)

An interesting point about this enquiry is that, having surveyed children's reading preferences, it proceeds to prescribe books it has found that children will not like: there is little emphasis on using the existing preferences, as Ballard and Finch would. The compilers' main aim is to select books with accepted standing with some of the qualities - narrative, action - which are to be found in the "sensational literature". Almost the only concession made to the fact that children do not like most of the classics is to present them in abridged form. Nevertheless, Lloyd-Jones and Owen's survey did show that children's preferences went against normal prescription. It was part of a movement which tended to see the reader as more important than the text. The work of Finch, Pocock, Lewis and even Pritchard moved away from a text-centred approach - and this was in line with the general psychologically-based move towards a pupil-centred approach which ran parallel with the recommendations of the 1921 Newbolt Report.

(70) Ibid: pp. 13-15

Summary of trends

In many ways the pronouncements examined in this section betray the fact that they were written before the new viewpoint on English Studies given by Richards and Leavis had become assimilated generally. While the centrality of English is assumed by the method writers and gradually - by the compilers of Board of Education publications, the form that centrality should take differs. There is an acceptance of "enjoyment" as itself being a valid educational end, a new catholicity of taste and a confidence in prescription beyond the "safe classics". Reading, both private and in class, is seen as a vital activity and a wide variety of books (with a concomitant plea for increased provision of them) is recommended.

Cook's notions of creativity were carried on and adapted more generally to the classroom. For the first time - as with Lloyd-Jones and Owen - children's own preferences were sought out and taken seriously. Fiction as a means of growth and personal development was asserted in both the Board publications and the method writers.

The recommendations of the Newbolt Report were acted on and fiction per se began to be a major concern. Nevertheless, in rejecting the traditional view of the cultural heritage and the accompanying insistence on acknowledged masterpieces, there was a growing assumption that the child's private reading was just as valid - thus when Finch, for example, says:

I would not give twopence for the boy who has
not undergone a full course of reading in "bloods" (71)

he not only echoes Ballard but also he opposes the Newbolt Committee's arguments concerning "the weeds of literature". Thus at this stage it would appear that this particular section of the argument was polarised. Children's reading was either "wholesome", "elevating" and thus, both in moral and literary aspects, in tune with the traditional view of the cultural heritage, or it was wide, catholic, and in all its forms could be seen as having places on a ladder which ran unerringly from bottom to top.

It is here that the arguments of the Cambridge School, when they were assimilated, had greatest effect. For, in their insistence on the debasement inherent in industrial society and the "fantasying" literature it produced, they introduced a new element into the discussion of literature. Though hinted at by Pocock, Pritchard, Lewis and Finch, discussion of values in fiction had not reached a very sophisticated level. The effect of the intrusion of the Cambridge School was to bring in their level of sophistication, to subtilise the argument considerably and to lead directly to a new evaluation of the nature and scope of fiction in the classroom which we shall see in the work of Jenkinson. In this new evaluation will come a partial synthesis of the assertions of the progressives and the Cambridge School.

(b) After 1928 - Developments towards Synthesis

Many changes are noticeable in method writing and Board Reports during the period from 1928 until the publication of the 1937 Suggestions. First, there was a distinct improvement in precision of terms and exactness of prescribed activity. One feels that the influence of

Richards, Leavis and Thompson - even if indirectly - was affecting such writers as Elton, Crump and Meldrum. Second, there is the existence of more sustained psychological investigation into children's aesthetic and literary development which most certainly influenced the progressives and protagonists of growth, and also led to an increased emphasis on children's own interests and how they could be used constructively in the classroom. Thirdly is the fact that new educational thinking developing from the Newbolt Report was heavily influenced by both the progressive and Cambridge traditions of thought mentioned earlier. More and more (culminating in the 1937 Suggestions) their seemingly opposed presuppositions are seen as complementary and the attempt is made to synthesise them in terms of practice and prescription in the classroom.

Method writers - Elton to Meldrum

An influence - in some ways rather maverick but still powerful - which accepted a child-centred approach to books and combined it interestingly with group psychology and the cathartic effect of literature - was G.Y. Elton (72) working at Frensham Heights before his early death. He uncompromisingly rejects all previous arguments about "heritage" and "elevation".

The important thing to be studied is the personal use that literature can be to different people, by releasing their pent-up faculties in various ways - the use of plays, novels and poems as a means of seeing one's emotions objectivised in other people and getting them off one's chest. The fact that too much literary study in schools can do harm and that novel-reading may easily

(72) Elton, G.Y.: Teaching English Macmillan 1929

become so passive as to destroy people's morale ought to be kept clearly in mind. (73)

When he talks of the novel "destroying morale", Elton is implying a distinction between types of literature. This distinction is to be taken up by Crump and Jenkinson and is already familiar from the references to "fantasying" books by Leavis and Thompson. Elton is also moving towards the idea of personal "relevance" to the individual of reading and literary study. This emphasis on "relevance" leads to the practice of bringing individual and group reactions (here for older children) to bear on the work:

If you say "what can Hamlet mean to our group feeling, or any particular person's feeling here present, with his past and his interests", then a rather different problem arises and things don't move as stiffly as they do for your own particular solitary intelligence. (74)

Elton is moving away from any idea of "emotionalism": he sees the need for some "objective correlative", to use Eliot's term.

There should be in poetry, drama or novel, nothing private or unsocial, nothing that won't bear quite detailed and dry speaking of from a mechanical "thing" point of view. (75)

"Soggy emotionalism" arises from being out of touch with the "social consciousness" of the race. (76) The idea of empathetic involvement within the author's experience and the seeing of that experience as relevant; the rejection of "amusement" as an end in itself and a manifestation (and misunderstanding) of "play instinct" are expressed as follows:

If you think that literature is nothing but "play instinct" and people's efforts

(73) Ibid: p. 59

(74) Ibid: p. 60

(75) Ibid: p. 61

(76) Ibid: p. 61

to amuse other people, the subject becomes jelly-like and unwieldy and there are no rules except the degree of amusement felt by every particular person at every particular moment. It becomes unteachable. If you think of it as a very very direct and clear form of the doing - instinct - a way of doing things in the spirit that you haven't a chance of doing the flesh, then it's plain sailing. (77)

Elton, then, shows himself in the tradition of Caldwell Cook and Nunn in his insistence on re-creation of experience (though he does not express himself in quite the same terms): nevertheless, he is also working towards an idea of a more rigorous approach and a concern for value and exactness in literature which leans far more towards Richards.

Another important statement on the teaching of fiction appeared with Crump's (78) work in 1929 - important because it foreshadows what Leavis and Thompson say about "fantasying" literature (79) and also what Jenkinson (80) and some of the contributors to English in Schools will say. (81) Crump rejects the idea of "good" and "bad" literature as a viable division of reading matter in schools.

The "good" literature fallacy must be dispelled before a right attitude to books can be achieved. (82)

The aim of literature teaching is not acquaintance with a "heritage" of "great thoughts" or any such abstract quality. Instead, children

(77) Ibid: p. 63

(78) Crump, G.H. (Senior English Master at Bedale's School) English for Schools (with preface by George Sampson) Nelson 1929

(79) See above: p.191

(80) See below: pp. 256-257

(81) See below: pp. 242-248

(82) Ibid: p. 43

must have a steady determination to find enjoyment in books wherever they can. "Enjoyment" is the aim: however, Crump in no way presupposes an uncritical enjoyment, nor does his rejection of "good" and "bad" categories imply any abandonment of critical standards.

Reading that makes no claims upon the intelligence not only does not stimulate the mind, but prevents its growth and development. For this reason a surfeit of magazine stories and sentimental, sensational fiction is definitely harmful. (83)

So Crump wants all such magazines actually banned from school (easy enough, one presumes, in a boarding school) because of their dangerous influences against growth: this foreshadows a point in the next decade to be made more and more forcibly.

The next writer to be examined in this section seems at first sight to represent a move in the opposite direction from that noted in the previous pages. Davidson (84) sees a danger in the emotionalism and lack of content which he sees spreading in schools and wishes for a return to "understanding" -

Once again, the intensive study of passages of good literature helps to produce that intellectual humility which is an essential mark of a person who is really well educated. (85)

English work is or should be:

an intellectual and moral discipline (86).

(83) Ibid: p. 43

(84) Davidson, E.F.: A Survey of English Work in Primary, Senior and Central Schools Collins 1930

(85) Ibid: p. 30

(86) Ibid: p. 59

Treatment of books in the classroom should take the following form: first there should be "detailed study of set passages" (which gives the 'discipline' mentioned above). Then there should be:

more rapid reading by the whole class or by groups of considerable size of continuous books of some length --- silently --- (with) discussion to test how far the book has been really understood and enjoyed.

Third should come "practice in reading aloud" (87). Davidson's bent is essentially practical; for instance, he wishes all children to be reading the same book in class all the time, not for any literary reasons but simply in the interests of classroom management (88). He also sees, along with close language study, reading for information as being more urgent for the Central and Senior School child than reading for pleasure (89). However, he stresses out-of-school reading: he wants private reading habits formed, for which the teacher can be an adviser (90). He urges reading of fiction - but is in favour of established masterpieces. He does not object to abridgement, but is against "retelling".

Davidson's recommendations, when compared with others we have examined seem restrictive. However, given the children about whom he was writing, their probable backgrounds and the fear that English teaching might well disappear into a soggy mush, his work is very much in the tradition we are seeing developing with Elton and Crump. His seeming to hark back to a pre-1921 position is more a realisation

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- (87) Ibid: p. 59
(88) Ibid: p. 146
(89) Ibid: p. 136
(90) Ibid: p. 154

of the reality of the situation than any feeling against the centrality of English: he was moving towards a synthesis possibly better made by succeeding writers. For instance, Davidson would probably approve of much in Jenkinson's work. For the influence of the Richards-Leavis school was beginning to make itself more felt. Gurrey's work on the Appreciation of Poetry (91) for example, was heavily influenced, as he said, by Eliot and Richards: a more relevant (for our purposes) influence was that on Meldrum (92) Meldrum's own insistence on the centrality of English is expressed in what is, for the times, a peculiar way:

My own bias is towards a teacher of
English who can replace a teacher of
classics. (93)

This is not as conservative a statement as at first it appears: it does not devalue English but shows a higher premium on classics. It is, in fact, the position of the Cambridge School. Meldrum sees the English teacher now as being the guardian of the humane values. Those values are expressed interestingly in terms both of discrimination and of growth. In talking of expression and communication, he says:

... the discovery of values in experience,
as it so much concerns the growth of the
individual, is obviously the most important
activity in the English course ... the
teacher cannot stand aloof as a neutral
observer. If he exercises any control at
all in the classroom, the standards of
taste he adopts will affect those with whom
he works. He will therefore, have to have
a literary faith, as it were: he cannot
remain a non-committed critic. (94)

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- (91) Gurrey, P: The Appreciation of Poetry OUP 1935
(92) Meldrum, Roy: An English Technique Macmillan 1935
(93) Ibid: p. 33
(94) Ibid: p. 23

Growth, again, is defined as enlargement of experience: this is his central justification for the reading of literature/fiction.

The teacher is going to improve taste; he is going to enlarge the range of a boy's experience by introducing him to others whose experience, recorded in books, we accept as most impressive of human nature, at its best and its most imaginative. (95)

This is very close to the definition of the function of literature made by Richards and Leavis. It is noticeable that Meldrum is comparatively restrictive concerning criteria for books which may be read in class:

... insofar as it is (the teacher's) special function to equip a boy with technical proficiency in his own language, any training in how to read must limit very much the numbers of books read in school. (96)

Also, if reading is "a class activity", the choice is limited because "a group does not travel at the pace of its fastest member", nor is there any "virtue in quantity of books read". (97) Meldrum does not see the pupil's private reading as necessarily infringing on school reading:

What is read ... out of school is his own choice ... it must be as varied as the tastes of the readers themselves. (98)

Thus, though Meldrum insists on literary standards at school, he is not censorious about private reading. He is, therefore, not concerned about the possible vitiating effect noted by Leavis and Thompson of certain forms of popular literature. Nor does he adopt the view of Ballard and Sampson that such reading, by juxtaposing the good with the less good, will itself form good taste.

(95) Ibid: p. 45

(96) Ibid: p. 45

(97) Ibid: p. 45

(98) Ibid: p. 40

In any case, Meldrum's work, though it makes great claims for literature, does tend towards acceptance of the notion of the discriminating elite as asserted by Leavis. However, (like Caldwell Cook), he was speaking of pupils of high ability in Cambridge.

Some relevant psychological investigations

As the progressive, child-centred thought developed, a number of psychological investigations were made into the aesthetic and literary development of children. We have already noted the investigation of Mary E. Matthews (99) as well as that of Dame Olive Wheeler (100). The influence of such investigations on method and prescription is, of course, great: there can be little doubt that findings such as these greatly influenced later compilers of Board of Education publications and other writers and teachers, as well as militating against proponents of the skills model and the traditional view of the cultural heritage.

An important enquiry into the formation of children's aesthetic judgments was carried out in 1934 (101) by M.H. Bulley. This investigation has indirect relevance only: aesthetic judgments were required of physical objects: this sort of artistic taste does not necessarily correlate highly with literary taste, though there is a connection as Winter and Woods show (see below). However, her main finding was as follows:

Although it would be exceedingly difficult to determine precisely the motives for the

(99) See above: p. 201

(100) See above: p. 191

(101) Bulley, Margaret H: Aesthetic Judgments of Children. British Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 4, Pt. 2, 1934.

children's preferences, there seems to be little doubt that when they reach the age of 10, taste begins to decline until it touches bottom round about 11-13. Then a change sets in. Taste steadily improves until it merges into the general level of adult taste (or lack of taste). Although some degree of critical judgment is found at all ages, it is at about 16 that it becomes more marked. (102)

Thus our period in question, variously called the time of "contemplation", of "wonder", of "romance", is also the time of lowest artistic taste!

Of greater relevance to our purposes was Bagley's enquiry in 1937 (103). Her findings on the teaching of literature (culled mainly from American surveys) are as follows:

1. Complete stories, poems and plays are studied with greater pleasure than short extracts.
2. Up to the age of about twelve years, children like to read stories about other children and animals. They prefer these to be realistic. They also enjoy vivid, fantastic tales. As they grow older, they enjoy human stories of home life and the adventures of real people: gradually their interest shifts to the heroic and ideal. Historical novels and those dealing with social problems appeal to them later
4. All children, whether dull or clever, appreciate the story that is well told and prefer it to the story that is mediocre and badly told. (104)

The period in question sees a shift in emphasis from the reading of fantasy to the reading of realistic, family and group stories, a

(102) Ibid: p. 166

(103) Bagley, Dorothy: A critical survey of objective estimates in the teaching of English Pt. 2, British Journal of Educational Psychology: Vol. 7, Pt. 1, 1937.

(104) Ibid: p. 67 (these findings are taken from Huber M.B.: Influence of Intelligence on Children's Reading Interests: Teachers' College contribution to Education No. 312, Columbia University, 1928.

finding with an important bearing on book choice and provision. The study by Williams, Winter and Woods in 1938 was more specific (105). Bagley, in Part 2 of her enquiry (106) had already said of literary judgment:

Literary judgment, an even slower growth,
often does not appear at all during school
life. (107)

The new enquiry implies a distinction between "judgment" and "appreciation" but seems largely to contradict the earlier findings of Bagley.

Some of the conclusions are as follows:

- (2) Thus tested, a capacity for literary appreciation is discernible in a primitive form, at a much earlier age than is generally assumed, and increases steadily with increasing age.
- (3) The capacity for literary appreciation correlates highly with intelligence and (to a smaller extent) with pictorial and musical appreciation. On eliminating the influence of intelligence, significant partial correlations remain, suggesting that aesthetic appreciation must also depend upon some general capacity of its own.

.....

- (5b) (Speaking of a second factor - the first is "a general factor of literary appreciation") a tendency to prefer classical writers and an objective style and a tendency to prefer romantic writers and a subjective style. The distinction is analogous to that already noted by Burt in tests of pictorial and musical appreciation; and a small positive correlation is found between similar types of preference in all three aesthetic fields. (108)

This finding is, of course, of supreme importance. It would appear

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- (105) Williams, E.D., Winter, L., and Woods, J.M.: Tests of Literary Appreciation: British Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 8, Part 3, 1938.
- (106) Op. cit. Pt. 2, BJEP Vol. 7, Pt. 2, p. 138.
- (107) Ibid: p. 154
- (108) Ibid: p. 283

to favour the Cambridge School's view of literary appreciation if there is a high correlation with intelligence: however, if there is a general capacity for aesthetic appreciation in all fields not necessarily related to intelligence then it may be that some support still is given to the proponents of growth, especially in view of finding (2) above. The significant difference between literature and the other arts, of course, is dependence for full understanding on verbal capacity which, itself, has a close link with intelligence: a consideration which leads us interestingly back to a consideration of Arnold's passage on the means of striking "the electric chain", and also gives extra relevance to Bulley's enquiry noted above. It might also be said, however, that finding (2) foreshadows the work in 1970 of Bolt and Gard. The final enquiry - again with indirect interest - occurred in 1942 (109). In criticising the Spens Report, Burt makes a point about the age-group we are considering and the proposed transfer at eleven. Burt rejects Hall and the idea of fairly well demarcated changes in the growth of the child.

When sudden changes are observed, they can nearly always be traced to actual or impending changes in the child's situation rather than to the spontaneous inner changes that result from the maturation of his psycho-physiological system.
(110)

From these investigations, we may deduce, importantly for the next period of the century to be studied, from Burt an idea of the development of the child - in a straight line and not in a series of jumps: from Bagley an idea of the progress of children's reading

(109) Burt, Cyril: The Education of the Young Adolescent; British Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 13, Pt. 3, p. 126.

(110) Ibid; p. 128

interests through the age group in question and from Williams, Winter and Woods a psychological basis for the inferring of the existence of a capacity for literary appreciation which has a strong relationship with intelligence. This, again, will lead to an increased interest in enquiring into what children are reading and a decreasing emphasis on any form of "teaching" literature to children of this age group and outside the grammar schools.

Education for Citizenship

Among the movements which became prominent in the "Secondary Education for All" impetus of the 30's was that of the Association for Education in Citizenship. Influenced partly by Dewey, the movement recognised the need for children to be educated to fit the needs of a rapidly changing society. There is, throughout the two published works of some importance produced before the 1939-45 War (111) (112) a strong emphasis on literature per se and on the possible effects of teaching it. In the first named work, J.E. Hales bases the social value of literature rather uncritically on its emotional nature:

Does literature help to produce good citizens?
... There are still many people who judge
literature, as an art, by the amount of moral
teaching they find in it. (113)

However, the real educational value of literature is to be found

... in the realm of feeling rather than
that of intellect. (114)

(111) Association for Education in Citizenship - Education for Citizenship in Secondary Schools - pub. OUP 1936

(112) Association for Education in Citizenship - Education for Citizenship in Elementary Schools - pub. OUP, 1939.

(113) Op. cit: pp. 133-4

(114) Ibid: p. 134

Thus Hales sums up his case in terms which hark back to an earlier period altogether:

Great literature communicates to us emotions which we recognise instinctively as fine in quality. (115)

This is not really an adequate justification in the context of this book - the section on clear thinking and newspaper work (116) is far more convincing. Hale's insistence on the merely affective harks back to the work of the English Association before the Newbolt Report. The second book, on Elementary Schools, reminds us at once of the definition of education for citizenship -

Training in the moral qualities necessary for the citizens of a democracy, the encouragement of clear thinking in everyday affairs and the acquisition of a knowledge of the modern world. (117)

In the body of the book is an article by E.E. White (Headmaster, Deansfield School, Eltham) on The teaching of English and clear thinking in training for citizenship where a justification appears in terms very reminiscent of the 1937 Suggestions. The aim of literature teaching is "the use of books for pleasure" - the author says;

We are often being told we must educate the child in such a way that he can later on make full and right use of his leisure; in opening up for him the wild fields of literature, we are doing something to this end. The appeal of literature is not single or one-sided; there is the magic of sound, the quest for meaning and truth, and the exercise of the critical faculty that goes along with this quest. (118)

(116) Ibid: Dyer - Reading and Newspapers pp. 244-53

(117) Op. cit: Preface p. XIII

(118) Ibid: p. 123

In bringing the child in contact with all forms of literature, we are enlarging his experience and his sensitivity (119). The argument about use of leisure is one which grows steadily more important, as we shall see. Nevertheless, the values of literature here seem exclusive: once again, work in thought, the media, etc., are included in the book, but literature seems to remain separate. The need for critical examination and use of children's private reading was not universally accepted: the Reithian hope of an intellectual and moral regeneration of society held sway in most schools. Harriet Price, writing of Modern School libraries (120) says that there is variety in the choice of books

provided they have literary merit. (121)

She points to the fact that BBC serialisation of books is helping in good reading and concludes:

... Lastly the aim of library reading is not to act as a soporific, or merely to pass the time pleasantly, but to arouse interest in things around, render the mind active and enrich the life of the child and help in his all-round development. (122)

In the contributions on citizenship and the immediately preceding extracts, we have noted a move towards pious and rather uncritical generality - however, ideas of this sort had undoubted influence on the compilers of the 1937 Suggestions, who in turn, obviously influenced the Education for Citizenship movement.

Board of Education publications - The Hadow Reports and the 1937 Suggestions

It is possible to view these succeeding publications as part of a

(119) Ibid: pp. 123-4

(120) Price, Harriet (HM, West Central School for Girls, Dartford:) Modern School Libraries: Reading in Modern Schools (ed. Paule de Lepervanche): Sharnbrook: Vol. 1, No. 1, Summer 1938.

(121) Ibid: p. 11

(122) Ibid: p. 12

consecutive development towards a "common" education and a re-statement of the Newbolt Report's insistence on the overriding importance of the Elementary School. The relationship between the Reports and the Suggestions can be seen as follows: the one sets out the ideal background and setting for the prescription of the other. Both seem to be in keeping with developing educational thought as it pertained to the functions of literature and fiction.

The first Labour Government of 1924 inevitably led to the move of "secondary education for all", originally the cry of R.H. Tawney. Indeed, the main lines of the subsequent progress of this movement which culminated in the 1944 Education Act were laid down in the first Hadow Report (123). The approach of this report insofar as it touches on the place of literature and fiction can be seen thus:

... between the age of eleven and (if possible) that of fifteen, all the children of the country who do not go forward to "secondary education" in the present and narrow sense of the word, should go forward nonetheless to what is, in our view, a form of secondary education, in the truer and broader sense of the word, and after spending the first years of their school life in a primary school, should spend the last three or four in a well-equipped and well-staffed modern school (or senior department), under the stimulus of practical work and realistic studies, and yet, at the same time, in the free and broad air of a general and humane education which, if it remembers hard work, does not forget music and, if it cherishes natural science, fosters also linguistic and literary studies. (124)

The Report continues to insist on the practical bias for children in the Modern School, and with its insistence on different types of secondary education for different abilities (reminiscent of

(123) Board of Education - Report of the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education on the Education of the Adolescent. 1926

(124) Ibid: Introduction pp. XIX-XXII

the Bryce Report), poses a problem to be tackled later by Jenkinson and others as far as literature is concerned.

The second Hadow Report (125) dealt with an age group outside the purview of this enquiry. Nevertheless, it must be briefly glanced at because of its important statements on future primary education. For, after summarising the progress of primary education from the narrowness of the Revised Code to the school as not "the antithesis of life, but ... its complement and commentary" (126), it proceeds to assert the desirability of breaking down subject barriers, care for the pupil's individual growth - in short, a gradual but inevitable evolution.

The primary school is on the way to becoming what it should be, the common school of the whole population, so excellent and so generally esteemed that all parents will desire their children to attend it. (127)

These early reports foreshadow much of the succeeding investigation, though their influence was somewhat delayed. It is, however, more the differentiated curriculum of the post-primary stage which here concerns us. For our purposes the succeeding and more important Spens and Norwood Reports imply the nature of this differentiation as it applies to literature, as the Spens Report depends on a view of literature reminiscent of the days of "the poor man's classics" while the Norwood Report seeks to free the Secondary School from examination shackles. Yet both try to move towards liberalisation of the curriculum.

(125) Board of Education: Report of the Consultative Committee on Primary Education HMSO 1931

(126) Ibid: Introduction p. xvii

(127) Ibid: p. xxix

The 1937 Suggestions must be seen in the light of progressive writers such as Nunn as well as the Cambridge School. There is a lesser influence of other method writers so far examined and the supporters of Education for Citizenship. Such influences on this synthesising document account for its very considerable changes from the 1927 Suggestions.

The General Introduction strikes the new note at once, seeing the child educated for a far more complex society than ever before. There is a greater emphasis on the development of personal qualities and interests which will fit the individual to cope with the problems this new advanced society will pose.

In the modern world, education must take account of leisure no less than work ... The citizens of tomorrow will be citizens of a more complex and more difficult world than that of yesterday. Social contacts are becoming more frequent and more varied, and children will need to learn to mix with a greater variety of types of individual than their parents probably knew, and to understand the point of view of people in other lands besides their own. They will need, moreover, to accommodate themselves to the sudden changes of process, and method in the occupations they are likely to take up, and even to be prepared to transfer themselves from one occupation to another and from one part of the country to another. The individual, therefore, must not only become more adaptable as a worker, but must also be in a position to select for himself some worthy and useful way of occupying his free time. (129)

This passage has been quoted at length because it is a significant statement, showing unequivocally the end of old fears that the Elementary School System was seen by the Board merely as a means of turning out units of production. The emphasis is on helping the

individual to cope imaginatively with changing situations, and while the generalities may be pious and the ends difficult to attain, nevertheless, the realisation had been made.

The succeeding paragraph headings are significant: Paragraph 9 is headed Elementary Education is a general education; Paragraph 10 is headed Attitudes of mind are as important as mastery of forms of skill (130).

The first references to English as a specific part of the curriculum not only affirm the centrality insisted on by the Newbolt Report but also echo Richard's statement in Principles of literary criticism:

The two pillars upon which a theory of criticism must rest are an account of value and an account of communication. (131)

These two aspects - communication and value - are separated out at once in the Handbook.

One value of English is as a means of communication, an important matter as civilisation becomes more complicated and increased command of the mother-tongue necessary. Appreciation of this fact will serve to give reality to the teaching which it may otherwise lack. Or again, the realisation by the teacher that literature, in its higher sense, of giving access to the deeper springs of life and conduct, should enable him to avoid undue concentration on the formal aspects of the subject-matter and on verbal and grammatical niceties. (132)

In this context, therefore, formal study is at least partly an irrelevance: paragraph 12 indicates that not only the lessons of Richards but also Nunn and the apostles of growth had been

(130) Ibid: p. 12

(131) Op. cit: p. 25

(132) Op. cit: p. 14

absorbed.

A summary of what the School can do

- (1) to provide the kind of environment which is best suited to individual and social development.
- (2) to stimulate and guide healthy growth in this environment. (133)

The need for a good home environment is stressed - as is the necessity for the school to provide a substitute good environment if that of the home is lacking. All the following specific remarks about books and reading must be seen in this clearly stated context of education for leisure and for society, growth, environment, communication and value - which, for the Board of Education, are new emphases. The first passage, concerning library provision, states that fiction is not exclusively suited for private reading -

... in the first place some books ... children read because they find these a reflection of human experience which has an intrinsic appeal to them. If these books are worth anything as books, the children will derive something of value from reading them, though they may not read with this end consciously in view. Such books in most schools libraries are limited to stories in prose, though books of poetry and plays, which undoubtedly appeal to many children, deserve to find a place more often than they do. Nor is it necessary that all stories read for enjoyment should take the form of fiction. True, stories of historical incidents, of travel and exploration, of invention and discovery, are equally worthy of inclusion in the school or class library for the children's private reading. Each story or poem in these books is an artistic unit and must be read as a whole if it is to be fully appreciated. (134)

The effect of literature, then, can be unconscious; the value extracted from a book in its reading is probably unquantifiable. Also, as already stated, fiction is not necessarily pre-eminent,

(133) Ibid: p. 15

(134) Ibid: p. 47

while a work of art has a wholeness and completeness which is essential to appreciation. These justifications for private reading and the school library seem (as did the 1928 Memorandum on Secondary School libraries) to cast doubt again on the arguments of Ballard, Sampson and the Newbolt Report that the reading of trashy literature is harmless, for the implication is that if children unconsciously derive "something of value" from books transmitting real value and honest "reflections of human experience" then the converse is true and the child may derive, unconsciously, harm from works which do not. George Orwell was saying something similar at about this time, rather more trenchantly (135).

The Handbook draws attention, as one would expect, to the need for reading for information and the special function of the school library in helping that need. Its section on the teaching of English Language and Literature develops some of the themes ^{statement} already stated. There is the by now familiar [^] of the special responsibility of the teacher of English -

... he has the particular duty of introducing children to the world of literature and enriching thereby their experience of life through that broad and lively discipline which their discovery of books will afford them. (136)

The teacher is a guide and impresario - a provider. The passage on libraries quoted previously indicates that no teacher should come between the child and his book - the statements about unconscious absorption of values and the wholeness of works of art imply this. His role is perforce a very tactful one - and

(135) Orwell, George: Boys' Comic Papers (Reprinted: Selected Essays Penguin)

(136) Op. cit: p. 352

also one which is in no way final. For, in its subsequent statement concerning "trashy" literature and the formation of good literary taste, there is a realisation that the teacher cannot in any way be held responsible if the taste for good reading is not formed. He does his best but will not see how the seeds he plants will grow.

... the existence side by side of these two fields of literature creates the present problem with which the teacher of English is inevitably concerned. In view of the comparatively early age at which children finish the Elementary School course, it would be unreasonable to blame the school if, later on, they yield overmuch to an appetite which is easily, and may be dangerously, satisfied. But something - and in the hands of a good teacher, a great deal - can be done towards leading them to prefer the better to the worse and towards instilling into them certain standards of taste which may last. It behoves the teacher of English to further this aim by every means in his power. (137)

It is by now clear that the argument put forward by writers such as Ballard and Finch that "trashy" private reading for children is part of a child's education and an essential step to the better literature is being reversed. There is a separation into "two fields" of literature: the one field involves "an appetite which is easily and may be dangerously satisfied"; the other implies "certain standards of taste which may last". There is a very obvious influence of the Cambridge School. The traditional view of the cultural heritage and the idea of literature's "refining power" are here subtilised into ideas derived from Richards of communication and value. The fear of "the weeds of literature" is subtilised into ideas derived from Leavis and Thompson about discrimination and

standards. The Handbook continues:

Literary education is, after all, a systematic attempt to build up a sense of values, to persuade the mind to accept certain types of experience which are of cultural and personal significance; it is a method of retaining in activity our traditional and characteristic modes of feeling and thinking that have given our civilisation its distinctive flavour and direction, but which are in danger of disappearing under the conditions of modern life. (138)

This paragraph could have appeared in Culture and Environment (139).

Its relevance to the Elementary Schools and the teachers in them is immediately made clear:

Such broad considerations as these may, at first sight, seem remote from the practical issues of the classroom, but in reality, they can never be irrelevant to the teacher of English. In a modern, civilised society, it is his privilege and his responsibility to educate minds into toughness and sensitivity, to train children to think hard and clearly, and at the same time, to recognise and enjoy so far as children may, some of the finest and deepest experiences of humanity. Only if these aims are vigorously pursued can our society keep its sanity and wholeness. (140)

The function of literature in society is uncompromisingly stated - as well as a difficult, complex role (combining tact and self-abnegation with a crucial influence) for the teacher, it is an official acceptance that the elementary school teacher, to be effective, had to be akin Matthew Arnold's "aliens". The inadequacies of the teacher as then selected and trained for such a role are not mentioned. However, the insistence on the virtues of "sensitivity" and "toughness" in appreciation and thought show again the influence of Leavis and Richards - and also look forward

(138) Ibid: p. 352

(139) Leavis, F.R. and Thompson, Denys: Culture and Environment Chatto and Windus 1933

(140) Op. cit: p. 352

to later influential writers on the subject such as Creber and F. Whitehead.

It is interesting to note that subsequent sections of the Handbook are more down-to-earth as far as the practising elementary school teacher is concerned. A later section attempts to state the relationship between classroom activities and independent reading - again stressing the teacher's role.

It would be foolish to attempt to impose any kind of artificial adult standard of literary values on the child, but it is equally foolish to hope for much in the way of critical development in the child's mind if his independent reading is cut off from his work in school. (141)

The teacher, therefore, is the bridge between home and school. He checks on the reading and is an arbiter of taste and values. While he does not impose adult standards, he does move towards incūlation of values - and again the implication is that reading of "trashy" literature will not necessarily form good taste through comparison with literature of worth.

There is what appears to be a contradiction in the final relevant remarks of the Handbook. There is an assertion of the peculiar suitability of the novel for study and training in literary values - which seems at first sight to accord ill with the previous statement (142) that stories are by no means pre-eminent in children's appreciation. However, this justification for fiction in the classroom does not necessarily invalidate the advisability of buying books other than fiction for private library reading.

(141) Ibid: p. 386

(142) See above: p. 236

The novel is the one form of literature with which we may be certain the vast majority of the children who leave Elementary Schools will continue to maintain familiarity. It is a form of literature which appeals very naturally and easily to the child with his intense love of story and action. The teacher should realise that the mere reading of a novel, in class or out of it, coupled with an occasional question about the progress of the story, is not the sum of the possibilities of this phase of literary teaching. (143)

The justification on the grounds of "story and action" is a familiar one - the assertion that it is probably the only popular form which will continue to be read also makes it a relevant form of study which will, with luck, perpetuate a link between school and subsequent life. This itself justifies its deeper study. For the Handbook, as the last sentence quoted above implies, goes on to show how the novel can be used as the centre of discussion periods:

Attention should be directed to the author's use of words and to the kind of experience and outlook that is expressed therein. The novel should form the centre of discussion - lessons much as poetry does. Codes of human behaviour, diverse facets of character, are topics readily extracted from a good novel. Effective teaching with its centre in prose fiction would be much easier and commoner if the work were adequately planned, and the novel carefully examined and divided into sections before its reading was begun. (144)

The existence in the novel of "codes of human behaviour" and "facets of man's experience" interestingly enough serve not only to show how the novel form transmits experience and value but also - as far as teaching method is concerned - takes us right

(143) Ibid: p. 389

(144) Ibid: p. 389

back to Batchelder's "indirect ethical teaching".

In this Handbook we have a document of some significance. Its prescription and practices are not new: rather they are re-statements (even more than they are summations) of practice suggested many times - and there is little which was not suggested in the 1921 Newbolt Report. However, the philosophical and social assertions of the Newbolt Report are intensified. The influence of the Cambridge School is clear - the insistence on the individual's growth and the need for him to cope with a complex society, and the maintenance of standards of value in the face of the encroaching demands of that society. The traditional and familiar recommendations of the 1937 Handbook are in fact new and surprising because of their changed context. This changed context itself is noteworthy because it marks a certain synthesis between the two at first sight opposed philosophies dealt with earlier. The progressives we have noted as seeing growth, education for leisure and of the whole man as concomitants of a common education throughout society. The Cambridge School we have seen insisting on discrimination, values and standards in the face of the mass culture of an industrialised society which at least implies the desirability of the education of an elite. Yet, in the Handbook, the influence of both philosophies is evident; a need for discrimination exists side by side with a need for the leavening of a whole society. While the Handbook may be criticised for a mere simplistic juxtaposition rather than any sort of satisfactory synthesis, it nevertheless conveys the urgency of the situation facing elementary education in the immediate pre-war period. It may be said that the Handbook marks a development of

the Arnoldian synthesis: Arnold's "culture" carries within itself definitions both of the heaven in society and the assertion of standards to which that society is inimical. The period 1922-44 sees these definitions tending to separate out and take their own courses. The 1937 Handbook showed they are still not necessarily entirely contradictory.

(c) Leading to Jenkinson: "English in Schools" and the
Spens and Norwood Reports

It is not being suggested that there was any direct connection between English in Schools and the Spens and Norwood Reports. However, like Jenkinson's work itself, all were born out of an apprehension of a pressing need for change. The call of "Secondary Education for all" provided the impetus for the Government Reports: the prospect of "Secondary Education for all" in the light of the claims both of progressive thought and (more importantly) the thought of F.R. Leavis jointly provided the impetus for English in Schools. Jenkinson indicates that he, too, is writing with these in mind; from them springs the urgency which characterises all these writings.

English in Schools

This periodical, dominated largely by contributors who had read English at Cambridge and had come into direct contact with F.R. Leavis, was in tone and content dominated by his example. Its influence is still strong: its early statements provide a portent worthy of extended study. As the immediate fore-runner of Use of English its importance cannot be underestimated. The first issue was published in 1939 - a date which in itself presupposes urgency,

albeit of a different type. Its first major article was one which set its tone and which draws together several threads already examined (145). and is by R. O'Malley. In theme it echoes clearly Q.D. Leavis, F.R. Leavis and Denys Thompson.

Literature and the pure and applied arts being in the long run the chief instruments of integration and successful growth, the English teacher will be much concerned at all stages with the quality of his pupils' reading. His aim will be to secure that no more spurious reading should be done than is necessary ... My aim in this connection is to prevent an addiction from being formed and to encourage enough good reading for the formation of taste and more conscious discrimination later on. There is, however, no hurry, and it is sometimes advisable to ignore a great deal of exclusively bad reading - especially with boys at the gangster age. Whilst seeking to encourage good reading, I do not seek to encourage reading. Those children to whom it does not come naturally can find equally profitable lines of development. The less they read the better ... My only constant aim in teaching is to further the integration of personality. (146)

The passage sees "growth" in the sense of individual fulfilment and balance ("the integration of personality") as propounded by Nunn, Jacks, etc., as being the end of education. It sees literature as a potent means of fostering this growth, but it does not see it as the only means. Much reading, as it is implied, is harmful and actually militates against fulfilment: by no means everybody can profit from reading: "bad" reading (which ruins "morale" according to Elton) is actually "addictive" and that those not capable of the sort of appreciation needed had better not read at all. This passage, while allowing for individual fulfilment for all people, nevertheless presupposes a society of the sort out-

(145) Ibid: O'Malley, R. (Dartington Hall) Aims in English Teaching
English in Schools: Vol. I, No. I, Summer 1939,
p. 4

(146) Ibid: pp. 4-5

lined by Leavis in Mass Civilisation and Minority Culture.

O'Malley's sentiments are repeated and made more specific by Pedley (147). Pedley does not imply an exclusiveness for literature to the same extent as does O'Malley: nevertheless, his social suppositions are the same. He draws attention to what he sees as the duty of the teacher to teach literature:

Unless we introduce literature to our pupils they will know very little of it and unless we encourage a capacity for discrimination, they may succumb to an environment which is indifferent, if not actively hostile, to cultural values. (148)

Pedley does not hint that there are many who had better not read.

Also - again unlike O'Malley - he sees what is dismissed by O'Malley as "spurious reading" as itself a leading-off point to a more discriminating approach:

It is our job to lead away from the "tuppenny blood". (149)

But the 'leading' does not imply a break:

If we encourage these boys to bring their bloods to school openly and there deal with them with the gravity with which we approach "school" books, we shall not only have the opportunity of developing critical ability, we shall also break down that barrier in the boy's mind between "school" reading and his own. (150)

The bridging literary form is the novel. Pedley feels novels should not be read in class, but class activities on novels read at home indicate qualities he is seeking:

(147) Pedley, R.R.: Literary Appreciation - English in Schools Vol. 1, No. 3, Summer 1940.

(148) Ibid: p. 52

(149) Ibid: p. 52

(150) Ibid: p. 55

Attention will be drawn to such qualities as lucidity, directness, honesty of purpose and method or their absence. The whole novel or story may then be examined and we must try to discover "how it works". (151)

The reasons for the pre-eminence of the novel and the bridging of the gap between home-reading and school reading are shown in the following passage, already quoted from with reference to Q.D. Leavis and Fiction and the Reading Public:

If only a minority will read Eliot and Keats, all of them do read and will read prose; it is prose, and especially prose fiction, that has the widest and most immediate appeal to them and it is with prose that they will have to deal when they leave school. An adequate training in the reading of prose would have important social effects; it would provide some safeguard against the exploitations of the propagandists and although all the boys' literature work should foster discrimination both in literature and life, it is in prose that discrimination is more important. Independence of judgment, awareness of how our first thoughts and cheapest emotions can be exploited for nefarious ends, should be cultivated at school; they will not be cultivated elsewhere. (152)

This is probably the most complete statement of the whole decade on the teaching of fiction. It is based firmly on the Cambridge School's position. It is important because - as in the rest of the article - there is an insistence that the whole of a child's reading experience is valid and that its lower reaches can serve higher ends; there is the recognition that literature - through the fostering of clear thought and careful reading - can protect the child from "the exploitations of the propagandists", thus putting Pedley's thought within the spectrum of that advocating education for citizenship; there is the concern for values and discrimination

(151) Ibid: p. 55

(152) Ibid: p. 52

that informs the work of the Leavis's and Thompson in the face of a rapacious industrial society. In a sense, the passage leads directly on to a consideration of the work of Jenkinson - and if it is objected that Pedley was obviously thinking of children of high academic ability, one will see that Jenkinson was not. The argument is put into perspective by H. Sydney Pickering, who for almost the first time, introduces a theme to be taken up strongly by post-war writers as a major concern. Pickering's point is that literature available for schools is a class-based literature. It carries within it the seeds of its own rejection by the elementary school working-class child.

Any writer who calls a nurse a 'nanny' or, apparently in all simplicity, names one of his characters 'Titty' is an alien to them. (153)

Pickering specifically denies that the elementary school child's private reading can be a stepping-stone to good tastes - the supposition made by many writers from Ballard onwards.

... Nor do I think we achieve anything by beginning with the less good and hoping piously that it will lead the child to better things. Any newsagent in a working-class suburb will tell you that elementary-school children do not graduate from The Wizard to Stevenson and so to Conrad. (154)

If literature is to have any place at all with the elementary-school child, it must be of obvious and immediate relevance to him. Speaking here of poetry, Pickering says

... the relevance of poetry should be made plain ... the poetry to be taught

(153) Pickering, H. Sydney. English in Schools Vol. 1. No. 5.

(154) Ibid; p. 98 Spring 1941. p. 98

should be the poetry of ideas. (155)

It may seem odd that attitudes which seem to forecast the rejection of middle-class values which is a central tenet of the radical position as defined in the Introduction (156) should appear in a journal so strongly influenced by the Cambridge School as English in Schools. However, besides asking what other medium would then exist, one may note a certain connection between the two positions. Pickering, in rejecting on behalf of the working-class child the supposition of the middle-class writer, still implies that there is a literary scale of values and that only the imposition of a middle-class value-system obscures it from the working-class child. By inference, Pickering is, at root, very close to the Cambridge School's position: Pickering's "relevance" will save the working-class child - will provide, if anything can, an alternative ladder to "Stevenson and so to Conrad", or as near to them as the child is ever capable. It is noteworthy that even such a contemporary radical viewpoint as that of Worpole (157) is, nevertheless, like Pickering's, not exclusive.

... the best books written by adults for children ... should always be part of the reading of young people. (158)

Pickering's insistence on the "relevance" of "ideas" is echoed subsequently in English in Schools by Clay (159) who returns to a more familiar element in the Cambridge School's position.

(155) Ibid: p. 98

(156) See above: pp 7-9

(157) See above: p. 8

(158) See below: p. 369

(159) Clay, N.L. A plea for non-fiction: English in Schools Vol. 1, Nos. 6 and 7, Summer and Christmas 1941, p. 118

I believe that reading non-fiction can lead young readers to learn that interest is not the same as excitement, to feel that life is not a slick succession of thrilling moments carefully manipulated and carefully staged. (160)

For Clay, then, "interest" is the antidote to the "fantasying" element; "interest" may thus be equated with Pickering's "relevance". It is noteworthy that both words loom large in post-war thought concerning literature in schools. Certainly the attitudes both of Pickering and Clay, while being in no way counter to the editorial policy of English in Schools, adumbrate later concerns remarkably clearly. Both attitudes lead on to Jenkinson's work, where the need for such "relevance" and "interest" is taken into account. It is noteworthy that What do Boys and Girls Read? was very favourably reviewed in English in Schools: it may also be said that the concern for the debasing tendencies of industrial society which permeated the thought of Richards, Thompson, the Leavises and the contributors to English in Schools may well have been an important element in the formation of post-war radicalism and was certainly a potent ingredient in the synthesis of thought concerning the place of fiction in schools brought about by A.J. Jenkinson.

The Spens and Norwood Reports

In dealing with the Hadow Reports and the 1937 Suggestions, we have noticed the increase in urgency concerning education and its relationship to a society becoming increasingly more complex and difficult to cope with. We have also noticed the growing

strength of the cry of "Secondary Education for All" and have seen a concomitant increase in concern about the sorts of reading experience available to children both in school and out of school. The two reports thus to be examined for their comments on the place of literature and fiction in schools in a developing context of secondary education can be regarded as important elements in this movement. In them can be seen a process running parallel with (if slightly behind) the prescriptions of writers noted earlier which is directly consequential upon the Newbolt Report. Also to be seen is the working out of the tripartite secondary system of the immediate post-war years, the Modern section of which is Jenkinson's main concern.

The prescriptions of the Spens Report (161) concerning literature and fiction are not only not new but in many ways represent a step backwards from the 1937 Handbook - which one would have thought a strong influence, as it dealt with a sector of Education which was to become incorporated within the unified Secondary system. In the section The Context of the Curriculum there is evidence that the compilers are still fighting secondary and grammar school battles one might have thought already won. There is a comment on

... the lack of a unifying principle, such as
used to be provided by a classical education. (162)

A remedy is given - which was the whole point of the 1921 Newbolt Report.

... we think that the school itself should

(161) Board of Education: Report of the Consultative Committee on Secondary Education with special reference to Grammar Schools and Technical High Schools
(The Spens Report) HMSO 1938

(162) Ibid; p. 173

adopt a unifying principle in its curriculum and that it should be found in the teaching of English. (163)

The justification for literature, too, represents a step backwards. The insistence on the "emotional element" takes us back to before the 1921 Report - a sort of criticism asserted by, say, Greening Lamborn, but effectively dismissed by Richards. Nevertheless, there is a wish to do away with set books for examination purposes which, while outside the purview of this enquiry, does imply that less formal methods were to be employed through the secondary school from the age of eleven.

The reading of literature is not only an important side of the work in English, but, with Music and the Arts, also plays its cultivating aesthetic sensibility. Literature is, of course, not the only subject of the curriculum in which the emotions are concerned. There is a strong emotional element in the sentiments that a pupil develops for any subject, but in the study of literature emotional training is more direct and more easily developed. This is one reason why the value of wide reading in literature is now universally admitted. (164)

One must admit (remembering Matthew Arnold and "the electric chain") that Music and the Arts may well play a more obvious part in "awakening and cultivating aesthetic sensibility" than literature in the sense to which the compilers of the Report seem to be referring. The compilers continue with a passage which - though not of direct relevance to our study - makes an interesting statement concerning feeling and emotion in literary education.

(163) Ibid: p. 174

(164) Ibid: p. 174-5

We have, however, grave doubts as to whether books should be used and studied at this stage in the manner that is necessary if English literature is to be an examination subject. We believe that prescribed books do more to injure the growth of a budding sentiment for literature than to encourage it and therefore we recommend that books should no longer be prescribed in the School Certificate Examination. (165)

The phrase "sentiment for" indicates that possibly what the compilers mean is not emotion/sentiment/feeling engendered by literature but love of (or emotion/sentiment/feeling engendered on behalf of) literature. Thus one may well have a "feeling for" literature which is not in any quantifiable and certainly cannot be rationalised in terms of emotions felt because of the content of literature. However, if the compilers mean what seems to be implied by "sentiment for" and not "emotional training", then to a great extent their position is at least coherent and - given the prevailing conditions of school certificate literary study - logical.

Any justification of literature on this basis must have some other element in it. The compilers are not willing to be in any way prescriptive, nor are they willing to emphasise the place of literature actually in the classroom. There are three main objectives in the teaching of English: clear expression and understanding and development as a social being, clear thought and:

... training in the appreciation of literature.
How far this can be taught at all is still a
matter for argument. But there is a general

agreement that no course in English is complete which does not introduce pupils to the richness and beauty of the literature which is our proudest heritage. Love of reading, joy in the discovery of literary beauty, enlargement of imaginative experience, these are among the most treasured fruits of a sound English education. (166)

Here we have a liberal version of what Dixon characterised as the cultural heritage model of English. Apart from "enlargement of imaginative experience" which seems justifiable, the other reasons given seem to lack definition. Not only do the justifications for teaching literature strike one as being undefined and formless but also the statements concerning the role of the teacher seem hazy and in places dependent on rather sentimental childhood memories. The teacher's function as guide and provider are mentioned, but there is little of the moral force that lies behind the portrait of the teacher we saw in the 1937 Suggestions in this account of the relationships between child, book and teacher.

... the question of reading lies at the root of the whole matter. Here the teacher can assist but not compel. It goes without saying that every school should have a library, and small class libraries are often an additional help. The library should not merely contain books; there should be comfortable chairs, lists of books recommended and someone to help and advise. There is often more real education going on in a good school library than in any of its classrooms. Here boys and girls can make their own voyages of discovery and dig up their own treasures. Any knowledge or beauty which we have found by our own efforts is worth more than all the riches handed out to us by our teachers; and there are few of us who are not still grateful to the wise man or woman who first gave us the taste for such adventures. The reading habit can also be induced by "silent reading" periods in school hours, where books

of the child's own choice can be read, with at first no censorship by the teacher, only a subtle forcing up of the standard by comment or encouragement. To impose preferences or dictate judgments is dangerous; but children are imitative by nature and if the teacher reveals his own delight in a book, they will often be impelled to try and share it. And much can be done by occasional reading aloud, without comment, of a short poem or prose passage which the reader obviously enjoys. In short, a good teacher can do almost anything to induce a love of reading except teach it. (167)

The main influence, then, is the library and - very importantly - the supportive environment which it should ideally be. Individual work is emphasised, as are the personality and critical faculties of the teacher. The earlier recommendation to abolish set books at School Certificate level has relevance to this study because, as already hinted, it would inevitably alter prevalent methods of "teaching" literature in secondary schools because of the formal demands in literature (as will be seen in part (iv), in discussion of articles in The Journal of Education). These points are given even greater cogency in the later 1943 Norwood Report (168). The main effect of this committee was to propose a distinct liberalisation of the secondary curriculum and - in English literature - the Committee followed the Spens Report in arguing against examinations in literature, thus implying different teaching aims for the age-group we are mainly concerned with.

... in the study of great literature, more especially in what is called imaginative literature, too much attention has been paid to aspects which are of secondary

(167) Ibid: p. 225

(168) Board of Education: Curriculum and Examinations in Secondary Schools. Report of the Committee of the Secondary School Examinations Council. Appointed by the President of the Board of Education in 1941. HMSO 1943. (The Norwood Report)

importance and the higher values have been obscured. The values with which the teaching of English Literature is concerned are final and absolute; they cannot be broken down into constituent parts; they are beyond analysis and wait upon the appreciative powers of the pupil, which are to some extent beyond the help of the teacher. (169)

"Aspects of secondary importance" - linguistic study, knowledge of the notes and the paraphernalia of formal examinations were dying (and still are dying) very hard in the secondary school. The compilers are indefinite and transcendental concerning the ends of literature, but their intentions to liberalise are very clear. They are also very close to the Spens Report - and closer than that publication to the 1937 Suggestions - in their views of the role of the teacher in all this.

... the personality of the teacher is in the last resort a decisive influence, both for the interpretation and for the appreciation of a book. We think therefore that at school English Literature can be studied successfully only when there is freedom given for the "variables" of which we have spoken - the teacher, the book under study and the pupil - to be adjusted to each other in the most appropriate way. And that right adjustment cannot be dictated in advance; it is discovered during the process of teaching and learning ... if English literature is made the subject of direct frontal attack, the value of the teaching is destroyed. (170)

The keynote, therefore, of both the Spens and the Norwood Reports is towards liberalisation of the curriculum and this shows itself particularly in their remarks on literature and reading. The same ends, by and large, are being proposed as are proposed in the 1937 Suggestions: all three publications (like all the other Board

(169) Ibid: pp. 92-93

(170) Ibid: p. 93

publications examined) are in the tradition established by the 1921 Newbolt Report. Official thinking for all types of school tends towards silent reading of a wide number of books, the novel being pre-eminent, with a minimum of formal study and a teacher acting as guide and provider. The peculiar nature of literary appreciation and understanding is recognised if not understood: the centrality of English studies is never contradicted. Also, especially in the 1937 Suggestions, many of the main cross-currents of thought between 1922 and 1937 are at least partly synthesised. Whether or not practices in the schools kept pace, the progress of official thinking forms a reasonably effective framework for the movements subsequently to be examined.

(d) The Work of Jenkinson

A.J. Jenkinson's book, published in 1940 (171) was not the first survey of children's reading, as we have already seen. But it was, up to that point, the most comprehensive and certainly by far the most far-reaching in its conclusions. His first task was to outline the state of affairs which led to the need for his survey to be made. He says of the reading habits of the first year in the secondary school:

... there is little difficulty. The boys are unsophisticated, avid, joyous in their reading ... the English teacher has only to direct this eagerness. (172)

However, there is a significant change in the second year:

"Sloppy", "daft", "boring", "dry": such are his unprompted reactions to the appeal of literature. (173)

Jenkinson makes the point that though this fact is really very well known, nothing has been done constructively about it.

There are ... books of general suggestions about the teaching of literature, like those of George Sampson, Greening Lamborn, and G.Y. Elton and J.H. Jagger, but these are not so much systematic treatises on the subject as collections of bright ideas (for bright forms, too, most of them!). Not one of them is concerned with those Middle School forms which have worried me and continue to worry most of their teachers. (174)

Jenkinson points to the unsolved problem of teaching the child in the middle years with the break at 11+ (and its attendant difficulties shown above), and no Sixth Form - the peculiar problem to be faced by the new secondary modern schools.

The teaching of English literature is only one aspect of this problem. In a rather

(171) Jenkinson, A.J. What do Boys and Girls Read? Methuen 1940

(172) Ibid: p. 3

(173) Ibid: p. 3

(174) Ibid: p. 5

vague and benevolent way it is spoken
of as being an important aspect. How
important, and in what ways, no one knows.

(175)

The next sections of the book are devoted to descriptions of the questionnaires and the research method itself. The conclusions derived from the findings can be summarised as follows: (176)
First - literary taste changes between the ages of twelve and fifteen, and these changes can "be roughly identified and described" (177). Secondly, the reading of comics and "blooms" is "not reprehensible": (178) Children will acquire "the reading habit" without "any encouragement from the schools". (179) Thirdly, for development of literary taste the period beyond the age of fifteen is "the really fruitful period" (180). Most private reading between 12+ and 15+ is "largely chosen from inferior books, magazines and newspapers". (181)

Jenkinson's main conclusion - a consequence of these earlier conclusions - is as follows:

The reading matter which appeals to boys of 12+ to 16+, apart from that which is read for the information it contains, is of two main sorts: that which promotes growing up, and that which compensates for the difficulties of growing up (182).

It is no exaggeration to say that most writers who followed Jenkinson concerned themselves, directly or indirectly, with working through the implications of this insight. Jenkinson's immediate purpose in making the distinction is to look carefully at the place

(175) Ibid: p. 6
(176) Ibid: Chapter XVI, especially pp. 138-9
(177) Ibid: p. 138
(178) Ibid: p. 138
(179) Ibid: p. 138
(180) Ibid: p. 138
(181) Ibid: p. 139
(182) Ibid: p. 139

of "escapist" literature - "fantasying" work, as the Cambridge School would put it. Later, he restates the proposition so that it applies to adults as well:

We read either in order to realise
ourselves or in order to forget
ourselves. (183)

The literature which "promotes growing up" helps us "realise ourselves"; that which "compensates" helps us "forget ourselves". Unlike the Cambridge School, Jenkinson does not reject "fantasying" literature altogether.

... the literature of escape, of self-forgetfulness, is more important to children than to grown-ups ... (but) there has ... been a tendency in recent years amongst literary critics and teachers to look upon any literature of escape as worthless or harmful ... escape or "self-forgetfulness" should be recognised as a normal function of healthy life. (184)

However, Jenkinson certainly agrees with the Cambridge School when he says:

Escape is reprehensible when it becomes withdrawal, when it reaches the point of impeding adjustment to the real world. (185)

This is precisely what Leavis and Thompson say in their chapter Substitute Living in Culture and Environment, and also what C.S. Lewis means when he compares the "fairy story" with the "realistic" school story in On Three Ways of Writing for Children (186). Both reject the sort of work which enables the child to escape into a "fantasying" world which flatters and feeds on itself. Though the distinction becomes finer as the years progress, the basic importance of the insight remains and colours all subsequent views of fiction's

(183) Ibid: p. 153

(184) Ibid: p. 153

(185) Ibid: pp. 153-4

(186) See below: p.335

place in schools. Much of the rest of the work concerns itself with developing the implications of this insight for teaching fiction in schools. Jenkinson develops many of his central points by direct reference to the teacher's own responsibilities.

Teachers should make their own enquiries about reading habits amongst the children they teach. (187)

Associated with this is the recommendation that:

Teaching literature should, on the whole, give way from 12+ to 15+ to providing literature and to stimulating and influencing the choice of literature read at those levels. Attempts to elaborate methods of studying books should be superseded by efforts to evolve methods of affecting the choice of books. (188)

There is only one active aspect properly left for the teacher in the "teaching" of literature:

Insofar as the teaching of literature survives at these ages, it should be primarily concerned with putting the meaning across to the boys, that is, with re-creating the author's experience in the minds of the boys. (189)

At this point he draws attention to Richards's chapter on the four types of meaning (190) as a means of effecting the aims quoted above.

Jenkinson proposes here an important place for fiction. As it is widely read - and, in an examination syllabus, is usually so long that it cannot have a word-by-word study treatment - then the novel

... should have more attention in school than any other form of literature. (191)

(187) Ibid: p. 156

(188) Ibid: p. 156

(189) Ibid: p. 156

(190) See Practical Criticism pp. 179-188

(191) Ibid: p. 156

Thus, instead of acquiring single class readers,

... small sets of three or four of one novel should be acquired. (192)

When it comes to choosing these novels, the teacher must forget many of his preconceptions:

Novels used and studied in school need not be standard classics. Very little of the really first-rate literature is suited to children aged less than 16+. (193)

The teacher should not be afraid of school stories, for example. He should not be afraid to practice reciprocity - teachers should read the children's books just as they are expected to read the teachers'. (194) When he moves on to more general cultural considerations, Jenkinson makes at least two points of great importance for our purposes: the first is -

Teachers and adults generally must not assume that poor reading drives out good reading. (195)

The second is -

... a feeble or degraded cultural life, involving the inability to read anything other than inferior literature, is a product of harsh and degrading conditions of life. Quality of reading is a function of quality of living. (196)

In the context of much of the argument that we have seen developing over this period, these two statements appear at first sight contradictory. While the second point seems to underline the arguments we have looked at from Leavis and Thompson (197), the first seems, therefore, excluded by it. However, the key to Jenkinson's

(192) Ibid: p. 156

(193) Ibid: p. 158

(194) Ibid: p. 158

(195) Ibid: p. 281

(196) Ibid: p. 282

attitude lies in the findings of his surveys - when, as already stated, he divides children's own reading into the two categories of books helping them to grow up and books compensating for the difficulties of growing up. The first category implies a positive function for fiction which later writers such as Harding will elaborate further. Jenkinson's main significance was that he synthesised a child-centred approach to fiction dependent on individual response (thus part of the personal growth model and in line with progressive thought) with the immediately relevant aspects of the Cambridge School without accepting the resulting social implications of a "mandarin" culture. He brought a necessary element of critical discrimination into the otherwise blanket acceptance of children's private reading made by writers such as Ballard and Sampson. By rejecting the standards of "good" and "bad" according to the canons of "literary worth", and the traditional view of the cultural heritage, and placing them firmly in the contexts of child capacity and child development, he assumed different critical standards - standards often hinted at (from Batchelder's "indirect ethical teaching" onwards) but never itemised as clearly as here. He also shared the general sense of urgency experienced by many educators caused by an increasingly complex society and the prospect of the new Secondary Schools which is a feature of the 1937 Suggestions, the Spens and Norwood Reports and later writers with a social concern such as Sir Fred Clarke. As far as fiction in schools is concerned, his main achievement was crucially to alter the way in which henceforth it would be approached, since he provided a method and a critical vocabulary for dealing with it without necessarily any reference to previous work.

CHAPTER 4 : 1944-1960

CHAPTER 4 : 1944-1960

Introduction

Though this chapter, like the two previously, is in two parts, the division is made for different reasons. Since the publication of Jenkinson's What do Boys and Girls Read? and the important pre-war statements in English in Schools, fiction becomes an independent and important form in schools. Whereas its early association with popular culture made fiction suspect, now this same association makes it seem the one literary form relevant to an emerging common culture. Narrative prose can be read by anybody. However, the fact that the novel form still encompasses The Brothers Karamazov and Sweeney Todd, while it now provides a challenging opportunity for English teachers, also entails an awesome responsibility. During this period there is much effort made to define both the value of fiction and the values expressed in it. Two works in particular - that of W.J. Scott in 1947, and the compilation called Young Writers, Young Readers, edited by Boris Ford, in 1959 (1) bring together the various strands of thought as they develop and both will be examined at some length. To repeat the distinction made earlier, it may be said that Scott attempts to define the value of fiction and Ford's compilation to define the values expressed in it. This, then, is the basis of the division in this chapter. Part 1, including Scott, examines attempts from various stand-points to define general moral, psychological and aesthetic concerns. Part 2, ending with Young Writers, Young Readers and English for Maturity by David Holbrook, looks at attempts to define the criteria for and the responsibilities of the authors of an emerging genre of serious children's fiction. In a sense, the division between "general" and "particular" in Chapters 2 and 3 is still being made - Part 1 defines the framework of

(1) For references, see below p.304 (Scott)
and below p.337 (Ford)

ideas within which the more specific, often textual, criticism is contained.

The period 194~~4~~⁵-1960 was one of great change in thought and practice concerning children's reading. New directions were sought: only towards the end of the period does a strong tide really develop as children's literature becomes virtually an industry. For this reason, many ideas examined in this section are juxtaposed rather than followed through their development. Urgent anxieties about educational issues in the post-war society and proposals for a common culture are highly relevant to this period. There are re-statements and developments of the thought of the Cambridge School. With the work of Marjorie Hourd and the increasing interest in the work of Jean Piaget, progressive concerns with creativity and growth take on a new analytic sharpness. In Part 1 all these concerns will be examined. At the same time, the texts of children's books were being subjected to astringent critical scrutiny and, for the first time, children's authors themselves were examining carefully their own processes. These aspects will be examined in Part 2. Perhaps the entire multifarious activity can be generalised as "re-defining the cultural heritage" for, in effect, this is what happened.

Part 1 Towards finding a place for fiction in schools

(a) A view of the Cultural Heritage

In no sense are the writers now to be examined to be confused with those dealt with above in The Reaction against Newbolt. Indeed, the influence of the Newbolt Report is strong on them. However, they seem largely to be unaffected either by the Cambridge School or the Progressives. Insofar as they are affected by the prospect of post-war conditions or of those conditions as they existed, they do not seem to have taken great note of Jenkinson. Beacock, for example, in re-assessing Caldwell Cook (2) seems almost unaware of any other influence on English teaching in the quarter of a century which had elapsed since Cook had been teaching at the Perse School, though he is aware of the possibilities of the Play Way method for secondary schools of all types. Similarly, the contributors to the English Association's symposium of 1946 (3) take little account of either the progressives or the Cambridge School. However, in her plea for reading aloud, one contributor, Agnes M.C. Latham (4) outlines classroom-based notions which refer interestingly to previous ideas concerning presentation of fiction.

... in the prison camps of Burma, exhausted men fling themselves down in the evening, anywhere - provided they are within earshot of the man with the book.

The fact that the children read in class does not, after all, prevent their reading at home. It encourages them by stimulating interest in books in general, and in the words of the selected author in particular. Moreover, there is something infectious in a shared enjoyment, so much so that the individuals to whom the

(2) Beacock, D.A. Play Way English for Today (The Methods and Influence of H. Caldwell Cook) Nelson 1943

(3) V. de Sola Pinto (ed.): The Teaching of English in Schools: A Symposium edited for the English Association Macmillan 1946

(4) Ibid: Chap. VII (Agnes M. Latham) pp. 100-113

book makes no special appeal are, nonetheless, drawn into the magic circle. Books read communally may, perhaps always ought to, be a little harder than the majority of listeners could tackle ;alone and unaided. Comment, if there should be comment, and discussion, which there surely will be, are easier when everyone is at the same place in the same book at the same time. (5)

This passage is noteworthy as being perhaps the first wholehearted case for the virtues of reading aloud by the teacher. While the process is seen as an educative one (the chosen work being "a little harder than the majority of listeners could tackle alone and unaided"), the spirit has totally disappeared which could dismiss the child's silent reading, for instance, as "an indolent proceeding". This particular activity of reading aloud has its communal aspect fully emphasised: the early reference to prisoners-of-war indicates a therapeutic element conducive to mental health. Latham also firmly rejects the "fallacies" as defined by Shayer. Although she mentions certain by-products for the child, such as increased vocabulary, she returns to the centrality of the work itself.

But the pleasure and interest in the selected narrative must come before everything else, however tempting it may be to kill several birds with one stone. If the teacher spends forty-five minutes reading himself, without a word of comment, it is still a good lesson and well worth his while. If half the class are sitting, with fingers in their ears, trying to read page 60, while a couple of their more inept comrades struggle through page 16, and the teacher chases the remotest allusion to its source, I will not say no one profits but that it might as well be changed into a silent reading period, while the teacher gets on with some marking. (6)

Here previous notions of rigour of language study and the necessary "stiffening" element in dealing with the books are contradicted

(5) Ibid: pp. 101-102

(6) Ibid: p. 103

purely on the basis of classroom practice. Literary worth itself will do the work on the child and the teacher's own comments (chasing "the remotest allusion to its sources") are secondary. The teacher's function is as a selector and presenter of work which speaks for itself, not as a transmitter of technique and bodies of knowledge. In the act of listening, the children are imbibing "literary" lessons.

They are becoming familiar with the methods by which accomplished writers solve the problems of their difficult and necessary art. (7)

The children are given models for their own writing: through listening comes a stimulus for Nunn's mimesis. However, the question remains: is this the mimesis that is exemplified by Cook's "Ilonds" and repeated by Pocock and Lewis (8) or is it the "literary" exercise proposed by "Scrutator" ? (9) It would seem that because the main emphasis in the teacher's reading aloud is placed on the shared response of the children, the activities outlined by Latham are, in effect, weighted towards the personal growth model rather than the skills model and the traditional view of the cultural heritage. This view is borne out when one considers her views on the choice of books:

Not only are there not enough good modern books to be had, the books in general which are selected for the English course are apt to be too exclusively literary. Certainly the English teacher is a teacher of literature. If he doesn't teach it, no-one else will, and there is much to be said in favour of reading essays, short stories, novels and plays. I should like to say a good deal in defence of the novel as a book to be studied in school. It is a picture of life; a window through which the adolescent can view the adult world, and if it is a good novel, it is a good picture of life ... it is in fact,

(7) Ibid: p. 104

(8) See above: p. 209

(9) See above: p. 173

a most informative kind of book -
particularly for girls, in whom
nature has placed a deep concern with
the lives of other people. (10)

Implicit in this extract is a rejection of the traditional view of the cultural heritage ("books ... selected ... are too exclusively literary"). But there is no critical exactness here brought to bear on selection: the phrase "not enough good modern books" is negative, begging the question of what constitutes the "good". The remarks on the pre-eminence of the novel (augmented later by approval of biography and autobiography) exclude any question of values. The qualities to be looked for are epitomised in the closing remarks ("a deep concern with the lives of other people"): thus the "window through which the adolescent can view the adult world" implies that the author will provide a window and not his own distorting lens. The genre criticism towards which Latham seems to be moving entirely ignores the urgent questions of value and worth raised by the Cambridge School: the statement "if it is a good novel it is a good picture of life" lacks the sharpness of Leavis and Thompson's rejection of "fantasying" literature or Jenkinson's relation of fiction to the child's developmental needs.

Latham's remarks on the place of literature in the educative process also indicate that though she rejects the traditional view of the cultural heritage, she does not reject the cultural heritage as an end in itself:

The teacher is in no way bound to introduce the child to the best of our literature just because it is the best and to think, if the child gains nothing by the contact, that it is nobody's fault and that no time has been wasted. By concentrating on the slow widening of mental horizons he is far more likely in the end to turn

out a pupil capable of enjoying Lamb
or Walter Pater. (11)

The inclusion of Lamb and Pater as touchstones for measuring the full contact of a person with the cultural heritage implies an attitude to literature at least different from that of the Cambridge School - an attitude far more to be expected from the English Association. However, the main interest of the final extract lies in the method implied - the teacher is expected to select from within the available works he regards as being part of the cultural heritage to provide the "slow widening of mental horizons". Here is at least a recognition of a developmental aspect. Though Latham appears to accept the cultural heritage in a way the Cambridge School would not, her emphases are on individual response to literature and careful selection and presentation of it by the teacher, firmly eschewing the processes of "systematic" and "close language study" of proponents of the skills model and the traditional version of the cultural heritage. This tendency to reject language study exists among proponents of the cultural heritage model who are yet unaffected by the Cambridge School, progressive thought or the synthesis supplied by Jenkinson. Gough (12), while accepting the idea that future innovation in English teaching will come from the non-public schools, nevertheless deplores the fact that the Norwood Report (13) recommended the abolition of the English specialist and the external English examination in the Secondary School. Sopwith (14)

(11) Ibid: p. 109

(12) Gough, Lionel: The Threat to English in the Secondary Schools.
English - (the magazine of the English Association),
Vol. V, No. 27, Autumn 1944, pp. 78-81.

(13) See above: p. 254

(14) Sopwith, S.S. Some Observations on the Teaching of English. English -
(the magazine of the English Association), Vol. VI,
No. 32, Summer 1946, pp. 81-84.

whom we have already noted writing of his methods at Shrewsbury (15), reinforces the notion that the English specialist must be retained by using the move away from language study itself to illustrate that English is not a "soft option".

... the effort demanded must be the right sort of effort - the effort of appreciation, which is far more strenuous than the effort of learning. (16)

The "effort of appreciation" nevertheless remains undefined in this extract - and indeed, Prideaux (17) rejects the notion as a feature of examinations. In asserting that only factual knowledge of books should be tested in examinations, he rejects appreciation as "unconscious" - a view which, as we shall see, is also held by progressive writers. It is here that the ambiguities inherent in the largely pragmatic attitudes adopted by the writers in this section are most evident. For while Latham and Sopwith agree on the need for "appreciation" rather than any close language study, Latham certainly implies that appreciation of books that the teacher reads aloud is itself "unconscious": that the models for the children's own writing will come as they listen to the teacher and thus "become familiar with the methods by which accomplished writers solve the problems of their ... art". (18). In all these writers there is a lack of the critical sharpness and moral urgency to be found in, say, The Use of English. One finds a note of worry, alarm, even anger in some writers without any hint of the attempt to redefine literary values that went on elsewhere. Tudsbury (19)

(15) See above: p. 207

(16) *Ibid*: p. 82

(17) Prideaux, P.H. The Examining of Literature - The Journal of Education, Vol. 78, Feb-March 1946, I - p. 62; II - pp. 124-6.

(18) See above: p. 268

(19) Tudsbury, J.S. The Teaching of English Literature. The Journal of Education, Vol. 79, March 1947, pp. 117-119.

for example, criticises the classics and asks the pertinent question whether teachers themselves will read them for pleasure. He notes, however, the sheer expense of equipping schools with the works of modern authors - especially when the teachers themselves are unsure of critical guidelines. The school has so far failed completely to "make the bridge between classics and rubbish", and

a great number of adults, as well as of adolescents, are today almost pathetically conscious that the books they read are pure rubbish; they would like to try something better if they knew what to look for - but emphatically not the dead authors they associate with English literature as taught at school. (20)

Tudsbury's attitude, then, is that the schools have failed to pass on the cultural heritage and that readers (and teachers) are in a state of ignorance as to how it can be furthered. The consequences of the teachers' ignorance are suggested by Jagger (21). In noting the requirement that books read in schools should be "in line with the interests of the pupils", Jagger notes:

... if a book does not conform to this requirement, the pupils might as well be reading Smith's Latin Dictionary for all the good they will derive from it. But this consideration, mistakenly understood, has sent many a teacher astray, by inducing him to put before his class what is unworthy ... That would not be refining the taste and elevating the mind. The school must give the pupils what is above than though not beyond their reach. (22)

Jagger's own vocabulary ("refining the taste and elevating the mind") indicates a function for literature which one associates with the traditional version of the cultural heritage - and indeed, with

(20) Ibid: p. 118

(21) Jagger, J.H.: Literature in the Modern School - The Journal of Education, Vol. 80, April 1948, pp. 186-7.

(22) Ibid: p. 187

Shayer's "moral" fallacy. He shares with Tudsbury a deep distrust of the teacher's own critical faculties as well as a doubt about the present suitability of the cultural heritage as he would understand it. Once again, the lack of any impulse to re-definition of terms as was then being undertaken in, say, The Use of English, is very much in evidence. An attempt at a compromise between the various positions represented here was made by Blamires (23) who attempts to avoid the rejection by Prideaux of "appreciation" as "unconscious" and so unexaminable.

It is true that the aesthetic experience of literature without intellectual discipline is inadequate as an educational process: it is also true that the study of "English Literature" without the aesthetic experience of literature is barbaric. (24)

However, Blamires' own distinction between "intellectual discipline" and "aesthetic experience" remains undefined. In any case, he defines the role of the teacher in school in such a way as to appear to remove both activities from the school. In stating that it is the university lecturer's job to comment on literature, he says:

... the school teacher's duty first and foremost is to see that his pupils become acquainted with literature; he must see that they read and that they understand. (25)

The teacher becomes a guide and a provider rather than a transmitter of knowledge (earlier, Blamires has severely criticised Herbertian method) (26). Blamires seems to take up Latham's position - that the "literary lessons" will be "unconscious" and will depend on the private personal response.

There are only two ways of experiencing a novel - by reading it and by hearing it read. (27)

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- (23) Blamires, Harry: English in Education: Geoffrey Bles, 1951
(24) Ibid: p. 14
(25) Ibid: p. 59
(26) Ibid: pp. 16-17
(27) Ibid: p. 89

The notion of literature as a cumulative experience is further implied:

The distinction between providing experience of literature and talking about literature is a very sharp one. (28)

Blamires' emphasis on the teacher's role as provider of experience, therefore, seems to separate him from the traditional version of the cultural heritage. Nevertheless, his distinction between "intellectual discipline" and "aesthetic experience" is not followed through in the context of a school. Also his suggestion that teachers "see that (...) pupils become acquainted with literature" does not imply any dissatisfaction with the traditional version of the cultural heritage. Indeed, it is noteworthy that Blamires' book is given a most hostile review by G.H. Bantock in The Use of English (29) in which Bantock accuses Blamires of totally misunderstanding both Leavis and The Use of English itself.

An influential writer who, in many ways, followed the lead of Jagers above was A.E. Smith (30) who is especially aware of the debilitating influence of modern mass-culture on the secondary-modern child.

Gone is the more equal partnership, the collaboration, that must exist between author and reader. Gone are many of the opportunities for the exercise of choice, taste and discrimination. The many now take what the few provide. (31)

Smith's attitude to reading is at first sight reminiscent of the traditional version of the cultural heritage. He rejects the "established Victorian classics" only because they are unsuitable for

(28) Ibid: p. 60

(29) The Use of English, Vol. 3, No. 3, Spring 1952, p. 142

(30) Smith, A.E. : English in the Modern School Methuen 1954

(31) Ibid: p. 58

the less academic secondary-modern school child. He assumes that there is a ladder from "rubbish" to the classics and the teacher's role is to find it. This is expressed charmingly as follows:

Consider such a possibility as this: we have found Jack Bowler reading a badly-printed story entitled The Test Match Murders. It is bound in a lurid cover whereon a masked and heavily bearded member of the M.C.C. is leaning over the balcony at Lords levelling two revolvers at the opening batsmen as they begin their walk to the wickets. We have allowed him to finish it undisturbed by sarcastic comment or the threat of confiscation. He comes regretfully to the last page. "Enjoyed it, Jack? Fond of books about cricket? I wonder if you would like this one? The man who wrote it was captain of the village cricket team at Storrington in Sussex some years ago. See if you like it. I thought it was pretty good, but you'll see for yourself what it's like."

We hand him The Cricket Match by Hugh de Selincourt (Longmans) ... later Jack finishes or fails to get on with Selincourt's story. What next? Whatever we do, we must not castigate him for failing to share our taste if he does not like the book. (32)

The excellent and humane classroom practice outlined in the above extract must not be allowed to obscure the fact that - by the standards of other writers on the subject - Smith's attitude is almost simplistic - merely a dramatisation of the familiar assertions of Ballard and Finch. Smith's prescriptions for reading indicate a rejection of the traditional version of the cultural heritage - but the assumption, as already stated, is that the rejection comes only for the secondary-modern child: the "bookish" grammar-school child, Smith assumes, will take to "the established Victorian classics." There is very little contemporary fiction recommended - and indeed, he makes the point that most of his recommendations are in standard school series. (33) However, his stress is on controlled but wide

(32) Ibid: pp. 85-86

(33) Ibid: p. 66

reading and discussion about books to influence taste; his methods echo those implied by Latham above.

Smith's work in many ways sums up that of the previous writers in assuming that there are new conditions to be dealt with; that the methods and prescriptions associated with the skills model and the traditional view of the cultural heritage are not in themselves capable of dealing with them; that there must be a new definition of what constitutes the cultural heritage for the new Secondary Modern Schools. Nevertheless, he - as well as the others - represents a line of pragmatic development and adaptation of method which has stretched throughout the century. It can be seen clearly in the work of the English Association before the Newbolt Report and has, in fact, taken little account of the new directions given by the Progressives and the Cambridge School between the wars and the resulting set of critical criteria for school literature given by Jenkinson.

(b) The Literature-based Progressives

In Section 3 we saw that though at first sight, the Cambridge School and the progressives seemed opposed, in many ways they were complementary. The work of Jenkinson and the 1937 Suggestions showed that elements from both could be welded together. After 1944 (in many ways) this process continued - for example, in the work of the post-war descendants of the Cambridge School writing in English in Schools and its successor The Use of English. They continued to re-define values in the face of a debasing industrialism and to establish criteria for a literature of personal, moral

and linguistic worth to wean children away from the trivia of contemporary society. At the same time, the teaching methods they recommend move closer to those of the progressives. Therefore, while in one respect they approach the personal growth model, in another they assume a society needing to be freed "to each according to his need" from "the weeds of literature" by a discriminating elite.

The chronological approach adopted in this section will lead to a more extended treatment of the work of W. Walsh and G.H. Bantock at the end of the period. As already stated, the centrality of literature as the arbiter of taste and values is a main concern of this movement. Progressive notions of creativity (for instance, in children's own writing) is - at least chronologically - secondary. Consideration of them must be reserved for subsequent discussion concerning Young Writers, Young Readers and the work of David Holbrook.

Two early statements - by O'Malley and Ford - typify the movement.

O'Malley seeks to itemise the development of taste:

Taste in reading grows not from bad to good, normally, but from simpler to more inclusive forms of good. There are good and bad at all stages. The best reading for young children is provided by verse and prose written for grown-ups but chancing to have a secondary interest, as with *Crusoe* and *Gulliver*; and the next best by material written for children that has an interest to grown-ups. De la Mare's poems are especially suitable in this respect. (34)

Firstly, this passage rejects the argument offered by Ballard and

(34) O'Malley, Raymond: The Purpose of Teaching English, Pt. 2
English in Schools, Vol. 2, No. 6, Easter 1948,
p. 98

others that the bad is a stepping-stone to the good. Already we have seen Pickering firmly reject the argument (35) from a social point of view. The implications of O'Malley's statement are, however, typically those of the Cambridge School, especially when read in conjunction with his first article in English in Schools (36). O'Malley's contention is that only work written seriously for adults will have incorporated within it the "simpler to more inclusive forms of good". The implication is twofold. The first is that only the adult reaching out to other adult minds is likely to be writing to the full extent of his powers and thus providing one of the "forms of good". The second - in many ways a corollary of the first - is that literature provided exclusively for children is unworthy and so presumably part of the trivialised world of the industrial society. In the light of succeeding investigations into the provision of fiction for children, this passage contains an interesting assertion. O'Malley implies (and thus takes up an important point of Jenkinson's) that the teacher must not only sympathise with and share in, but find interest in what the child is reading: O'Malley agrees with C.S. Lewis's point.

I am inclined to set it up as a canon that
a children's story which is enjoyed only
by children is a bad children's story. (37)

However, another point made by Lewis is by implication not accepted.

The third way (of writing for children)
consists in writing a children's story
because a children's story is the best art
form for something you are to say: just as
a composer might write a Dead March not because

(36) See above: p. 246

(37) Lewis, C.S. On three ways of writing for children included in Walter Hooper (ed.) Of other worlds, Bles, 1966, p. 24. (First published in Fifty-two: a Journal of books and authors from Geoffrey Bles. No. 4, Autumn 1959, No. 5, Christmas 1959.

there was a public funeral in view but because certain musical ideas that had occurred to him went best into that form. (38)

O'Malley quite explicitly relegates literature written primarily for children to an inferior position. One infers a less than wholehearted acceptance of Jenkinson's criteria of worth in children's reading matter, and a more obvious emphasis on literary values in the sense of the Cambridge School. This again implies a fear of the "weeds of literature" - which appears plainly in O'Malley's subsequent remarks.

... good reading - that is ... reading conducive in the teacher's opinion to the integration of individuality. Bad reading has the opposite effect. The problem of private reading at once arises. Happy were the teachers who had not to face the competition of the catchpenny juvenile productions of today. Their content and influence are to be deplored. Nevertheless, I believe it is bad tactics to ban them, whether explicitly or through the power of suggestion. Intellectual snobbery may follow, or just a heightened interest in the banned material, but certainly not good taste. (39)

Remembering the early cry in 1902 of the HMI's, one wonders when O'Malley's "happy" teachers existed. In this passage is the fear of debasing literature familiar from Leavis and Thompson and the assertion of the power of good reading to "integrate individuality". However, O'Malley ascribes an important role to the teacher as a "Discriminator - for" - good reading is defined by "the teacher's opinion." Here again is an echo of Arnold's "Alien"; an interventionist who is more knowledgeable than the children and thus a definer of taste, which itself is dependent on the progressive version of the cultural heritage.

(38) Ibid: p. 23

(39) Op. cit: p. 98

The complex of ideas raised by O'Malley (possibly summarised in the question, "Is it better to read nothing than anything?") exercised the minds of contributors to English in Schools and Use of English very deeply. O'Malley's hint that the teacher is an arbiter of values is one answer: the wish to foster a critical sense through all types of reading (in spite of Jenkinson's findings (40)) persisted. In the context of a discussion as to whether there should be trashy reading or no reading, Dorothy King asserts:

Criticism leads to appreciation of the good and the beautiful, and the two must go hand in hand. I think fiction is the best starting point for this early attempt at Practical Criticism, as most Lower and Middle School children read only fiction in their spare time.

One must, I think, ensure "good reading" both by demand or suggestion, but not, of course, by prohibiting "bad" reading. The discussion together of at least one compulsory work of fiction per term, is necessary, supplemented by book lists, lectures given on "good" and "bad" books and by discussion of books adapted as films and radio serials. Compare "The Four Feathers" with Dick Barton, as a beginning. (41)

There is a rather hopeful tone in this extract. (For example, does one know at the start of the child's lecture - if indeed it is the child who gives it - if the book in question is "good" or "bad"? Who decides? And what is the teacher's reaction if the child reverses the adjectives?) This tone indicates a difference of emphasis from O'Malley within the same general range of sympathies. One might call it a "soft-hearted" as opposed to a "hard-hearted" approach. Certainly one would wish for more critical definition

(40) See above: p. 257

(41) King, Dorothy: English and Leisure: English in Schools, Vol. 2, No. 8, Autumn 1948, p. 135.

than "appreciation of the good and the beautiful": within the context of this article there is no indication of how fiction can serve the purpose of early attempts at "Practical Criticism" (apart from the activities hinted at in the second paragraph). And these activities are far from satisfying the term "Practical Criticism" as Richards used it. For it is noteworthy that in both these extracts the terms "good" and "bad" are bandied around remarkably uncritically. It is a feature of this particular movement - as one would expect from its ancestry - that definite critical guidelines appear and that they are to do primarily with the nature of language. In the first number of The Use of English (previously English in Schools) Boris Ford states the basic position:

We have an uncomparably fine literature in which the richest and most profound moments of imagination have crystallised. Today, the words that matter most are lost amid the welter of toothpaste instructions and nightcap blandishments, and the ships of state and the strong-jawed heroes, and the deadness of officialese and the banality of jargon. At such a time and, indeed, as a protection against this onslaught, we need to keep ourselves and above all, our pupils in touch with the incisive emotional integrity of the words that make up our literary heritage. (42)

The phrase "literary heritage" here implies a continuity of culture and society, but its hint of tradition must not obscure a new definition. The statement is a firm expression of the progressive view of the cultural heritage. The image Ford presents of the teacher as an embattled guardian of values in a hostile and debased society is very much that of the Cambridge School and one interpretation of Arnold's "Alien". It was in this context that Jenkinson's

(42) Ford, Boris: The Reading Habit Use of English Vol. 1, No. 1, Autumn 1949, pp. 9-14

criteria of worth in children's reading were made. But in his insistence on the primacy of the language in literature ("the incisive emotional integrity of the words") he implies (by the standards of the Cambridge School) a different view of the cultural heritage from (for example) Latham with her mentioning of Lamb and Pater. The phrase "incisive emotional integrity of the words" began to provide a touchstone for the detection of Jenkinson's criteria of worth, as will be seen in subsequent examination of Young Writer, Young Readers and the work of David Holbrook. Even so, there is an ambiguity in the phrase. One may assume, with Ford, that the debasing forces in the industrialised society are swamping this "emotional integrity of the words". Yet one may also accept O'Malley's point that "while seeking to encourage good reading, I do not seek to encourage reading", as well as Pedley's "if only a minority will read Eliot and Keats, all of them do and will read prose". These statements are all typical of the Cambridge School. However, presumably "the emotional integrity of the words" forms a touchstone for the detection of the great art which only the discriminating elite can appreciate. To say otherwise indicates, first, that there are other elements besides this "emotional integrity" which distinguish Eliot and Keats as the writers for the discriminating elite; secondly, that "emotional integrity" is a quality to be identified in works of far lower artistic status according to the standards of the Cambridge School. If it were not so, then the cause of those outside the discriminating elite would be lost. The Cambridge School's position, therefore, must be that the "emotional integrity of the words" is the lowest common denominator between the highly-wrought art for the discriminating elite and the basic statements of feeling, in whatever medium, which

can stand in opposition to the "welter" of the industrialised society. The consequence here is that stories and poems suited for less able children outside the potential elite can be as emotionally valid as the great art and can just as readily lead to what O'Malley frequently calls "the integration of personality". This suggests that the Cambridge School, from a different set of assumptions and by a different route, has arrived at the same conclusion as the progressives and radicals - that the traditional view of the cultural heritage is inadequate and a new sort of literature must take its place which will have a new but valid legitimacy. An attempt to define this "valid legitimacy" is made by Bantock, taking a societal overview from a University Department of Education:

Foremost among our requirements, then, will be an education which educates to "reality", the sort of reality that George Bourne depicts his peasants as facing - so that their life had strength as well as narrowness - only translated into twentieth-century terms, where his valley has disappeared for ever. This, of course, will raise the whole question of the level of consciousness at which we can aim. What in fact, is required is a new folk culture ... (43)

The connection with the Cambridge School here is clear. The use of Change in the Village as a key text shows that the simplicities of a previous age are longed for. Bantock's concern for a recreation of "folk-culture", in many ways akin to that of Hoggart, implies the familiar rejection of the cultural values of the industrial society.

(43) Bantock, G.H.: The Education of the less able child (reprinted in Education in an Industrial Society, Faber 1963), pp. 209-210.

It is still the homely and intimate that catch on, even with their new soft centre. (44)

This "soft centre" (to be found in "The Archers", "The Dales" ... "Coronation Street") is all the new world can offer to take the place of the folk, oral tradition. The implied lack of "emotional integrity" is plain. Bantock clinches his point as follows:

... the sophisticated, when they have needed to address the folk, have addressed them in terms of symbol and image. (45)

All agencies, from the Medieval Church onwards, have done this because it accords with the way the "folk mind works". To adapt this for the modern world indicates

... not a thin aestheticism but a grappling with the real world through the relevant medium. (46)

Much of what Bantock subsequently says is reminiscent of Hoggart and looks forward to Britton and even Worpole, Searle and the Radicals. It must be remembered, however, that his social preconceptions are totally different and that while he would agree with O'Malley about "more inclusive forms of good", and with Whitehead

" 'lowest common factor' ... at work in all popular entertainment" as well as Worpole's criticism of "false sentiments and opportunism" (47), he would certainly reject Worpole's insistence that the folk-

culture itself had primacy and that the elite feared a "shared and non-legitimised literary culture" (48). Walsh, Professor of Education at Leeds University, also works from the preconceptions of the Cambridge School: his notion of a society is based on a hierarchy of feeling, with the discriminating elite at its apex.

(45) Ibid: pp. 212-3

(46) Ibid: p. 215

(47) See above: p. 360

(48) See above: p. 411

However, for him there is the ladder of sensibility: differences are of degree, not of kind. Speaking of Coleridge's influence on the education of teachers, he says,

The belief that experiences dissimilar in character but alike in quality fit together to make a coherent whole is one with heartening implications for education. It means there can be a "progressive transition" between the humblest sorts of these experiences which are relevant for children and the mature discoveries of genius". (49)

For Walsh, too, the deepest insights are made by esoteric literary criticism: however, his stress is more on language, its nature and the uses to which it can be put.

Language is the means by which the setting of the human being is immensely enlarged, and the context of his action made immeasurably more complex. (50)

Bantock, by comparison, does not trust language as a means of communication in folk culture. Walsh finds the symbol and imagery of folk speech an essential element of language at its most highly-wrought and artistic. Speaking of the language of Huckleberry Finn, he says,

The language has the existing vivacity of folk speech, an effortless flowing energy which makes the laboured-at vigour of later American prose writers look febrile and insubstantial. It has, too, the intimacy of peasant talk. (51)

Both Walsh and Bantock, however, see the aims of education as being, in Bantock's terms, "a grappling with the real world through the relevant medium". Bantock looks at the needs of a mass, inarticulate society: Walsh indicates a more personal, individual

(49) Walsh, W: The Use of Imagination: Educational thought and the Literary mind Chatto and Windus, 1959, p. 66

(50) Ibid: p. 229

(51) Ibid: p. 143

stress and shares the romantic-progressive view that capacities for understanding and feeling differ in degree only and not kind. The writers here examined, therefore, share a view of the cultural heritage which is far removed from the traditional version of it. They stand together, sharing the attitudes of the Cambridge School towards the centrality of literature and the primacy of the language with which it is written. Except for Walsh, there has been little trace of romanticism in their prescriptions and attitudes. Their concept of society has been based on the need for its sensitive elite able to discriminate on behalf of the rest of it. The mission to save those not of the elite from the trivialising effects of industrialised society and the need for each person to make his own contact with serious, honest work of integrity are of equal importance to the Cambridge School. Bantock has emphasised the first: Walsh the second. While in The Use of English we have seen O'Malley and Ford emphasise the first, in Young Writers, Young Readers and the work of Holbrook we shall see an emphasis on the second.

(c) Personal Growth: Child-centred progressivism: Education of
the Emotions

We have noted the Romantic-progressive line of thought which emerges during this century with Hall and continues through Holmes, Caldwell Cook, Nunn, Jacks, Wheeler and Whitehead. We have noted that Wheeler based much of her progressive thought on her own earlier research. We have also noted that the main impetus of all these writers was towards creativity; that the notion of mimesis - the re-creation of the original creative act - was at the centre of education.

The movement towards creativity in English showed itself mainly in terms of children's writing; plainly the child's poem or story is the nearest to an artefact the English teacher can cause to be produced in the way of the impetus set in motion in art education by, say, Viola (52) and Read (53).

The most important text for the teacher of English in this respect is Marjorie Hourd's The Education of the Poetic Spirit (54) which has its strongest emphasis on the child as "sub-creator" (to use Tolkien's term), creating in terms of Coleridge's theory of the imagination. However, the connection between this sort of creativity and the reading and appreciation of fiction is, in this Romantic-progressive line of thought, less immediately obvious than it is with the writers of The Use of English. In this passage, Hourd shows a completely different emphasis from, say, O'Malley and Ford.

It is this quality of vision in imagination that we need to look for and encourage in children's expression. This sounds very simple and it is: but education too frequently opens the door through which the inferior faculties come in. The teacher himself is often the meddling interloper. (55)

This passage places the child's creative capacity first. The child's own ability to make patterns, to synthesise, is the main agent in personal growth. The teacher, as "meddling interloper", has a function far different from that proposed by the Cambridge School. The imagination of the child must work unfettered. Free expression through the plastic power of the imagination, will lead

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- (52) Viola, Wilhelm: Child Art ULP 1942 (2nd ed 1944)
(53) Read, Herbert: Education through Art. Faber and Faber 1943 (3rd ed.
(54) Hourd, Marjorie: The Education of the Poetic Spirit Heinemann 1949 1958
(55) Ibid: pp. 82-3

to the ordering of chaos - the process towards order which is at the heart of Coleridge's theory. The Education of the Poetic Spirit, therefore - though the key text of this period of progressive thought in English - has little direct to say about the place of fiction: yet such an activity must be accounted for. Thus Marjorie Hourd's later work Some Emotional Aspects of Learning (56) will be considered at greater length. First, however, a work which - though published earlier - has a direct relevance to this section of the enquiry will be examined - Margaret Phillips' The Education of the Emotions (57). Part of Phillips' intention was to test, through her questionnaire and protocols, the reactions of a wide variety of adults (275 in all) to the various artistic genres. The reactions, though those of adults, have significance for children in terms of the development of progressive theories of appreciation. In Chapter 9 (Poetry; Drama; Prose Literature) Phillips writes:

We shall expect to meet again the distinction seen in the case of the "painting" protocols - here between sentiments for literature in itself and sentiments for those experiences in the practical world which literature enables us to recall or to imagine. (58)

Here is an immediate distinction between art as art and art as "a criticism of life" - a distinction which is common to all art.

However, prose literature exhibits a different result from other forms of art:

(56) Hourd, Marjorie: Some Emotional Aspects of Learning Heinemann 1951

(57) Phillips, Margaret: The Education of the Emotions Allen and Unwin 1937

(58) Ibid: p. 208

... genuinely aesthetic elements in the protocols tend to decrease and the "practical" elements to increase, as we pass from poetry through drama, to prose literature. (59)

This reaction on the part of the sample reflects much of the unease we have noted as being felt about the novel in the classroom. It can be seen to account for what Elton calls the "thing" element (60) and what Hayward found so difficult to rationalise in his own treatment of the novel (61). Prose literature - because in its form as story - takes images from everyday life or parallels - is far more difficult to react to aesthetically than other forms of art (even other forms of literary art such as poetry and drama).

An extension of this emphasis on the practical is made later, with embedded in it an interesting parallel with the Cambridge School and Jenkinson.

The majority of my protocols show literature as serving the practical purposes last illustrated - i.e. as fulfilling the needs of the self not by transmitting life, but by compensating for it on its own level; offering such types of emotional satisfaction as one's own life has for the moment, or permanently, failed to supply. (62)

At first sight this passage - seeing as it does the experience of literature as compensating vicariously for emotional deficiencies in the reader's actual life - recalls Leavis and Thompson's fear of the debasing "fantasying" literature and to foreshadow Jenkinson's category of books which compensate for the difficulties of growing up. Yet it is noteworthy that there is no hint of

(59) Ibid: p. 208

(60) See above: p. 218

(61) See above: p. 152

(62) Ibid: p. 229

criticism in Phillips' use of the word "compensating". The function she seems to imply for prose literature is, it would appear, mainly therapeutic; notions of the quality of the literature and the worth and truth of the experience it offers do not necessarily enter into the matter. This possibility is reinforced in her conclusion -

Prose literature serves typically similar practical purposes, especially those of compensating for, commenting on, and supplying a refuge from, everyday life.

In general, it would seem that aesthetic values only appear in proportion as practical needs are satisfied. (63)

Prose literature is read primarily for the consolations it can give to the reader: only when this function is completed can aesthetic values be appreciated.

Phillips' work certainly demonstrated the power of prose literature and went some way towards describing the actual effect of reading it. The notion that the reader brings his own experience to bear on and thus interpret the experience offered by the author is implied throughout: the progressive theme common to Cook and Nunn of creative re-creation (64) is repeated in terms of the act of reading and understanding. Phillips is well aware of the close connection between understanding and creativity itself.

Art whose techniques are more elaborate, e.g. literature and painting, should be taught by methods which keep creation and appreciation closely linked. (65)

(63) Ibid: p. 233

(64) See above: p.187

(65) Ibid: p. 306

Phillips, then, draws attention to prose literature (fiction) as vicarious experience which modifies or compensates our own, though without implying differences in quality between such experiences. Hourd, on the other hand, makes a very distinct difference between levels of quality of experience in a way which is different from the fears of the Cambridge School and Jenkinson about "fantasying" or "compensating" literature but, in the end, makes a rather similar point. In her 1951 work (66) Hourd is as concerned as ever with the primacy of the child's free imagination, the quality of the child's experience and his understanding of it.

Activity is an indispensable technique if it allows the balance of forces in a child so to express itself, that by getting to know himself, other people and the outside world gain in value for him. But we have to realise that this principle underlies all good teaching of whatever kind. (67)

The "balance of forces" enables the child - by knowing himself - to understand the experience offered him from outside. It is this self-knowledge which would supply the judgment of offered vicarious experience that seemed to be lacking in the respondents to Phillips' questionnaire. It is also a self-knowledge which the Cambridge School would say could only be fostered in the child by the interventionist, discriminating teacher, whose choice of literary works will bring this self-knowledge. But Hourd's emphasis is on the child first: the difference is vital.

So it is with interest, which stands in danger of becoming another marble monument ... what we are really saying is that every lesson should be a creative act and this is something that

(66) Op. cit: see above p. 287

(67) Ibid: p. 76

both activity and interest teachers overlook. They know that material must be produced for the child's mind to act upon, but they fail to realise that children also construct within themselves material upon which they act. (68)

In saying that children's creativity can come from inside, without need of a stimulus, Hourd is also implying that the essential contact between child and work of art is an appreciative context would be an essentially internal, private one. Her main advocacy here is for the withdrawal of the teacher to allow the child's creativity to order itself into equilibrium.

It is not an easy thing to leave children face to face with their own chaos. This means being prepared to receive expression of violence, distortions of reality and incoherence of many kinds before there gradually emerge satisfying shapes and forms. Appreciation and making things from direction are both valuable activities because we learn much through identification and emulation, but to fashion something right out of ourselves is a much more satisfying thing to do. (69)

She suggests that the primacy of the creative art renders other activities secondary: "Appreciation and making things from direction" - where the teacher may intervene - are subservient to the child's internal process. One may infer that the place of literature and fiction will be subservient and only acceptable insofar as the experience offered can be encompassed, understood by and assimilated by the creatively attained "balance of forces" mentioned earlier:

We should not overlook the extent to which theory and philosophy can become an escape from creativity; and much also that goes under the name of appreciation. Learning provides us with many ways of vicarious

(68) Ibid: pp. 76-77

(69) Ibid: p. 77

living, and it is often difficult to know whether we are cheating or not. For example, to read in the Iliad of Priam's grief over the body of his son may provide an experience of different kinds; we may recognise our own griefs and so come to understand "sunt lacrimae rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt". No one would doubt that this is an expression of great value, but there is a way of weeping Priam's tears in order to escape from our own which perhaps we fear, if we gave place to them, might shatter all our being. But not until we can endure the full extent of our own suffering will the "lacrimae rerum" be of much creative value to humanity. (70)

This long quotation brings Romantic-inspired creativity at least partly into line with the Cambridge School and Jenkinson - as well as giving a critical element to the findings of Phillips. First remains Hourd's insistence on the primacy of creativity. Appreciation - unless it is made with the full "balance of forces" having already brought order out of chaos - may lead to "cheating" when we confront the vicarious experience offered by literature. Are the tears we shed for Priam ones of imaginative sympathy or are they indulgences of our own? Hourd's very example of Priam (which is not only a high point of the classical heritage itself, but also symbolic of a basic archetypal - and mythical - situation), shows that she reverses the equations of Cambridge School and Jenkinson. It is not the experience offered by the work of art which matters most: therefore, literary discrimination itself is by definition secondary. It is the capacity the reader has from within his own resources to assimilate the experience offered which is important - a capacity which depends on the reader's own creative processes. Thus, according to the Romantic-progressive view, the

impetus towards true discrimination comes from within and not from the "alien" teacher. The "balance of forces" it is implied, will reject the offered vicarious experience of the inferior work of art because, in imaginative re-creation, one capacity for creativity will answer to another and the action of reading will become a partnership between reader and author. Lack of creativity in the reader, on the other hand, will transform the greatest literature into that which "compensates" or is "fantasying". Response matters most.

Though Hourd does not mention him here, her emphasis on the child's assimilation of valid vicarious experience is very close to that of Piaget. It is left to Richardson (71) to give an account of the process in overtly Piagetian terms. Marjorie Hourd's emphases were essentially Coleridgean: in Piaget's ideas of assimilation, accommodation and reversibility, there is a similarity with Coleridge's account of the imagination and the function of metaphor, making new things familiar, familiar things new.

In Richardson's account there is the familiar progressive stress on activity leading to a form of contemplation.

Somewhere on the way between the ingenuous play-acting of the young child and the attentive watching and listening of the mature spectator, there is a middle phase of literary activity - a place in which intelligent interpretation of play or poem gradually becomes possible through active representation. (72)

(71) Richardson, Elizabeth: (University of Sheffield).: Socialisation, Aesthetic Awareness and the development of literary appreciation: An application of Jean Piaget's Theory of Intelligence. Researches and Studies (University of Leeds Institute of Education), No. 12, May 1959, pp. 5-17.

(72) Ibid: p. 19

This notion of "active representation" is reminiscent of the "Play-way" and of Nunn's mimesis. It is a central tenet of Progressive thought. Its psychological justification is as follows:

The child "assimilates" everything to his own central idea or to the known schema of the action which he is performing. In this way he gradually masters his own experiences, though he is still a long way from understanding the puzzling and often frightening world in which he lives.

At the opposite extreme from symbolic play, in which a familiar pattern is enacted over and over again, Piaget places imitation. This depends not on the assimilation of the new to the old, but on the accommodation of the old to the new. (73)

A two-way process ensues. Assimilation through symbolic play leading to conscious dramatisation enables the child to master, to internalise, his own experiences. The emphasis is that the process is towards himself. Accommodation through imitation leading to structural play enables the child to graft on to, to fuse, to adapt his own old, existing experiences to the new ones. The emphasis is that he is working beyond himself towards outer things. Assimilation leads to the actor: accommodation to the artist.

The actor becomes more submissive: the artist less submissive to the demands of the model. (74)

The activity of literature depends more on accommodation, for literature offers new vicarious experience. The "artist" will be "less submissive to the demands of the model" because he is reaching out to new experience. Appreciation of literature becomes imaginative re-creation of the artist's process: once again, the Piagetian account is seen to be firmly part of progressive thought.

(73) Ibid: p. 20

(74) Ibid: p. 20

... there is in most children a natural tendency to enjoy well-marked rhythms: they also share with one another, with the teacher and with the poet a common heritage of joys and sorrows ... a wise teacher will set out to build new associations between the life experiences his pupils already share and the literary experiences he is about to put within their reach. (75)

Literature, therefore, is, in a sense, therapeutic. Its use is to socialise the children: aesthetic judgments are inherent in the process of coming to terms with experience. At this point one may draw a parallel with the negative correlation made by Whitehead concerning the child's appreciation of "imaginative coherence" (76). Aesthetic appreciation in the child is not verbalised: is presumably unconscious. The integrity of the experience offered and its relevance to the child constitute the "imaginative coherence": the unconscious (and only much later verbalised) aesthetic appreciation comes with the accommodation of new experience with old.

... literature, perhaps more than any other subject in the curriculum, helps to extend children's sympathies and expand their hearts and minds, but only if the teacher succeeds in grafting it on to the experiences which already have meaning for them ... at its best, the teaching of literature, like the growth of personality itself, is a process of becoming. (77)

The main importance of Richardson's account in Piagetian terms was that it gave a rationale for notions of identification, moral codes and vicarious experience in fiction (as well as other literature) which is to become, in the final section of this enquiry, an increasingly important progressive theme, through

(76) See below: p. 317

(77) Ibid: p. 28

Pickard, Harding, the Flowden Report, Britton, Bolt and Gard, and Applebee.

(d) Social Concern: The New Order: The Growth of Leisure

In Chapter 3 our examination not only of Jenkinson but also the Board of Education publication - notably the Hadow Reports, the 1937 Suggestions and the Spens and Norwood Reports - indicated the recognition of a more complex society and the need to educate its members in accordance with its needs and the consequent requirements of social justice. Post-war reorganisation and the translation of the cry "Secondary Education for all" into actuality hastened this move. Allied to this was the recognition in the 1937 Suggestions of education for leisure and in the Spens and Norwood Reports a recognition of a need to move to a common curriculum. The Second World War and the opportunity for subsequent replanning, both of society and the education system, obviously gave a great impetus to this movement, which is here represented by the work of Clarke and Fleming. Clarke's first main work (78) on this topic appeared in 1940. He looks forward to the termination of the war and what would be the paramount need for a cohesive society. Education must play the major role in the cohesive process. The new curriculum will have to possess a relevance: a common curriculum will lead to a common culture.

In the first place, the claims for a common culture are too insistent, and for the great mass of the population the classical curriculum is quite without relevance, except insofar as is made for intelligent study of the ancient inheritance. Then the thrust towards a new and

more comprehensive, if not highly egalitarian form of national unity, will tend to become irresistible, bearing down in its progress the social barricade of which the old studies provided so much of both the decoration and the substance. (79).

For the purpose of this enquiry the main interest of this extract is twofold. First is the implicit rejection of a traditional view of the cultural heritage in its guise as a descendant of "the classical curriculum". Nevertheless, there is no suggestion that the new social order is anything more than an evolution. The old curriculum still has relevance when it gives "intelligent study of the ancient inheritance". Thus, if Clarke's position vis-a-vis the categories defined for the purposes of this enquiry may be deduced from the extract it would be towards the progressive version of the cultural heritage, with a view of society similar to that of Jacks and Whitehead. The "ancient inheritance" itself is relevant to the "thrust towards a new and more comprehensive ... form of national unity". We are here very close to Jacks' search for "the moral equivalent of war" and A.N. Whitehead's "trained nervous energy".

(80) A further statement about the supreme value of "cultural continuity" is made in his subsequent work of 1948 (81). The developing notion of a "common culture" does not imply any break with the past: the process is one of sifting out the best elements of the "ancient inheritance" which will form the basis of any such "common culture". However, the need for the "common culture" is urgent.

The national plan of education must be so devised and so worked as to place the main

(79) Ibid: p. 64

(80) See above: pp. 189-90

(81) Clarke, Sir Fred: Freedom in the Educative Society ULP 1948

emphasis on a common culture. By such means it may hope to transcend the cleavages and tensions of conflicting interests and check their divisive effects. (82)

The function of the "common culture" in closing society's divisions is highly reminiscent of Arnold's prescriptions for the functions of the "Alien". The emphasis is different: Clarke implies the common culture will come from below: Arnold's liberalising culture would be spread from above by the "aliens". Nevertheless, the aims of a united society based on recognition of "sweetness and light" and "the good" (in Arnold's terms) or the best of "ancient inheritance" as part of a culture which will "transcend" cleavages in Clarke's terms - are very similar. Clarke reaffirms a central statement of the 1937 Suggestions concerning education for leisure:

The gulf between work and leisure must be closed. (83)

This closing of the gap itself will be helpful in checking "the divisive effects " of existing society. Once again, Clarke is at one with Jacks and A.N. Whitehead. It is clear that Clarke's view of the educational process is that it socialises first and foremost. Fleming (84) also asserts this strong socialising purpose and relates it to progressive notions of personal growth. In her examination of contemporary English teaching (85) she certainly finds modern and innovatory treatments - but the treatments are essentially of the old, divisive (in Clarke's sense) curriculum. Forty years

(82) Ibid: p. 47

(83) Ibid: p. 42

(84) Fleming, Charlotte M: Research and the Basic Curriculum ULP 1946

(85) Ibid: Chap. X, The Socialising of the Curriculum pp. 109-117

before there was formal grammar, oral reading of a small number of books and carefully rehearsed essays. From 1920 onwards, she detects the beginnings of an attention to the needs of the children's own society. From 1930 onwards she notices a tendency to regard the child's silent reading as a different activity from oral reading. Projects began to appear. There was a greater recognition of the child's personality and a sort of socialisation crept into the normal curriculum. The demands of a new society meant the curriculum had to change:

... the whole personal development of the pupil matters more than his increase in skill in a subject field and that failure and incompetence upon mental health. Attention is therefore, turning to the socialising influence of the curriculum and the contribution which reading and self-expression may make to the harmonious development of each pupil's personality. (86)

The effect of Fleming's work taken in juxtaposition to Clarke's is to reinforce the notions of society that were expressed between the wars by the progressives. The move towards the curriculum as a socialising force firmly allied the proponents of a common culture with the proponents of the personal growth model. The relevance of Clarke and Fleming to the place of fiction in schools lies in the implication first, that the traditional version of the cultural heritage would have little to offer because - by definition - it represented a divisive culture; secondly, that in a society which needed the gap between work and leisure to be closed, to have its members socialised by means of a common curriculum in the schools and which would need Whitehead's "trained

nervous energy" and the best of "the ancient inheritance" to heal its divisions, the private encounter with the vicarious experience offered by literature might have an important part to play. However, the literature itself must be that which does not lead to "divisiveness". It is here that - at first sight paradoxically - the prescriptions of the proponents of an egalitarian society on the one hand and those who see a pyramidal society with, at its tip, the sensitive discriminating elite, show a great similarity. We have already noticed the Cambridge School's fear of "the welter of toothpaste instructions and nightcap blandishments, and the ships of state and the strong-hawed heroes": also we have noticed the much later statement of Worpole as a proponent of an egalitarian society condemning the "false sentiments, comic book stereotypes and literary opportunism" of much writing provided for children. From their different points of view both elitists and egalitarians reject the values of the industrial society: the former because its cultural products are concerned to give "compensation in substitute-living ... pitifully unrelated to the possible conditions of working life"; the latter because commercial provision for the working class mirrors "the wider alienation of production and consumption that characterises the wider society" and works against the development of a "shared and non-legitimised literary culture".

A work which, in effect, attempts to synthesise the approaches both of the Cambridge School and the progressive egalitarians is that of M.J.P. Lawrence (87). She sees the potential fissures in society as

(87) Lawrence, Margaret J.P. (Lecturer in English, Bingley Training College). Citizenship through English Oliver and Boyd 1946.

extremely dangerous and education in the use of leisure as vital in healing them. Of the Secondary Modern child, she says:

Consider, however, what is to be the life of any one of these children when schooldays are over. He will probably vacillate between two extremes. The one extreme is that of an unintelligent workman in factory, shop or home, putting in a quota of hours and then turning to an unfruitful use of leisure in cinema, dance, gossip novelette or cheap press. The other is that of an intelligent, interested craftsman turning from a developing skill and interest in work to a rich leisure in library, cinema and radio (intelligently used), sport, hobbies and handicrafts. (88)

There is an interesting fusion of themes in this passage. She objects to the "demoralisation" of the workman by his surroundings. Here one may recall A.N. Whitehead and his insistence on the need for "trained nervous energy". The "demoralisation" she sees inherent in contemporary society implies that the opposite is happening. However, there is an unmistakeable influence of the Cambridge School as well in the opposition of "workman" with "craftsman", "gossip novelette" with "rich leisure in library". That she shares the anti-industrialism of both the progressives and the Cambridge School is clear in later statement:

... Bourne's Change in the Village gives a sad picture of the motiveless, empty life of the modern workman. (89)

The choice of text - Change in the Village - is itself important, as it is a key work for the Cambridge School. M.J.P. Lawrence continues by asserting that the progressive concern for development

(88) Ibid: p. 3

(89) Ibid: p. 7

of individual personality and the Cambridge School's concern for standards and values are complementary and equally important.

At the moment we seem to be too general.
We aim at enrichment of the child's personality through reading, dramatic work, poetry and so on. We do not, it appears, consider sufficiently what the youth's leisure is today and what in the future it might become if we, the teachers, were more constructive, more definite in our suggestions and guidance. The five great servants of leisure today are the Library, the Press, the Cinema, the Radio and Sport. (90)

The progressive mode of "enrichment of personality" is given focus only by a willingness on the part of the teacher to take on the role suggested for him by the descendants of the Cambridge School:

"culture" and "growth" are inseparable. Clearly, M.J.P. Lawrence has no faith in prevalent popular culture and shares the Cambridge School's assumption that a previous organic, vital popular culture is dead. Her prescriptions for reading for "leisure" and "enjoyment" will be dealt with later, in Part 2 of this Chapter; for the moment we may note that the contemporary works she suggests presumably take the place of the lost organic culture and thus become a part of the progressive version of the cultural heritage. Perhaps the most effective statement of a coming-together of the themes outlined here of the development of a society which is not divisive and a prescription for leisure which is neither redolent of a divisive cultural heritage nor debased and leading to "substitute living" is Hoggart's:

The quality of life, the kind of response, the rootedness in a wisdom and maturity which a popular and non-highbrow art can possess may be as valuable in their own ways as those of a highbrow art. (91)

(90) Ibid: p. 7-8

(91) Hoggart, R. The Uses of Literacy Chatto & Windus, 1957. P. 277

It may be that these qualities are what M.J.P. Lawrence sees in her prescriptions for reading which are later examined. Hoggart's statement certainly forms a touchstone by which the developing progressive version of the cultural heritage - especially as it develops in relation to fiction for children - may be judged as a means of providing fit use of leisure in a non-divisive society.

(e) Towards a Synthesis: the work of W.J. Scott

The major themes we have examined in this section so far have been as follows:

- (i) Among those not to be identified with any particular movement but concerned with steady, pragmatic change in English as time passed, there was a realisation that the traditional version of the cultural heritage was inadequate; that for new conditions there was a gap in reading provision; that the schools were unable to provide a bridge between "the classics and rubbish". Nevertheless, it was more and more recognised that the essential contact was between child and book and the teacher's role was as provider and (possibly, by reading aloud) an interpreter - but not as transmitter of knowledge.
- (ii) Among the teachers from the Cambridge School is an increased hostility towards the trivialising effects of the mass culture of the industrialised society; a concern for literary values couched in terms of "incisive emotional integrity". Coupled with a move towards a literature of "emotional integrity" for children who are not to be of the "discriminating elite" is a new insistence on the child's own creative contact with experience through his own writing.

- (iii) Among the romantic-progressives is also a stress on the child's creativity - but one which places the creative process itself first and sees both the exterior stimulus to creativity and the meeting of experience projected by the creative processes of others as, though necessary, secondary.
- (iv) Among progressive educators is an impatience with the traditional version of the cultural heritage as being anachronistic in a new post-war society. A common culture is called for which will negate the divisive tendencies of the old culture: this common culture needs a literature based on "interest" and relevance to the child's experience.

These strands fuse throughout the period in a number of ways, notably in the work of W.J. Scott (92) which (though published fairly early in the period 1940-1960 and though emanating from abroad) had a twofold influence. First of all, it was the most detailed and far-reaching comment on and intensification of the work of Jenkinson during the period. It is relevant to our purposes because it dealt with a society so heavily influenced by British culture as to be to all intents and purposes a scaled-down, simplified model of that with which we are directly dealing. It also becomes indirectly extremely important in the same development of thought concerning fiction in schools in Britain because it is acknowledged by and heavily influences F. Whitehead, especially in The Disappearing Dais (93) and his Reports for the Schools Council. (94)

(92) Scott, W.J. Reading, Film and Radio tastes of High School Boys and Girls. New Zealand Council for Educational Research, 1947

(93) See below: p. 351

(94) See below: pp. 512-5

Scott shows early on his indebtedness to the work of Jenkinson by basing his findings on the use of a slightly modified version of Jenkinson's questionnaire. He also implicitly takes up Jenkinson's position vis-a-vis notions of literary quality by assuming the criteria of worth as being either a help or a hindrance to growing up. This leads him into a position unmistakably close to the Cambridge School. When talking of the escapist novel, he says:

... it provides for its readers a pleasantly emotional experience of a fantastic day-dream world. In its usual, current sense, the word "escape" underlines the difference between the real world, with all its puzzles, conflicts and ordinariness, and an "ideal" world, in which people are more magnificently endowed, conflicts more heroically and decisively waged and puzzles more satisfactorily solved. (95)

However, he asks whether the notion of "escape" into another world is of itself necessarily bad and makes a crucial distinction between types of fantasy - a distinction which later on will occur more frequently.

So far as the fantasy of Gulliver's Travels and Erewhon is concerned, it is a device for giving the author a better perspective in which to comment critically on human nature and institutions. (96)

It is the nature of this "better perspective" which helps to determine the nature of a "good" book - a concern for values which is not necessarily itself prescriptive.

... the experience of reading such a book must in some way deal with the real world of men and things. I am now assuming that the experience of reading such a book will increase the reader's knowledge of himself, others and the world he lives in. (97)

(95) Ibid: pp. 26-27

(96) Ibid: p. 28

(97) Ibid: p. 29

This statement marks an important advance in the refining of Jenkinson's distinction between "growing up" and "compensating". Scott questions the use of conventional adult assessments of literary worth for children and adolescents: instead, he carries Jenkinson's distinction further. In the following passage - long but important enough to be quoted in full - he explores a possible function for the concept of "story" in the emotional development of the child right through the age-range on which the present enquiry centres, and up to adolescence. It is noteworthy, too, that he concludes that a developing taste for literature will depend very largely on the sort of society which is constructed for the child to live in.

(Story) is a most valuable means of satisfying their curiosity about "a great, wide, beautiful and wonderful" but also perplexing, strange and fearful world, and of stabilising their emotions in and around their small society. Among other things, it offers them the excitement of imaginatively knowing fear and safely escaping from it, the pleasures of avenging in make-believe the humiliation and coercion those in authority over them may subject them to, and the satisfaction that comes from a well-nourished imagination. By the age of 9 or 10 a large number of children are avidly reading not only fantasy stories but true stories and informative matter as well, using their books and magazines for the twofold purpose of enlarging their knowledge and experience and compensating them for the shortcomings and frustrations of their daily lives. It is a delicate balance that they thus preserve. When their lives are fairly smooth and secure, their interest in finding out leads them increasingly to accounts of the actual world and its people; but pressure on them from anxiety or unpleasant experiences quickly makes them seek the escape that fantasy provides.

The adolescent has the same balance to preserve, but his task is complicated by the physical and psychological changes he undergoes at this period and his rapidly increasing knowledge of people, things, ideas and words. As the evidence shows,

a good deal of the field of adult literature now comes within his scope. Much of it is fantasy and its literary quality is low. Just when the adolescent is engaged in adjusting his own more complicated inner self to the expanding world about him, he is subjected to the powerful onslaught of the commercial culture ... and persuaded to accept a mental diet that weighs the balance heavily on the fantasy side. It is possible that he is the readier to accept it because the stresses and strains of his life - the quick rush towards maturity and the imminence of work and responsibility in the adult world, the thwarting of his desire for independence by too much discipline imposed from without and too little trust by his superiors in his ability to practise democratic methods in his adolescent community and so on - makes his fantasy a continuing emotional necessity. I think there is something in this. The problem of developing in boys and girls of this age a taste for the books that civilise as well as satisfy is too large to be solved by good teaching and libraries alone; the solution would involve, among other changes, a much more purposeful instruction in the meaning and responsibilities of the democratic system for both adolescents and adults, some practice of it as well as talk about it in the schools, a breaking down of the large schools into smaller units with a closer sense of community and probably more control over the agencies of entertainment to give education a better chance.

(98)

The synthesising of thought in this passage is remarkable. In his concern for value, his insistence on the debilitating effects of "fantasy" literature and "the powerful onslaught of the commercial culture", he is at one with the Cambridge School. His prescription for the ideal school society ("smaller units with a closer sense of community" and "more control over the agencies of entertainment") reflects the Cambridge School's fear of the debasement of feeling inherent in the industrialised society and their longing for the reinstatement of the organic community of which Change in the Village is the exemplar. At the same time,

education is seen as a socialising process, as it is with Fleming.

Scott's following through of the psychological and emotional development of the child and the place of story in it connects him with Hall and Caldwell Cook: his wish to create the conditions for growth in the child and the need for trust of the child recall Holmes, as well as Nunn, Whitehead and Wheeler. This underlines a point hinted at previously (99) - that while the logical extensions of thought of the two main sets of writers examined in Chapter 3 are mutually exclusive, in practice their views on the place of culture, literature (and fiction in particular) in the development of particular children are complementary. Subsequently, Scott examines the ideas of such as Ballard, Sampson and Finch that comic reading can be a stepping-stone to higher things. After making the point that a right use of leisure should entail no need for "bloods" - reading might well come from specialist books on hobbies "more closely related to the concrete concerns of the reader's daily life" - Scott says:

The assumption behind the contention that it is better to read bloods than not to read at all seems to be that reading them places the feet of the pupils firmly on the lowest rung of the literary ladder, up which they will now begin to climb. But it is not true that children who have formed the habit of reading bloods necessarily go on to something better when they lose it. Some do, but many pass beyond the bloods to their adult equivalents, exchanging the Champion and the Crystal for the mass-produced western, detective and romantic story. To grow out of a taste for the Champion and the Crystal into one for Georgette Heyer and Leslie Charteris is not to climb upwards. And the statement that

(99) See above: p.179

reading bloods is a normal phase through which boys and girls must pass ignores the indubitable fact that some of them do not form the habit at any stage of their development. (100)

Again, this is an argument from the Cambridge School. Already forcibly made by Pickering (101), it is borne out by the writer's own observation. While the extract does not contain the fear of "cheap and trashy literature" of the early Inspectors, neither does it exhibit the relative complacency in this respect of Ballard and Finch. Once more, it is a synthesising statement, given depth and significance through its being consistent with a coherent view of society and literary worth, and a comprehensive view of the nature of reading. Nevertheless, Scott does not reject, in his disapproval of "bloods" the principle outlined by Smith of the teacher's starting with the pupils' own tastes in fiction and himself working "upwards". But - consistent with his earlier justification of the concept of story - Scott lays down particular criteria for the sort of fiction to be employed.

On the principle of beginning with the pupils' tastes as they are, the story that they can understand and enjoy must be the teacher's starting point. When he makes his choice of a story to read and discuss, he must keep several points clearly in mind. First of all the book of fiction, if it is to be enjoyed by most of his pupils, must have an intelligible and interesting theme, and an intellectual level that places it readily within their comprehension. At the same time, it should be good of its kind, so that his pupils' response to it will mean some direction of their taste towards literature of a better quality than they would normally choose for themselves. And it should not be too easy,

(100) Ibid: pp. 84-85

(101) See above: p.246

underestimating the capacity of boys and girls can have as harmful an effect on taste as overestimating it. (102)

An important point in this passage is the stress Scott lays on the role of the teacher. The onus is placed on his judgment and the implication is that poor judgment on his part can be positively harmful. Again, Scott shows a leaning towards the Cambridge School's position in this hint of the teacher's discriminating for and on behalf of the children. He is performing the role of Arnold's "Alien". Scott elaborates subsequently on the teacher's role:

The point above all for the teacher of literature to keep in mind is that he always has a dual role to play; he is concerned as an interpreter with the immediate task of ensuring that the experience of intelligently reading and discussing a book is thoroughly enjoyed, and as a teacher with building up a taste for books of good quality. It will hardly be disputed that the second end cannot be achieved without the prior achievement of the first. (103)

A feature, then, of Scott's work is its bringing together of several strands. The place and nature of "the weeds of literature" are defined comprehensively, rounding off many previous and seemingly exclusive arguments. Literature's place in "growth" and its function as a definer of "values" - again, two seemingly opposed arguments - seem reconciled (although it must be realised that Jenkinson's and Scott's criteria for "worth" by no means exclude the higher functions of literary criticism posited by Leavis and Richards, nor do they invalidate any implications of a society formed in gradations of insight and understanding). Scott carries on, underlines and extends the tradition of

(102) Ibid: p. 195

(103) Ibid: p. 196

Jenkinson and the writers in English in Schools and The Use of English. At the same time, in his insistence on the private nature of the child's assimilation of the experience of the book and its potentialities for personal growth, he is very close to the progressives, foreshadowing the work of Richardson and later, Harding, Bolton and Applebee. In his detailed passage on the possible socialising effects of fiction he rehearses some of the themes of Clarke and Fleming. Thus Scott's work may be seen as one of the major synthesising documents to be dealt with in this enquiry.

(f) Further Developments

Whether as a consequence it is difficult to say - but the years after Scott's work produced a number of surveys of children's reading habits which attempt to state more objectively what happens when children read. The first two - those of Roody (104) and Stewart (105) - appear to take up hints from Scott about fiction's relationship to life and its presumed relevance to the child's moral and emotional development. These ideas seem to derive from the 1938 work of Rosenblatt and certainly form an integral part of her 1968 work as it appeared in Britain. The other two - Whitehead (106) and, to a lesser extent, Carsley (107) -

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- (104) Roody, Sarah I: Developing Personality through Literature: The English Journal, Vol. 36, No. 6, June 1947. University of Chicago Press, pp. 209-304.
- (105) Stewart, W: The Novel in Education: Educational Review, University of Birmingham Institute of Education, Vol. 2, No. 3, June 1950, pp. 171-180.
- (106) Whitehead, F.S.: The Attitudes of Grammar School Pupils to some novels commonly read in schools: British Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 26, Pt. 2, June 1956, pp. 104-111.
- (107) Carsley, J.D.: The Interests of children (aged 10-11) in books: The British Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 27, Pt. 2, Feb. 1957.

take a subtler, more literary view of fiction, indicating a need for the teacher's discriminatory role and finding qualities beyond moral exemplification. Whitehead's work here, of course, assumes great importance for the future.

Roody's work came from America. Such influence as we have seen from these - apart from Hall - has been concerned with ethical teaching (one remembers Batchelder's remarks). Roody sums up the nature of ethical teaching and a connection between it, literature and social studies (a connection already made in 1938 by Rosenblatt).

The idea is presented that the happiest people are those who choose their ruling motives wisely and learn how to subordinate their lesser desires without actually stifling any of them ... to many of the pupils it is a new idea that in most great literature the things the characters do are of less importance than are the reasons why they do them. (108)

The direct ethical/moral teaching using literature as a quarry for models continues on this basis, till, at the end of the course

... many students have already begun to realise how a person's character is developed by his experiences. (109)

This conversion of literature to life is in some ways a fairly crude proceeding - although it is only fair to say that literary and aesthetic judgments play an important part: the pupils, for instance, are given

... some of the earmarks of false or pseudo-realistic fiction - works that give an oversimplified picture of life. (110)

(108) Op. cit: p. 301

(109) Ibid: p. 302

(110) Ibid: p. 303

Roody's programme is representative of an American attitude later to be, for British readers, immensely subtilised by Louise Rosenblatt. Nevertheless, the approval was severely criticised by Stewart. Stewart commences by pointing to the often acknowledged division between school and private reading:

Too often there is far too large a gap between the sort of literature recommended by the English teacher and the normal reading tastes both of children and adults: the books are read as a duty and the pupils turn to their cheap fiction with a sigh of relief.

The English syllabus should, therefore, contain more fiction, carefully graded to lead up from the child's love of adventure to the young person's interest in every aspect of life and living. (111)

This limit of a developmental approach to the selection of novels for children reflects the point made by Phillips concerning prose literature and its closer relationship with life. (112) Stewart's next remarks, however, imply at first sight a similarity with Roody and American thinking:

In considering the educational implications of novel-reading in a little more detail, we must first of all acknowledge that many adolescents are directly influenced by the moral tone of the literature they read at a time so vital in the formation of ideals. Being much more deeply concerned with problems of personality and conduct and beginning to acquire some appreciation of abstract values, they may then find in their stories and novels many characters whom they can admire, and upon whom, consciously or unconsciously, they can begin to model themselves. (113)

(111) Op. cit: p. 173

(112) see above: p. 288

(113) Op. cit. Pt. 1, p. 175

It will be noticed that this statement is in some ways at odds with both the Cambridge School and the progressives. It almost suggests Shayer's "moral fallacy" - certainly the sort of activity presupposed in the act of reading is not necessarily encompassed by linguistic qualities in the novel (Ford's "incisive emotional integrity of the words") (114). Nor does it place the main importance on the child through imaginative re-creation of the original creative process, as does Hourd (115). Assuming that "characters" can be "admired" and exist in such a way that children will "model themselves" upon them suggests a measure of identification between reader and character, but also seem to assume that the characters themselves are something more than impressions gained from words on a page. While Stewart rejects the giving of much weight to any direct moral plea in a novel, he is nevertheless, very definite in his views about a work's moral tone.

We shall avoid at first any author whose view of life is twisted or distorted, remembering that it is this sense of values that is the important thing in the direct moral effect of literature: this is what sets the virtues and the villainies of the characters in the right perspective and most decisively influences the sentiments of the impressionable reader. (116)

Stewart's main criticism of Roody appears at this point: partly because of the fact that she would admit what is to him "ephemeral" contemporary literature to help with the students' behavioural problems. Stewart sees the novel bringing about mental hygiene.

Our teachers should perhaps be more keenly aware of the value of the novel in the

(115) See above: pp 290-2

(116) Ibid: Pt. 1, p. 76

education of the emotions, in helping the individual to appreciate the patterns of society and his or her place within those patterns. (117)

The student may gain help from an "ephemeral" book, but he would gain more from a work of quality.

... a youth baffled by the behaviour of a female "age mate" could learn just as much about the extraordinary way in which young women normally behave from Under the Greenwood Tree, a novel good to read for other reasons, as from a slick modern novel about adolescent flirtation. (118)

The assumption made here (which the Cambridge School would reject) is that actions and motives have the same moral and emotional significance in the "slick, modern novel" (which Leavis and Thompson would call "fantasying") as in the work of imaginative quality. Stewart implies that the various qualities of novels can be separated: some of them ("other reasons") make some novels better than others. The point Ford would make is that the "slick modern novel" would not have "the incisive emotional integrity of the words". Hourd, by the same token, would see this particular sort of "learning" about behaviour and "modelling" upon characters as "emulation" - far inferior to any creative process.

Stewart's prescriptions are at variance with the period's prevailing opinions. His subsequent remarks on the use of "bloods" in the classroom underline this.

If teachers are prepared to read and discuss the bloods and thrillers with the children, to talk about them without

(117) Ibid: Pt. 1, p. 77

(118) Ibid: Pt. 1, p. 178

patronage and condescension or insincerity of any kind, then boys or 13 or 14 should begin to understand the reasons for their love of them, and a stage is reached at which these boys are prepared to consider the "ideal worlds" into which their reading wafts them. (119)

This passage assumes that from the "blood" to Conrad is a ladder and that the child will move steadily from rung to rung - a view strenuously denied by many, from Pickering onwards (120), but later to be urged strongly by Britton, Hindle and Bardgett.

Stewart's synthesis is one which steadily finds less sympathy as the period progresses. Whitehead's investigation (121) takes a far more stringent account of the qualities children look for in books and the influence of literary qualities the adult himself would find desirable in them. The books in question were Pride and Prejudice, Jane Eyre, Prester John, Pilgrim's Progress, A Tale of Two Cities, Kidnapped, Treasure Island and Gulliver's Travels.

This list could be seen to represent the traditional version of the cultural heritage likely to be present in a grammar school of the mid-fifties. The sample of children was presented with an attitude scale of eighteen sentences. The first findings were that there was no significant difference in ~~sex~~ reaction and, more importantly:

... among the influences which determine children's attitudes towards novels, those which relate to the children themselves and the conditions under which they read the novels are relatively unimportant as compared with those influences which are inherent in the novels. This conclusion is in opposition to the sometimes heard view that "it doesn't

(119) Ibid: p. 2, p. 4

(120) See above: p. 246

(121) Op. cit: see above, p. 311

matter much what books you use because a good teacher can get them to like almost anything". (122)

The implication of this finding is that the teacher's own powers of selection and discrimination are important if the main influence is the nature of the book. Thus weight is given to the literature-based progressive notion of the teacher as arbiter of values.

Whitehead goes on to

explore the nature of those qualities inherent in the books themselves which may be presumed to have determined the children's attitude, by making use of the assessments of a small group of adult judges. (123)

These judges were all English graduates: their criteria were thus literary. Correlations were made between their criteria and expressed children's attitudes as follows:

- + 0.64 1/ Simplicity of language
- + 0.87 2/ Ease of identification with hero or heroine
- + 0.71 3/ Degree of emotional immaturity of theme handled in the novel
- + 0.78 4/ Openness of the "wish fulfilment" element (i.e. the extent to which the reader's own satisfaction seems recognisably to derive from the imagined gratification of his own wishes or daydreams).
- 0.26 5/ Degree of imaginative coherence (i.e. the extent to which the interconnections between character, motives, actions and consequences of actions are consistently maintained within the novel's chosen convention). (124)

Thus for those qualities which make for easy reading, narrative flow, ease of identification, there is high correlation. However,

(122) Ibid: p. 109

(123) Ibid: p. 110

(124) Ibid: p. 110

there is a strong negative correlation for the one criterion which attempts to summarise a book's aesthetic and artistic quality. The implication is to underline Jenkinson's insistence that literary criticism cannot be taught to children. It also foreshadows Paffard's important statement that appreciation is not deeper because it has been verbalised:

... appreciation occurs long before the
ability to make an ordered verbal response
to a work of literature can be expected. (125)

However, to take the negative correlation quite literally and to state that books for children need have no "imaginative coherence" would certainly be to deny completely everything said by the writers of the Cambridge School. The negative correlation would for them imply the need for a strengthening rather than a diminution of the teacher's role.

Taste, then, forms itself unconsciously over a period of time, and the teacher - as provider and impresario - has a main part to play in them. Carsley (126) concludes his own investigation thus:

It would appear necessary to give children
of this age the widest possible choice from
a variety of children's classics, adult
classics, contemporary children's fiction,
reference books, non-fiction including
biography and children's annuals. (127)

Stewart, Whitehead and Carsley tend to confirm Scott's conclusion that any taste and critical balance will only form themselves over a period of time and with the active guidance of the agency of the school; that taste also will not be formed in a vacuum but that children should have wide choice of reading. All insist upon the

(125) See below: p.

(126) Op. cit: see above, p.311

(127) Ibid: p. 13

importance of private reading, their attitudes and methods
anticipating many of the main features of the current debate
about fiction.

Part 2 The Nature of the Books themselves

(a) Ideas to be dealt with

In Part 1 it was found that a general unease existed among many writers about the sorts of fiction to be read in school. They feared that the school had failed to "make the bridge between classics and rubbish"; (1) and that in choosing books based on the children's own interests, "many a teacher" has been sent astray by the resulting inducement to "put before his class what is unworthy" (2). Descendants of the Cambridge School, especially in The Use of English, have feared "the catchpenny juvenile productions of today." We have noted the pleas for a common culture independent of the traditional version of the cultural heritage, as well as surveys and investigations which indicate that the reading of imaginative literature has an important role to play in the personal development of the child. Underlining all these statements during this period has been the distinction made by Jenkinson and re-stated by Scott that books for children either help in their growing up or compensate for the difficulties of growing up.

There are many questions which must be dealt with. If the traditional version of the cultural heritage is to be discarded, what is to take its place? How does one combine the notion of "children's interests" with worth? In other words, how does one combat the "catchpenny juvenile production" by providing works with "imaginative coherence" (scoring low in Whitehead's investigation)

(1) See above: p.271

(2) See above: p.271

with those "interest ratings" which scored high? (3) If the Piagetian and romantic-progressive account of the reading process is correct, how are the items of experience offered within imaginative fiction to be seen as those which enable us to understand "sunt lacrimae rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt" and not "a way of weeping Priam's tears in order to escape from our own"? (4) Does reading taste develop in a linear fashion so that "the Wizard leads to Stevenson and Conrad", as Ballard, Finch, etc. would have us believe and Smith has attempted to illustrate, or is Storm Jameson correct when she says:

In fiction, as in any other currency, bad money usually drives out good (5) ?

(b) Concern with nature of children's reading: prescriptions and values

We have already noted Margaret J.P. Lawrence's remarks on education for leisure and that, while (like the Cambridge School) she harked back to a pre-industrial past, she nevertheless (like A. N. Whitehead) saw reading and education for leisure providing a capacity to cope constructively with the present industrial society. When we turn to her specific section on reading, we find prescriptions of a surprising type. Books for class use between the ages of 11 and 13 fall into two categories. Class books are the nearest to the traditional view of the cultural heritage. One's first realisation is that no works of Dickens are prescribed at all. There is a fair amount of Sir Walter Scott: however, there is also J. Meade Falkner's Moonfleet, much Jules Verne and The Wind in the Willows.

(3) See above: p.317

(4) See above: p.292

(5) Jameson, Storm: The dangers of fiction: Use of English, Vol. 3, Spring 1952, pp. 137-140.

Modern books include M.E. Atkinson's works (e.g. Mystery Manor), Kastner's Emil and the Detectives, Eve Garnett's The Family from One End Street, the works of Arthur Ransome, Kate Seredy's The Singing Tree, Strong's Odd Man In, Mary Treadgold's We Couldn't Leave Dinah, and many other contemporary children's works. (6) Previously, in speaking of types of reading lesson, she has selected enjoyment as the most important element (7). This enjoyment becomes an essential part of personal development; it is part of education for leisure. The prescriptions she makes are works calculated to meet Jenkinson's criteria for children's reading matter. It is here that we see an attempt to make the "bridge ... between classics and rubbish". In choosing these contemporary works, M.J.P. Lawrence has been concerned to trace a continuity - to identify the successors to the cultural heritage and see this identification as an urgent necessity. Nevertheless, two considerations remained; the criteria for this identification (a question closely allied with Jenkinson's distinction), and the suitability for children. This problem is neatly stated in 1949/50 in The Use of English. Geoffrey Trease was asked to review the second edition of Jenkinson's work: What do Boys and Girls Read? - Jenkinson to review Trease's Tales out of School (8) - which will be referred to subsequently. Unsuitability for children of much available adult literature is asserted by Jenkinson when he takes Trease's point that the modern novel's preoccupation

has for a long time been the weakness,
rather than the strength, of human nature. (9)

(6) Op. cit: pp. 93-94

(7) Ibid: p. 92

(8) Trease, Geoffrey: Tales out of School Heinemann 1949

(9) Use of English, Vol. 1, No. 2, Winter 1949, p. 101

Jenkinson agrees -

Children cannot be interested in the analysis of decadence or maladjustment. Their own overt impulses are essentially optimistic and creative. (10)

The implication is that much serious literature of quality is inherently psychologically unsuitable for children. In What do Boys and Girls Read? Jenkinson insisted on the need for the teacher to share experience with children. Presumably, current available literature prevented such sharing. Trease subsequently reverses this point. In dealing with Jenkinson's own prescriptions he says:

... he mentions hardly any contemporary "juveniles" ... can it be that the names of most popular living writers for boys and girls, in 1939, would mean nothing at all to English teachers - and that the list for 1949 would mean still less? (11)

Trease had pinpointed a weakness in teachers which, despite M.J.P. Lawrence's prescriptions, had already had attention drawn to it by Dedman - who also provided something of a remedy in pointing out a type of fiction which might satisfy Jenkinson's requirements.

Having talked of the activities needed to stimulate reading and interest he notes a development of the previous ten years, underlining again the point made by Lawrence:

... a new style of writer for the ten-pluses has come to the forefront.

Arthur Ransome was the first: with him is characterised the writing of them all.

The stories are realistically told, they convey ideas and increase knowledge, and

(10) Ibid: p. 103

(11) Ibid: p. 102

the English is excellent. The things that happen to these very real and ordinary children are the things that could quite conceivably happen to the readers under similar circumstances. (12)

Dedman notes among this new school of writers such names as M.E. Atkinson (already recommended by Lawrence), Malcolm Saville and David Severn. Dedman sees in these authors a particular sort of relevance. At the same time a complementary type of relevance was asserted by Morgan.

English literature is not so much factual material to be acquired as an imaginative experience to be lived in such a way that standards and values are unconsciously developed. (13)

This statement has echoes in it of Roody and Stewart at the same time as it suggests the need for "imaginative coherence" (despite its low correlation in Whitehead's survey). Morgan also makes a point subsequently to be repeated with increasing force and already made by W.J. Scott (14). Speaking of Wind in the Willows and denying that the element of fantasy in it is not escapist whimsy, she says:

... its detail is firmly rooted in the actual world. (15)

The two propositions, then, are first, that stories are appearing combining realism and truth to the child's experience with quality; secondly, that fantasy is rooted in experience and insights into the real world can come from it. It is from re-workings and subtilisations of these two basic positions that the synthesis of interest and worth is to be made. In conjunction with Jenkinson's

(12) Dedman, Stanley C. : Reading tastes in Children: The School Librarian, Vol. 4, No. 5, July 1944, p. 249.

(13) Morgan, Kathleen E: (Edge Hill College) English Literature in the Secondary Modern School: Journal of Education, Vol. 82, Sept. 1950, pp. 479-81.

(14) See above: p. 305

(15) Ibid: p. 480

criteria, they represent an opportunity to move decisively away from the traditional version of the critical heritage. This point is taken up by Urwin (16) who, in pointing out the wide division between children's reading matter and the accepted school classics, such as Sir Walter Scott, says:

While boys in Grammar Schools up to the age of 14 and 15 are satisfied with comics, pulp magazines and the like, it would appear that many teachers are still treating them as if they were regular subscribers to Household Words. (17)

Urwin prescribes books which few teachers might themselves have chosen:

... I suggest we might try The Red House Mystery, Coco the Clown, Trent's Last Case, The Call of the Wild, Moonfleet, Emil and the Detectives. Yet I must confess that even these are at least twenty-five years old, and twenty-five years seems the minimum amount of time required to make a book respectable enough to become a school classic. (18)

This therefore, indicates the preoccupation: that if Jenkinson's criteria are regarded as valid then teachers must look elsewhere than the usually accepted sources for fiction. The example set by Lawrence seemingly had not been followed. Literary merit alone is not enough - so the traditional classics are not useful. Urwin's specific remarks on Stevenson underline this point forcibly (19). Only Treasure Island, he feels, can be admitted as a children's book. He states:

"Story-teller for boys" is surely a misrepresentation of Stevenson's gifts. (20)

(16) Urwin, G.C.: Books v. Pulp Magazines Use of English Vol. 2, No. 1, Autumn 1950, pp. 26-28.

(17) Ibid: p. 28

(18) Ibid: p. 28

(19) Urwin, G.C. : Robert Louis Stevenson in Schools: Use of English Vol. 2, No. 3, Spring 1951.

(20) Ibid: p. 142

In dealing practically with one very commonly prescribed book, he says:

As for The Black Arrow, the book was a failure from the first. Most boys found it, as adults do, confusing in its plot and very thin cloak and dagger gadzookery. Strange names, strange places, fights and flights do not necessarily make a gripping story, and on occasions, boys have said they prefer Quentin Durward. (21)

The traditionally valued elements of plot and story are themselves inadequate. Urwin's final dismissal of Stevenson is as follows:

Surely Stevenson's audience is a collection of Stevenson men who delight in escaping from place and age into strange lands and past times and into a state of idealised boyhood. (22)

In Stevenson, Urwin finds a form of escapism which is identifiable with Jenkinson's "compensation". Dedman's criteria, too, indicate that such a "classic" as Stevenson has demonstrably lost relevance for the present-day child.

However, the exchange of reviews between Trease and Jenkinson suggests that serious adult literature is out of reach of children as well. Therefore, a new source has to be found; Dedman's criteria for good children's stories become of increasing interest. There is a move towards the serious treatment by teachers of children's fiction; in noting a publisher's remark "the whole trouble with publishing for school libraries today is that the teachers are beginning to read the books", an anonymous contributor to The School Librarian draws attention to a radically different new situation, which is

(21) Ibid: p. 141

(22) Ibid: p. 142

... most clearly illustrated by the reviews of children's books, which now appear in journals like The School Librarian or Junior Bookshelf, reviews which differ markedly from those in the Sunday and Weekly papers, because the question they ask, even of fiction books, are so clearly educational. For what age is this book written? Does its reading age match its content? How will it be used? And - most revealing of all - is it sound? (23)

There is a developmental hint here, a different aspect of which had already been noted by Townsend when talking of the proliferation of pulp paperbacks.

It is a symptom, not a cause, of an alarming deficiency in adult taste ... it is school which forms, or fails to form, taste. (24)

Serious treatment of children's reading should attempt to guard against this deficiency in adult taste from being perpetuated. As J.H. Walsh says (25)

Of course, the children will work through this present state (of comic reading) and turn to fresh reading matter. But it will not be because they recognise the inadequacy of their present heroes: it will be because new heroes have taken the place of the old. Will these new heroes be better ones or worse? (26)

Once again, it is stated that the school and the teacher must act as arbiters of taste; a point taken up by Webber:

What is our ultimate aim in persuading these children to read? We hope, by the time they leave school, to have led them to appreciate books as a lifelong source of pleasure and a valuable source of information. (27)

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- (23) Publishing for School Libraries - The School Librarian Vol. 6, No. 1, March 1952, pp. 21-26.
- (24) Townsend, John Rowe: Paperbacks: Use of English Vol. 3, No. 1, Autumn 1951.
- (25) Walsh, J.H. Harold, Marjorie and Eagle: Use of English Vol. 4, No. 1, Autumn 1952, pp. 5-8.
- (26) Ibid: p. 8
- (27) Webber, J: Reading Matter for the Modern School Use of English Vol. 4, No. 3, Spring 1953, pp. 141-4.

The most important work in this respect was that of E.W. Hildick who, while teaching and contributing to periodicals such as The Use of English, was himself trying to evolve a type of children's fiction which would satisfy Jenkinson's criteria and also be acceptable and entertaining to children. In this section we shall examine the development of his work and early reactions to the type of literature for children he began to produce. We will make clear the nature of his own synthesis between "interest" and "worth" - "the bridge between classics and rubbish". The first necessity for him was to analyse why comic reading was unsuitable. He regrets the new phenomenon of the comic strip and shows that the old-style long story at least made children read. This is not so of the strip.

The worst make no demands on a child's reading ability and even those that set out to do so fail, because in appealing to the backward reader's sense of logical sequence, they're appealing to something usually that isn't there. (28)

Subsequently, Hildick modifies this attitude - which itself, is interestingly countered by M. Lewis (29).

It is difficult to see a clear connection between the reading of comics and reading in general, nor can one say that the spread of comics has been harmful to reading in general by children (30).

This point echoes those made by progressive writers earlier - that comics and thrillers provided the essential reading practice for the child. Indeed, the visual impact

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- (28) Hildick, E.W.: Comics, carrots and backward readers. Use of English
Vol. 5, No. 4, Summer 1954, pp. 235-7.
- (29) Lewis, M.M.: Children's Reading and Illiteracy The School Librarian
Vol. 7, No. 1, March 1954, pp. 24-26.
- (30) Ibid: p. 24

criticised by Hildick is to Lewis a positive boon - not only in comics but new media generally.

It becomes the teacher's task to develop the children's potentialities, and to use the visual image which is available through these media to develop the children's ability in reading. (31)

Hildick's own modification comes from practical teaching experience - and is an obvious pointer to the nature of his own early works of fiction (32). He talks of a communal oral composition with his pupils which led to criticism of their own stories which, in turn, led to a now informed criticism of the stories in comics. Hildick's aim through this criticism was to turn children against comics: this, he feels, was itself a mistake.

... instead of setting out to turn children against comics, I ought to have aimed at weaning them from comics. Well, I admit that that would have been a much better way - if there had existed any satisfactory literary counter-attraction to the comic-strip. (33)

Hildick's approach to providing the "satisfactory literary counter-attraction" was towards relevance to the child's life. He itemised the potential children's author's main problems as those of speech, taste and culture, thus implying a far higher level of identification of author with child-reader than suggested by many other writers. It is not the business of this enquiry to embark on criticisms of Hildick's early work in fiction: Nevertheless, it is worth noting that J. Ashlin, in reviewing Jim Starling and Jim Starling and the Agency, said he gave them to read to a boy whose

(31) Ibid: p. 26

(32) Hildick, E.W. Combating Comics: Use of English Vol. 6, No. 2, Winter 1954, pp. 80-84.

(33) Ibid: p. 84

... experience in "English" throughout most of his school life have bred in him a suspicion and a distaste for literature of any kind. (34)

The boy, though critical of certain minor features, liked the books. While Hildick moved towards writing books of obvious social relevance for non-literary children, another children's writer, James Reeves, tried to define a literary quality in writing for children which in its own right would be valid. (35)

For practical purposes it does not matter whether we adopt the exclusive or the inclusive definition, provided we keep our standards high enough. When we teach children "literature", we mean we teach them good literature, or as good as they can appreciate. (36)

Using The Diary of Anne Frank as a model, he says,

Her rapid and brilliant characterisation are remarkable as literary performances; yet they are artless except in the instinct for selection which they show - the instinctive understanding of the meaning of significant detail. (37)

The suggestion here is that the merits of children's literature as opposed to good adult fiction - as far as the artistic performance of the writer is concerned - is of degree, not kind. The literary qualities Reeves sees which make the Diary a good children's book are precisely those possessed by a good writer for adults. Anne Frank wrote as a child: she communicates, says Reeves, especially to children - yet she has qualities which are possessed by any able writer without reference to whom he is writing. This leads on to a further distinction made later by Trease (38).

(34) School Librarian, Vol. 9, No. 4, March 1959

(35) Reeves, James: What is Literature? Use of English Vol. 7, No. 4, Summer 1956, pp. 239-43

(36) Ibid: p. 242

(37) Ibid: p. 243

(38) Trease, Geoffrey: Why write for children? The School Librarian Vol. 10, No. 2, July 1960, pp. 102-108

Some children's writers, Trease says, reject the adult world - they exhibit "an imaginative elapse into childhood".

... Myself, though, I find the adult world a splendid - if often terrible - thing. I have a quite old-fashioned urge to tell the new boys about it, to communicate information and enthusiasm, re-create the past, interpret the present, and help them understand their surroundings and themselves. (39)

Trease, therefore, has returned us to Jenkinson's distinction - helping them to grow up. Writing for children had become a respectable educational as well as literary activity. It is noteworthy that three of the writers who have featured much in this section - Townsend, Hildick and Trease - involved themselves deeply in both educational and literary aspects of the problem and thus began to fill the gaps in literary provision for children noted by Jenkinson and his successors.

Three possible approaches can be isolated - Hildick's to proceed from the child's own interests and experience; Reeves, to present a literary quality differing from that of adult literature only in point of view and nature of communication; Trease, as an interpreter for children of experience which might not be theirs - an initiator into experience. The first approach allies itself perhaps to the literary theory to be outlined by Rosenblatt, the other two lean on Scott. All three seem to show a direct connection with the pleas of Jenkinson. The themes adumbrated in this section will be taken up in more detail subsequently.

(c) The Children's Author Himself - Trease and Lewis

One important explanation of children's fiction's becoming an element of education was a new self-consciousness on the part of the author for children himself about his function. The Cambridge School sought work able to be understood at levels below that of the discriminating elite but not "catchpenny juvenile productions". The progressives wanted a literature of relevance offering personal growth as part of a common culture. Everybody wanted a "bridge between classics and rubbish". Darton (40), Doyle (41) and Lancelyn Green (42) drew attention to the history and traditions of children's literature and claimed a value for it separate from that of the traditional view of the cultural heritage.

If a serious literature for children on this basis was to establish itself completely, it followed that the form needed dignifying as a genre in its own right - much as Henry James in the nineteenth century dignified the novel form itself by providing a critical account of it in terms of his own creative process. The main reason Trease gives for writing for children is to be found in remembrance of childhood and the modifying relationship with children (43). Trease spends much time in his survey criticising those authors who deliberately try to satisfy children's tastes, for they are the purveyors of "rubbish".

One tries to please, naturally. But when one begins deliberately to "cater" like a

(40) Darton, F.J. Harvey: Children's Books in England: Five Centuries of Social life 2nd Ed. CUP 1958.

(41) Doyle, Brian: Who's Who in Children's Literature

(42) Lancelyn Green, Roger: Tellers of Tales new edition Ward 1969.

(43) Trease, G. Tales out of School Heinemann 1949 (Edition med: 2nd ed. 1964)

school dietitian adding up calories and checking off vitamins, then one begins to write down. (44)

Trease mentions the process of recall and re-expression of childhood as being a fit purpose for the children's novel. This memory should not entail any "emotional fixation" in adolescence.

... one can have the vivid memory without the emotional fixation, and it is that, I suggest, which has drawn fine sensitive books from writers like Walter de la Mare and A.A. Milne, who are no less at home in the adult world. (45)

This leads to an interpretative function for the children's author, which Trease, in another article (46) expresses, as already noted and quoted:

... I find the adult world a splendid, if often terrible, thing. I have a quite old-fashioned urge to tell the new boys about it, to communicate information and enthusiasm, re-create the past, interpret the present, and help them understand their surroundings and themselves. (47)

These remarks indicate a view of a special function for the children's author: a function which will bring to children's fiction a specificity of purpose which will not be encompassed by O'Malley's distinction between "prose written for grown-ups but chancing to have a secondary interest ... and ... material written for children that has also an interest to grownups". (48) The themes outlined by Trease are expanded considerably by C.S. Lewis. (49) Lewis's first way of writing for children is that criticised by Trease -

(44) Ibid: p. 24

(45) Ibid: p. 24

(46) See above: p.331

(47) Ibid: p. 103

(48) See above: p.276

(49) Op. cit: see above, p.277 (Edition quoted from - Haviland, V. (ed): Children and Literature: Views and Reviews Scott, Foreman (U.S.) 1973, pp. 231-240

the catering for a public..

There is no question of "children" conceived as a strange species whose habits you have "made up" like an anthropologist or a commercial traveller. (50)

He repeats a point made by Trease about the children's story appearing modified by the particular children to whom it was originally told.

In any personal relation the two participants modify each other. You would become slightly different because you were talking to a child and the child would become slightly different because he was being talked to by an adult. A community, a composite personality, is created and out of that the story grows. (51)

Lewis's third way is, in this context, the most important simply because it imputes to stories for children an artistic and aesthetic importance which, in Lewis's eyes, makes them as valid as, and not mere substitutes for, any items contained in the traditional version of the cultural heritage.

The third way ... consists in writing a children's story because a children's story is the best art form for something you have to say; just as a composer might write a Dead March, not because there was a public funeral in view but because certain musical ideas that had occurred to him went best into that form. (52)

If then, the children's story has an artistic validity in its own right, it follows that it has currency beyond its immediate purpose.

I am almost inclined to set it up as a canon that a children's story which is enjoyed only by children is a bad

(50) Ibid: p. 232

(51) Ibid: p. 232

(52) Ibid: p. 232

children's story. The good ones last.
A waltz which you can like only when
you are waltzing is a bad waltz. (53)

The distinction made by Lewis is one of far greater subtlety than that made by O'Malley. It also has implications concerning development: that we are the sum of all our developmental stages.

A tree grows because it adds rings: a
train doesn't grow by leaving one station
behind and puffing on to the next. (54)

This proposition in turn leads to the most detailed description so far of part of what Jenkinson meant by his distinction between "helping" and "compensating".

... let us again lay the fairy tale side by side with the school story ... There is no doubt that both arouse, and imaginatively satisfy, wishes. We long to go through the looking-glass, to reach fairyland. We also long to be the immensely popular and successful schoolboy or school-girl, or the lucky boy or girl who discovers the spy's plot or rides the horse that none of the cowboys can manage. But the two longings are very different. The second ... is ravenous and deadly serious. Its fulfilment on the level of imagination is in very truth compensatory: we run to it from the disappointments and humiliations; it sends us back to the real world undivinely discontented. (55)

The story which leads to "fairyland" on the other hand does not thus cheat the reader, for

(he) desires and is happy in the very fact of desiring, for his mind has not been concentrated on himself. (56)

The work of imaginative fantasy can help more in "growing up" than the work that is truly "fantasying" in the way outlined by

(53) Ibid: p. 233

(54) Ibid: p. 234

(55) Ibid: p. 236

(56) Ibid: p. 237

Leavis and Thompson (57). That "fantasy" not seemingly allied to the real world can be constructive parallels the similar point made by Scott. (58) The experience offered in such a "fantasy" of "fairyland" will, in effect, be that hinted at by Trease when he talked of "the old-fashioned urge to tell the new boys all about it". It will be personal experience transmuted into art by the author.

... everything in the story should arise from the whole cast of the author's mind. We must write for children out of those elements in our own imagination which we share with children: differing from our child readers not by any less, or less serious interest in the things we handle, but by the fact that we have other interests which children would not share with us. The matter of our story should be part of the habitual furniture of our minds. (59)

Lewis's account, therefore, parallels that of other writers in that it predicates a purpose and a function for fiction which can also be seen in the assertions of both the Cambridge School and the progressives. It leans towards a progressive version of the cultural heritage (however much in his novels Lewis expressed dislike of a "progressive" mode of education) in that this function concerns the notion of personal growth. It rejects the view that bad literature is a stepping-stone to the good, held by Ballard, Sampson and Finch. However, its main effect was to establish the children's writer himself as a figure of substance who could have an important relationship with the child.

(57) See above: p.180

(58) See above: p.305

(59) Ibid: p. 238

(d) Young Writers, Young Readers (60) and David Holbrook

This extended examination to be made of Young Writers, Young Readers will, it is hoped, establish it as another synthesising document of some importance, from which David Holbrook's own approach leads quite naturally. Young Writers, Young Readers can be seen as a fusion of the approaches of the descendants of the Cambridge School on the one hand, and Romantic-progressive thought on the other. Elements of discrimination and the search for values are juxtaposed with and dependent on a sense of the child's own creativity. Romantic, Coleridgean theories of creativity form the starting point for the book: the notion of personal growth is the most important of all.

... thus verse and prose (of the children) represents an important and legitimate part of the business of growing up, and it records a seismograph of children's development through the years of school life from five to eighteen years. (61)

The book falls into two parts. The comments upon the children's writing in the first part assume a Wordsworthian innocence in childhood corrupted in adulthood by an inimical society, so that there is a sincerity, sensitivity and accuracy doomed to disappear. A romantic-progressive view of the child develops into the acerbity of the Cambridge School.

It is only when children such as these become adult that it is difficult to find writing of genuine originality and sensitivity. All too many of these children are likely to give up creative writing altogether, finding that the adult world is mainly interested to have them

(60) Ford, Boris (ed.) Young Writers, Young Readers: Hutchinson 1960.
(edited from material in The Journal of Education, 1955, 1956, 1957, and The Use of English)

(61) Ibid: p. 1 (Ford: Introduction: Children's Writing)

write creative advertisement copy or creative
lending-library fiction. (62)

At the end of this extract, the influence of the Cambridge School is clear. Complementary with it is the compilers' estimate of reading material provided for children. As for adults, it has the divisions of "good" and "bad", the "bad" corresponding to the "fantasying" literature condemned by Leavis and Thompson (63); that which, in Jenkinson's words, "compensates for the difficulties of growing up". (64)

... mostly, the books of stories, the verses, the adventures, that fill the shelves of libraries and bookshops (not to mention the comics that litter the stalls) are insipid and concocted like a coloured drink for teenagers. Far from re-entering a child's world, the cajole the child into a suburban doll's house or on to a toy-soldier's battlefield. From the disinfected set smile to the muscle-bound gesture of violence: such is the emotional range with which the great bulk of adult authors try to entice children out of their deeply moral world that stretches from great toughness to tenderness. (65)

Janice Dohm extends the point made above in terms reminiscent of C.S. Lewis and illuminates Jenkinson's criteria in so doing.

Adults may choose to remain immature in their reading, but no child has chosen his immaturity and most are still trying to climb out of it as quickly as they can. (66)

In rejecting the "formula" book typified by the work of Enid Blyton, Dohm says:

The world created by the mediocre, in any medium and whatever motivates the maker, is small and shoddy, gradually closing the minds

(62) Ibid: p. 2

(63) See above: p.181

(64) See above: p.257

(65) Ibid: p. 98

(66) Ibid: p. 106

and narrowing the interests of the audience until only the few familiar formulas can provide entertainment and escape. But there are few children who, if caught young enough, cannot respond to quality in one form or another, and there is a wide range of excellent and imaginative books to set before them. (67)

This passage obviously imputes great power to fiction either to "help" or "compensate" and is certainly at one with the Cambridge School. The second sentence, however, provides an interesting variation of a familiar argument. No longer are children to be weaned to quality by being introduced to "Treasure Island" under the guise of "a better pirate story than that in the comics". Dohm intimates that the predilection for quality actually exists in children and, if "caught young enough" they will "respond to quality". This view is strongly Romantic in a way which owes as much to Rousseau as to Wordsworth. Here, set in conjunction with the Cambridge School's assertions of the debasement inherent in industrial society and the triviality of the civilisation it engenders, Dohm's point marks a clear example of the fusion of progressive thought with that of the Cambridge School. The combination of the child's innocence and craving for quality and the rejection of the trivia of the mass-media lead to a new interest in the nature of literature actually supplied for children. Therefore, an important feature of Young Writers, Young Readers is its attempts to discriminate among children's writers. Blyton and W.E. Johns come in for special criticism. Blytôn is criticised because her sort of work

never leaves the most underprivileged child's mental environment, and ... usually suggests that any book which does so is probably difficult and dull, for prigs and intellectuals only. (68)

Johns is criticised because the

... combination of an offered philosophy and a flippant tone is characteristic: the cynicism is so complete that it cannot take even itself seriously. Children all too easily drink in attitudes such as these when they are defenceless, though being absorbed in an existing narrative. (69)

Barnes, in this article, makes the point that

For a child, fantasy can supply a preliminary involvement in wider experience, a kind of trial-run in adult life.

However, Johns' books provide no such analogy to adult experience.

Thus, "the intelligent boy - the average or above average grammar school pupil" -

usually reads a number of these stories, but with many others of different kinds during his twelfth year ... then he abruptly stops and appears to despise them. (70)

However, Barnes says:

Many less gifted children come upon the stories a year or two later, when their apprehension of reality is beginning to congeal into more permanent patterns. And some continue reading little else but Biggles for several important formative years ... one imagines that for this last group the stories are filling - but not satisfying - some dominant emotional need. (71)

One recalls Lewis's use of the phrase "ravenous and deadly serious".

This again strongly implies the Cambridge School's view of the literary elite which can discriminate while the rest must be helped as near to this state as possible against the soulless expression

(68) Dohm, Janice: The work of Enid Blyton: Young Writers, Young Readers, p. 103

(69) Barnes, T.R.: Captain Johns and the Adult World Ibid: p. 122

(70) Ibid: p. 116

(71) Ibid: p. 116-117

of a modern society. The values implicit in a "Biggles" book, says Barnes, are exactly those of the "fantasying" literature itemised by Leavis and Thompson and feared by Lewis.

However, Young Writers, Young Readers mentions many authors able to "help in growing up" (in Jenkinson's terms) - Andersen, Alcott, Burnett, Carroll, Defoe, Dickens, Grahame, Jefferies, Kingsley, MacDonald, Nesbit, Ruskin, Sewell, Stevenson, Swift, Twain and Verne are recommended as pre-twentieth century authors. Also, many twentieth-century living authors are recommended as well, as "potential classics" - such as "B.B." Boston, de la Mare, Enright, Garnett, Harnett, Lewis, Lofting, Lynch, Mayne, Norton, Pearce, Ransome, Tolkien, Travers, Uttley and Williamson. Many other contemporary authors are also recommended (72). In this work comes a full acceptance of the notion of children's fiction - including contemporary fiction - as an integral part of the progressive version of the cultural heritage, subject to tests both of discrimination (for "incisive emotional integrity" as proposed by Ford) and the artistic integrity proposed by C.S. Lewis. Many of the same points are made by Holbrook, in English for Maturity, who defines even further the specific place of fiction in the education of the child:

The novel, as D.H. Lawrence said, illumines many secret places of life - the unspoken workings of the mind and being. The long story of manners and morals gives the growing child not only a more satisfying experience than poem or play can give at the same age, but at the same time gives most important opportunity to discuss an imaginative experience in all its aspects with his fellows. The value of this is greater in our time, when we tend to consider our deeper

motivation less and less, and because the themes of the greatest novelists have been largely those concerning the uniqueness of each individual life, in a society which has become more and more complex, impersonal and indifferent to the individual. To have thought and felt this problem through the good novel is almost an essential qualification for a member of a democracy being that of a work of art - an imaginative experience in a prose form.
(73)

This statement of values has been preceded by the observation

... the development of interest in the long story is a natural one for a growing child. (74)

Holbrook has placed in a developmental context his claim for the uniqueness of fiction in education: he implies the elements of empathetic involvement and identification in "the long story of manners and morals" and sees them as crucial because of their exploration of "individual life" in society. This statement about the "social" good of novel reading ("qualification for a member of a democracy") recalls Scott (75): the insistence on the novel's being "an imaginative experience in a prose form" stands by Ford's "incisive emotional integrity of the words ..." (76) and obviously stands against Leavis and Thompson's "fantasying" and Jenkinson's "compensating" literature. Holbrook is firmly in the tradition stemming from Leavis and Richards: his prescriptions for child reading move away from the traditional version of the cultural heritage and towards an idiom characterised by simplicity and sincerity - again, the "incisive emotional integrity". At the same time, the insistence by both Holbrook and the compilers of Young Writers, Young Readers on creativity complete the fusion with

(73) Op. cit: p. 166

(74) Ibid: p. 166

(75) See above: p. 307

(76) See above: p. 280

romantic-progressive thought in a way which enables C.S. Lewis's account of the writing of fiction, the isolation of children's fiction as a genre in its own right and the attempts during the period to combine the notions of "interest" and "worth" all to be incorporated into a new synthesis of ideas to be developed further in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5 : 1960 TO THE PRESENT DAY

CHAPTER 5 - 1960 to the present day

Introduction

The division of this chapter into two parts is made for reasons similar to those given for the division in Chapter 4. Part 1 provides the framework of ideas, whilst Part 2 considers their practical consequences and implications. This chapter is by far the longest of this survey because far more has been written on the subject during this period than any other. Chapter 4 draws attention to the emergence of a children's literature largely intended to give children literary experience different in degree and not kind from the works in "the great tradition". This literature, because it was called "literature", should aspire to the aesthetic and moral values of the "best" works - those appreciated by the "discriminating elite"; because it was also "children's", should be written by people with, if not a knowledge of child development, certainly a notion of responsibility towards the child. Because it was intended at least partly for use in schools, it should embody many of the values of an emergent "common culture". This loose network of ideas provides the framework for the ever-increasing activity in fiction which has developed since 1960.

In Chapter 5 two main areas of common ground were established between progressive critics and the Cambridge School. First were ideas of imagination and creativity in the child. Second - really an aspect of the first but more directly relevant to this enquiry - was the nature of response to literature/fiction, a response which depended on active involvement in the text, in turn demanding clear criteria for the nature of the text. Guidelines for criticism of a specific children's literature

began to develop. This criticism took as its starting point Jenkinson's distinction between books which help and books which compensate and could satisfy both progressives and Cambridge School alike. An explanation of the way this criticism would develop was made by Blackie (1) who states unequivocally that prose literature being written for children was greatly superior to verse being written for children. He forcibly makes the point that no longer does the teacher have to depend on myth, folk-lore, legend, etc. for unambiguous stories for children. In defining this new prose literature, Blackie says:

The characteristic common to all of them, and to all books which I should choose for children, is a fundamental seriousness in the sense of not being superficial. Even when the experiences are fantastic, they have, in these books, the quality of seriousness, and where they are amusing they are not trivial. In this way they are in contrast to another group of children's books which I should banish from school and, as a parent, discourage from home, books in which the fantasy and the fun have no firm root in real experience. (2)

This statement contains within it the critical standards established in Young Writers, Young Readers, especially by Dohm and Barnes, and further asserts Ford's "incisive emotional integrity". In its distinction between types of fantasy it echoes Trease and Lewis. It may stand as a statement which will inform all the discussion in this section of the enquiry, since it has important implications for the succeeding stages of the formation of the progressive version of the cultural heritage.

(1) Blackie, J: Good enough for the Children? Faber, 1963

(2) Ibid: p. 56

Part 1 - The Place of Fiction

(a) Ideas to be dealt with

In the first part of this chapter, synthesis between progressive writers and the Cambridge School will be examined. This first part will look at such writers as Greber, F.W. Whitehead, Inglis and Abbs, whose moral concern and anti-industrial bias seem to carry on the work of the Cambridge School, Bantock, W. Walsh and Holbrook. Their literature-based progressivism implies rejection of modern urban society and a constant redefinition of values as urged by Leavis.

However, another form of progressive thought, centering on the personal growth model but rejecting the primacy of literature, gains strength during this period. Writers such as Bernstein, the Rosens, Britton, Doughty and Wilkinson must be examined for a definition of the place of literature within a language-based philosophy of English teaching. Coincident with this and in many ways connected with it are two other movements of great importance. One is the progressive-egalitarian search for "relevance", leading to a thematic approach to literature and detectable in much Schools Council work and especially in Stenhouse. The second is the radical approach. Here the notion of cultural relativism, entailing rejection of all versions of the cultural heritage, as evidenced in the work of Searle and (on a more practical level) Worpole, will be examined. It will be noticed that little direct mention will be made in this section of teachers and writers representing the skills model or the traditional version of the cultural heritage. This is not because the line of thought is dead

(see Froome's Note of Dissent in the Bullock Report (3)), but because there is little development to trace within it, despite the appearance of successive Black Papers. As already stated, most of its cultural and societal assertions have been subsumed into the values expressed by the Cambridge School and teachers educated or influenced by F.R. Leavis. This subsection will end with what may be loosely described as "synthesising documents" although their status as such is not so clear-cut as, say, the Newbolt Report, Young Writers, Young Readers or the work of Jenkinson and Scott. First there will be examination of the work in the U.S.A. which reached Britain during this period, of Louise Rosenblatt because its approach seeks to combine a number of utterances concerning literature made as a result of the 1966 Dartmouth Seminar.

(b) The Literature-based Progressives and the Cambridge School

Talking of the fiction section of a lower stream form bookshelf, Holbrook says, in English for the Rejected (4)

The bulk of classroom texts are grotesquely Philistine ... the re-telling of the "world's great stories" in various forms in books for less able children destroys most of the point of the epithet "great" ... the fiction sections, then, is barren of art ... The non-fiction section, on the other hand, is full of beautiful and striking books ... so we have an overall picture, once more, of what our industrial-commercial civilisation considers valuable. Or, if you like, another demonstration of its essential inefficiency. Children need to explore their inner experience through phantasy: this faculty is not nourished.

(4) Holbrook, D: English for the Rejected CUP 1963

Instead, their attention is sent outwards, towards things that "go". (These non-fiction books) seldom go beyond asking "How?" to ask "Why?", even when wondering such problems as language and "the growth of civilisation". They assume that we move from drumbeat to tickertape; they assume Progress, and express none of the doubts backward children must inevitably feel about the "march of man". (5)

This statement extends themes noted in Young Writers, Young Readers and English for Maturity and shows itself part of a tradition carried on by Creber, F. Whitehead, Inglis and Abbs. The "inner experience" is starved by society's insistence on the debased values of industrialism. Creber's (6) prescriptions for the secondary school bring together progressive thought and that of the Cambridge School. He calls for a

systematic course of imaginative work ...
utilising the characteristic interests
of the child at succeeding ages of his or
her development (7).

He quotes Edmond Holmes in support of this aim, showing he is in the progressive tradition. His criticism of contemporary 11+ education is that it denies the child's world of experience "through sensation" and he quotes Raymond Williams in The Long Revolution on the necessity for "the transmission of valued experience". This phrase, suggesting an attitude to an emergent progressive version of the cultural heritage, is used to introduce an argument about literature which is very reminiscent of the Cambridge School.

Many of our pupils live in two worlds as far as literature is concerned; or rather, they live in one and "go through the motions" in the other. The first is the world of Pop singers and pulp magazines, while the second is that of officially-sanctioned literature which is, of

(5) Ibid: pp. 276-7

(6) Creber, H.W.P. : Sense and Sensitivity ULP 1965

(7) Ibid: p. 12

course, "very good", but has little or no relevance outside the classroom. (8)

Echoes of the need for "the bridge between classics and rubbish", of Pickering on relevance of literature for children and of the Cambridge School's urgent unease about modern society are strong here. Greber's remedy is based on the child's experience: the bridge will not be made in terms of the traditional view of the cultural heritage. Chapter 1, on the first year, is entitled The Rediscovery of the Familiar, and Chapter 2, on the second and third years, The Growth of Consciousness. The titles alone indicate the child-centred, progressive stance. Greber's prescriptions for fiction take two forms. The one is mimetic exercises reminiscent not only of Pocock and R.T. Lewis, but also of Caldwell Cook and the "Ilonds". In dealing with writing from stimuli for second years and beyond, Greber says:

... it is in the sphere of narrative that many may most easily take to atmospheric writing. They can learn just how much difference is made to a story by the appropriate atmosphere. In this connection some study of novels, in particular of the opening paragraphs, is often illuminating. See, for example, the beginning of Rosemary Sutcliffe's Outcast ... (9)

Greber's justifications for literature are as follows:

I have asserted that there need be no dichotomy between the interests of the child and those of the subject, and this holds as true, it seems to me, in the field of books as in that of creative writing. An approach to English "through literature" is not only compatible with a child-centred education, it is an indispensable part of it - provided that the initial emphasis and criteria derived from the teacher's appreciation of the child. (10)

(8) Ibid; p. 18

(9) Ibid; p. 60

(10) Ibid; p. 161

Here he rejects the traditional version of the cultural heritage. In placing the needs of the child first, Creber is asserting its progressive version as outlined in Young Writers, Young Readers, while still suggesting the primacy of literature as a form of language use. He continues:

Children's imaginative reading becomes really absorbed and active as soon as they have half-recognised some personal analogy. When one sees first- and second-year children reading, for example, The Boy who was afraid by Armstrong Sperry, C.D. Lewis's The Otterbury Incident, The Family from One End Street by E. Garnett or Emil and the Detectives by Erich Kastner, one sees transiently reflected on their faces "traces of a great part of (their) past experience" in a way that is not different in kind from the reaction of an adult moved by a simple line of poetry. (11)

There is an impressionism in this extract which is imprecise. Nevertheless, it implies a developmental approach and in its recognition of shared experience as an element in literary appreciation it connects with the more precise work of Pickard, Harding and Britton to be examined subsequently, as well as recalling Blackie's words about "real experience".

Creber, then, has asserted a primacy of literature which is in direct line with Young Writers, Young Readers and Holbrook. The notion of experience as the basis of English teaching and the part literature plays in this is similar to what is implied in Jenkinson's distinction. F.Whitehead's approach (12) is more prescriptive than that of Creber. Strongly influenced by W.J. Scott as well as his own earlier survey of attitudes to novels read in schools (13), he

(11) Ibid: p. 164

(12) Whitehead, F: (op. cit) The Disappearing Dais; Chatto & Windus 1966

(13) See above: p. 351

leads to a notion of why children read. Basing his statement on Terman and Lima (14) he says:

a major motive ... is the desire to obtain vicarious satisfaction of a wish-fulfilment kind. (15)

This reason recalls Phillips (16) and also reflects back interestingly to Hourd (17), with the implication that with this "wish-fulfilment" comes a lack of the "balance of forces" necessary to creativity: "weeping Priam's tears in order to escape from our own". Whitehead, as he develops his argument, shows implicit agreement with Jenkinson's distinction. The already noted negative correlation for aesthetic and formal criteria in his earlier survey (18) does not allow him to be content with "wish-fulfilment" and "vicarious satisfaction". By implication, "the book which helps children to grow up" offers

an extension for the capacity for experience, an enlargement and refinement of that imaginative sympathy through which we gain an increased grasp of the realities of human living and a deeper insight into the ways in which human beings (including ourselves) think and feel and behave and affect one another. (19)

This statement of the affective values in literature and the stress on the internal understanding and "enlargement" of "sympathy" are in line with progressive thought. Whitehead's statements about values in society, however, indicate his connections with the Cambridge School. He rejects the values he sees in the mass-media.

Comics and commercials, headlines and hoardings - these typify the influences which are at work

(14) Terman and Lima: (as quoted by Whitehead)

(15) Op. cit: p. 45

(16) See above: p. 287

(17) See above: p. 290

(18) See above: p. 317

(19) Ibid: p. 48

all the time bludgeoning or beguiling our children into eschewing mental and spiritual effort and accepting the satisfaction which is easy, immediate and ready-to-hand. (20)

The role of the teacher - akin to Arnold's "alien" and thus very much in the spirit of the Cambridge School - is here vital.

This process of "playing down to the lowest common factor in us all" is at work to some degree in all popular entertainment, popular journalism and popular fiction. Clearly it is flatly counter to all the English teachers' efforts. (21)

Whitehead accepts a progressive version of the cultural heritage. Like the contributors to Young Writers, Young Readers, he criticises inferior children's reading (W.E. Johns) in terms of values, exactness of language and worth. In commenting on a passage from a "Biggles" book, he says:

... interest and tension are maintained almost entirely by an unrelenting accumulation of incident: there is no dwelling on any single item in the sequence, and little attempt at any genuinely realised immediacy of presentation ... The tension and mental stress which would be inseparable from such an experience in real life are wholly absent, and the characters are presented as the merest silhouettes with no interior life whatever (22).

By comparison, his comment on a passage from J. Mead Falkner's Moonfleet is as follows:

The excitement here is a matter of entering into the experience of the narrator in his hazardous situation, an experience which has been realised

(20) Ibid: p. 56

(21) Ibid: p. 57

(22) Ibid: pp. 51-52

with vivid immediacy both in the external world of action and in the internal world of feeling. (23)

The difference is made in terms which recall Ford's "the incisive emotional integrity of the words". The words themselves are the touchstones by which Whitehead detects the "fantasying" work: the "work which compensates for the difficulties of growing up" rather than the work which promotes growing up. In his stress on values in literature and his rejection of that which tends to "the lowest common factor in us all", Whitehead is strongly in the Cambridge tradition. In his search to provide a literature for children based on Jenkinson's distinction and his assertion of the need for creative approaches to reading and work in literature he is plainly a literature-based progressive. The justification for the use of the novel in school given by Inglis is in many ways similar. He constantly reiterates the need for the personal involvement of the teacher in formalising the experience of the child, and, like Holbrook, sees literature and fiction as being an essential means of constantly redefining this experience for the child. (24) Of the novel as an art form, Inglis says in another work (25)

The finest novels, I propose, are written by an author who commands his material from above, and not from within one of the characters; who writes as well as he can in his own voice, and in plain, direct prose; who has a grasp of the movements of history and society; and whose novel is related to such movements. He should have a subject of some importance, which admits prose of dignity, suppleness and precision; finally, he should be concerned to trace the growth of relationships between men and women, and between places, and to define the moral values which live and grow

(23) Ibid: p. 55

(24) Inglis, F. : The Englishness of English Teaching CUP 1969

(25) Inglis, F. : An Essential Discipline Methuen 1968

in a civilisation. His job is to find and nourish civilisation, to cultivate the finest life he knows. (26)

The definition of the novelist is close to the Cambridge School's understanding of the functions of the critical elite. The novel is a responsible form, transmitting society's best values. Notions of relationships, sense of place and definition of "the moral values which live and grow in a civilisation" show the validity of the cultural heritage. However, Inglis states that the novel as a form is living - the values it defines "live and grow". For Inglis, the cultural heritage does not merely reside in the traditional version and its "acknowledged masterpieces" (27). Literature's function within a society is all-embracing.

If ... one is looking, not for a specialism but a common meeting ground, then literature is the oldest such meeting ground, and it is still the best. (28)

Literature's function is vital to mental and social health.

As it becomes harder to discover the identity, community and strong sense of place and home which marked earlier English societies, then we may turn to the study of literature to re-affirm and cultivate this lost sense, for without it there is no chance of a living civilisation. (29)

The concept of the constantly adapting tradition running counter to the values of the industrial society, therefore, is entirely that of the Cambridge School. The notion Inglis has of the nature of the literary tradition and its constant redefinition can be seen in his remarks on the modern children's novel. After criticising Rosemary Sutcliff and Philippa Pearce for a certain fudging of moral issues in the name of liberalism he states firmly:

(26) Ibid: p. 253

(27) See above: p. 175

(28) Ibid: p. 254

(29) Ibid: p. 254

The one exhilarating aspect of literature for children today is that its authors have not relinquished the idea of goodness. (30)

In the literature embodying the progressive version of the cultural heritage, Inglis sees something of the moral quality he has isolated as a peculiar attribute of the novel. In the fact that Rosemary Sutcliff and Philippa Pearce - who are distinctively children's novelists - exemplify the new literature for children, Inglis indicates his acceptance of the progressive version of the cultural heritage as part of his own synthesis between progressive thought and that of the Cambridge School.

In the same way, Abbs makes claims for the centrality of literature, though with a different emphasis. Abbs stresses a psychological element, more in the manner of Holbrook, when he parallels psychotherapy with the creative process.

Good psychotherapy consists in the person bringing the suffering to the light of consciousness, reliving it, with the consequent freeing of his personality. How similar this is to Emily Dickinson! She has a terror, she experiences it, heightens it even, creates from it and then moves through it (31).

But the comparison is not complete.

Art is not therapy, though it may contain therapeutic elements ... One needs the fusing of great thought with powerful feeling. The work of art has to go beyond the creator to be relevant for man. (32)

Abbs is at one with the Cambridge School when he opposes this high, liberating function of Art and Literature to the values of the mass-media -

(30) Inglis, F. : What shall we tell the Children? Children's Literature in Education, No. 13, 1974; p. 31.

(31) Abbs, Peter; English for Diversity Heinemann Educational Books, 1969, p. 44

(32) Ibid; pp. 44-45

... the nature of the trash presented to the teenager on the mass-markets ... the English teacher ... sees the constant effect of the mass media on creative work. Again and again free drama enacts a plot on last night's television; a mundane plot with the stereotyped characters ... (33)

Like Inglis, Abbs moves towards a conception of the progressive version of the cultural heritage when he writes of another representative of serious literature for children. In commenting on the work of Penelope Lively, he says:

The novels ... present real children undergoing real adventures and changing in relation to their experiences. The novels are dense with life, with fun and growth ... essentially preoccupied with time, vision, memory and the present moment running back into the continuum of lived time, which is history. (34)

Children's fiction can be more powerful, significant and more in tune with life than adult fiction, because:

In writing for children, an author must return to the child in himself. (35)

In doing this, the writer such as Penelope Lively does indeed facilitate "the transmission of valued experience". Again, the notions of literature for children being part of a living tradition which can be seen in terms of the cultural heritage, yet which do not depend on "acknowledged masterpieces" is clear. Both Inglis and Abbs imply that the authors they discuss are not in any way "elitist". Accessible to all but defining true values, they provide common ground between progressives and the Cambridge School.

Common to all four writers here examined is an assertion of the

(33) Ibid: pp. 26-27

(34) Abbs, P.; Penelope Lively, Children's Fiction and the failure of Adult Culture Children's Literature in Education, No. 18 Fall 1975, pp. 122-3.

(35) Ibid: p. 123

centrality of literature as a unique means of defining values for the child; a rejection of the values of modern industrial society; a stress on growth and creativity. They represent the most energetic continuation of the thought of the Cambridge English School together with romantic progressive thought. They state that "the incisive emotional integrity of the words" is instrumental in "the transmission of valued experience", and thus, show opposition to the radicals shortly to be examined.

(c) Language-based progressivism

It is not the purpose of this enquiry to trace the rise of linguistics in the teaching of English; merely to indicate the new place of literature within a language-based philosophy.

Mathieson (36) points out that a growing stress on "oracy", rejection of notions of "correctness" in language because of its "irrelevance to the growth of linguistic competence and its underlying assumption of one, unassailable standard" (37) does not necessarily entail a rejection of literature.

... supporters of a new approach in English teaching through oral work are not, in general, hostile to the current emphasis on literature and creativity ... (38).

Mathieson quotes Halliday's attitude towards literature teaching for the working class child - an attitude which sees literary language as admittedly important but certainly not central.

(36) Mathieson, M: Preachers of Culture Allen and Unwin 1975

(37) Ibid: p. 150

(38) Ibid: p. 151

... if the English teacher does not teach the non-literary uses of English, there is no one else to do so ... Moreover, the pupil is more likely to appreciate English literature if he can also understand and get the most out of English in its non-literary uses. Literature is only literature against the background of the language as a whole. (39)

With this notion of literature's being a part - no more or less important than others - of language, one may examine its place in more detail. A comprehensive account of the linguisticians' denial of the primacy of literature is given by Doughty (40). First, he objects to what is in practice a woolliness in the treatment of literature.

The experience of studying literature seems to confer upon English teachers a strong bias against any intellectual activity that exhibits systematic and highly structured procedures. (41)

There is a fear on the part of teachers that what Elton called the "thing" element - which must be discussed to avoid "soggy emotionalism" - might ruin the affective elements of literature. This fear actively renders literature's teaching less effective. There is here an interesting reminder of the fears of the "soft option" expressed by proponents of the skills model. Further discussion concerns the fear of many teachers that linguistic study entails displacement of literature in the curriculum. The true place of literature is defined as follows:

In the new perspective provided by linguistics, literature lost its dominant position, and appeared as only one amongst the many varieties of Written English, that would benefit by being

(39) Ibid: p. 151 (Quoted from Halliday, M.A.K., McIntosh, I., Stevens, P. The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching Longmans 1964., pp. 223-4.

(40) Doughty, P: Programme in Linguistics and English Teaching, Paper 5. Linguistics and the teaching of Literature Communications Research Centre, Department of General Linguistics UCL & Longmans 1968.

(41) Ibid: p. 15

examined from a linguistic point of view. (42)

When it is examined in this way

... literature appears as only one amongst the multitude of uses we have for language. From a linguist's point of view, it has no special claim to attention. (43)

The linguist may have an important function concerning literature:

One thing the linguist may do is to show us the linguistic features that make literature a recognisable major variety of written English: this would enable us to see what patterns of the language it shared with other varieties, and what patterns set it apart from them. Thus we may be able to see more clearly than we do now the directions in which our pupils' command of language is likely to move when they draw strongly upon their experiences of the language of literature. (44)

When looking at literature in the classroom, Doughty isolates three ways in which it may be used: text-centred; information-centred; experience-centred (45). In all these approaches, a linguistic perspective is essential for the teacher. Without it, in his own discussion:

... the teacher has talked about the text in so private a way that his words are literally the only ones available to the class for talking about it. (46)

So the children cannot assimilate the language - either of the literary work or the teacher's words. The teacher's lack of a viable vocabulary can only be remedied by this linguistic perspective:

... linguistic examination ... would not be

(42) Ibid: p. 25

(43) Ibid: p. 27

(44) Ibid: p. 34

(45) Ibid: p. 47

(46) Ibid: p. 55

subject matter to put directly before pupils, but a major aid in the teacher's search for a way of talking about literature.
(47)

The perspective should be part of every teacher's armoury.

The teacher has a particular need to be able to transcend the limitations of a "folk linguistic" knowledge about language: a general understanding of language from a linguistic perspective will be relevant to any part of his work.
(48)

In speaking of the text- and information-centred ways, Doughty proposes an active role for the teacher: the "linguistic perspective" will enable him to bring together the diverse linguistic elements of the children in discussion. This role is clarified in the "experience-centred" way. The teacher's main objective here will be

... the pupil's understanding of his own experience ... the teacher's attention is directed towards a double end: enlarging that experience through confronting for talking and writing that he can devise; and enabling the pupil to make sense of both this new experience and his total experience of the world. (49)

Literature, therefore, has validity only insofar as it enlarges the pupil's experience: the teacher's task is to facilitate this enlargement through initiating effective discussion - effective because of his linguistic perspective. The child will be able to assimilate the language and the experience into his own writing.

An essential element ... must be the pupil's own use of language ... a dynamic relationship (between language and experience) is first acted out in talk before it is available for writing.

A secondary assumption is that literature provides

(47) Ibid: p. 62

(48) Ibid: p. 69

(49) Ibid: p. 74

the major source of vicarious experience available to the teacher: and that this experience becomes available to the pupil through talking about it. Once available to him, it can then become the point of departure for his own writing, which will, hopefully, show signs that he can now find the language necessary for making better sense of his own direct experience of the world. (50)

In the language-based view, therefore, literature is not an end in itself - and certainly not central to English studies. It is part of a process, reflecting its status as one language use among many, neither more nor less important. The process is essentially child-centred: the admitted literature is that which has relevance to his own experience. Similarly, for Britton, books are a "source of experience" - but no more potent than "the visual-verbal media of film, television and stage-play". (51) Books are essentially interpretative of contemporary experience: to "stand the test of time" is something extra, not central to a work's immediate worth.

... as providers of experience there is no substitute for a living writer, director or playwright. "Not for an age but for all time" constitutes a comment on a glorious bonus, uncontracted for, an extra. Every age requires its interpreters, the artists whose sensitivity to their environment enables them to be the first to make necessary adjustments to change ... Thereafter, the age requires also that these adjustments ... be given currency in the pattern of culture - something that can happen only as readers and viewers respond to the works that embody them, and, because they are in some degree artists themselves, further articulate them, perhaps in second-rate novels, films, plays and so on. These are part of the pyramid. (52)

Britton's image of the pyramid recalls the prevalent image of the

(50) Ibid: pp. 74-5

(51) Britton, J: Language and Learning Allen Lane, 1970, p. 264

(52) Ibid: p. 264

"ladder". In fact, Britton later uses this image.

... a taste for the stereotyped, the second-rate, may at times be the first rung of a ladder and not the first step to damnation. (53)

It is here that one sees that language-based progressivism has within it the possibility of re-defining the terms of the moral debate. The notion of the "ladder" familiar from Burrell, Norwood and Hope, Ballard and Sampson, and denied by the Cambridge School and their descendants is re-defined. Later (54) we will note Britton's acceptance of the second-rate in his definition of spectator-role: certainly as far as children are concerned, he refers to the need for different types of reading. The reading child will, in adolescence, learn discrimination: the non-reading child can only form any reading tastes

if he is given free run of a varied collection of writings about the world he lives in, written by those who live in it. (55)

Britton considerably subtilises the notion of the "ladder" of reading taste.

... the responses young people make to the books they choose to read form in fact the raw material of the maturer responses we covet for them eventually. The sensitive response to a work of literature we value ourselves is arrived at, I think, by refining these earlier responses, and not by stifling them. (56)

All works on "the pyramid" have a place in this process of "refinement". But even as our responses are refined, we retain the capacity for lower-level reading:

... we continue to enjoy reading at many different levels ... While aware of the deeper satisfaction we can derive ... from the great works of literature, we can nevertheless enjoy

(53) Ibid: p. 268

(54) See below: p.399

(55) Ibid: p. 266

(56) Ibid: p. 266

lesser satisfaction from elsewhere at times ...
It is particularly important that we should
recognise the necessity for this range when
we are thinking of adolescents. (57)

Having defined a place for literature on the language spectrum,
Britton therefore, can deny the central tenets of the literature-
based progressives. When Abbs deplores

,... the constant effect of the mass
media on creative work (58)

he is stating something Britton has contradicted. To work through
the second-rate in terms of the refinement of the response is an
essential part of the process. The process cannot start at all
unless the artefact responded to deals with experience within the
child's understanding. Though for Britton literature at its best
defines and interprets experience in a peculiarly sensitive way,
the less sensitive interpretation of the less good work has still
a valid place in the hierarchy of responses. Within the classroom
the best literature (allied to the teacher as arbiter of values)
is not the central agent of education and refinement. In
language-based teaching, the whole language environment is stressed;
the child's experience and response are paramount. With Halliday,
Doughty and Britton the notions of values, of society and the
cultural heritage implied by Holbrook, Creber, Whitehead, Abbs and
Inglis seem, at least in part, to be contradicted.

(d) Radicalism in Literature

So far we have not discussed the third type of English teacher

(57) Ibid: p. 267

(58) See above: p. 357

described by Mathieson (59). The radicals' "unwillingness to teach literature stems mainly from their convictions about the richness of working class culture". In briefly outlining the radical position, Worpole's views - already mentioned in the Introduction - will be discussed and compared with those of F. Whitehead's, since the relationship between the radical and the literature-based progressive is important and, in some ways, ambiguous as far as attitudes to fiction are concerned. After this, the radical attitude to literature will be treated more generally by examination of some of the work of Searle in The Forsaken Lover, where Searle is considering literature on a wider scale and its impact on non-English societies. In spite of this concern, it goes a long way towards pointing out the main distinction between radicals and progressives, notwithstanding the similarities that sometimes appear between Worpole and Whitehead.

As we have already noted in the Introduction, Worpole's account of the development of the traditional version of the cultural heritage stressed the ruling classes' fear of a "shared and non-legitimised literary culture" (60). Working-class reading material, to facilitate personal growth, should emanate from the working class itself (61). In his account of the aims of the Centreprise Community Publishing Project in Hackney (62), he says,

(59) See above: p. 9

(60) See above: p. 11

(61) See above: p. 11

(62) Worpole, K: Publishing is for people too. The Times Educational Supplement, 1st March, 1974. Edition used: as quoted in Meek, M., Warlow, A., Barton, G: The Cool Web, Bodley Head 1977, pp. 344-347.

talking of the common fallacy that the "aspirations of the working class are so limited",

... continuing political demands made during the last 200 years by working-class movements ... have encompassed possibilities for the re-organisation of social life that make even the wildest manifestoes of any of the current "alternative groups" look the piecemeal changes most of them are. (63)

The idea that the working class has "limited aspirations" comes from the effect of censorship brought about by the traditional version of the cultural heritage.

At a recent meeting of young teachers in East London, Chris Searle said he had to look to Moscow to get hold of a copy of poetry written by workers involved in the nineteenth-century Chartist movement in Britain. (64)

For this reason, co-operative publishing of working-class material is important. Nevertheless, Worpole does not see the activity as exclusive in providing reading matter.

The aim of this project is not to replace the wider literary and social culture of the better commercial publications: no teacher would want to stop using, for example, the novels of the best children's authors, or substitute local history for the larger perspectives. (65)

Later on, we shall see Worpole single out works by Philippa Pearce and Nina Bawden for special commendation. It would appear at first sight that Worpole is accepting a notion of a progressive version of the cultural heritage - especially when one remembers Abbs's statement concerning a similar children's author, Penelope

(63) Ibid: p. 345

(64) Ibid: p. 345

(65) Ibid: p. 346

Lively, with the words "the present moment running back into the continuum of lived time, which is history" and its implications of "transmission of valued experience (66) which is an aspect of any version of the cultural heritage. In fact, Worpole rejects the full implications of cultural relativism as argued by Young and Keddie.

People, particularly academic educationalists who go looking for "cultures" or "communities", will never find them, because to do that they would have to stay for some time and become a part of them. (67)

There is a notion of continuity applicable to all cultures as they develop. This very development must modify the idea of cultural relativism.

Certainly any group has a culture, and while it is interesting, for example, to look at the culture of long-term prisoners, this should not mean that we forget to ask why there is such a thing as long-term imprisonment. And there is such a thing as deprivation. The majority of people in this country are deprived of power and of the means by which they can get power. (68)

Dissatisfaction with the cultural heritage, therefore, entails dissatisfaction with the life-chances offered to a deprived working-class. Here is the crucial difference between the literature-based progressivism of the Cambridge School and the radicals. If all responses are equally valid there can be no acceptance by the radicals of the novelist's function as proposed by Inglis:

His job is to find and nourish civilisation,
to cultivate the finest life he knows. (69)

(66) See above: p.357

(67) Ibid: pp. 346-7

(68) Ibid: p. 347

(69) See above: p.355

The radicals can accept literature only on the basis offered by Dixon - that adult literature has to "earn the right" to "a hearing in the dialogue of the classroom", for:

literature has no existence "out there"; the written sequences of signs take life from within us, from the personal experiences that we as readers draw on and bring to them.
(70)

This justification - essentially child-centred - leads to speculation on what Worpole understands by the "better" commercial - publication and those qualities it has which enable it still to be used. When he talks of "wider literary and social culture", does he mean what F. Whitehead means in The Disappearing Dais when he states a main justification for literature?

... an extension of the capacity for experience, an enlargement and refinement of that imaginative sympathy through which we gain an increased grasp of the realities of human living and a deeper insight into the ways in which human beings (including ourselves) think and feel and behave and affect one another. As teachers, we are rightly concerned to foster this element in our children's reading, realising that the quality of the imaginative experience we derive from our books has a close bearing upon the quality of experience we are capable of in our everyday living.
(71)

To Whitehead, the imaginative works which are part of the cultural heritage have the power to stimulate personal, intellectual and emotional growth at the same time as they provide "wider literary and social culture". Worpole, however, sees literature provided for the consumer as largely inimical to growth. The notion of cultural continuity has degenerated thus far:

Reading and writing in schools are two separate processes and only mirror the

(70) See below: p. 387 Dixon, J: Growth through English set in the perspective of the Seventies OUP for NATE 1975

(71) Op. cit: p. 48

wider alienation of production and consumption that characterises the wider society. (72)

Both writers would agree on the nature of "fantasying" literature: both see much imposed "popular" culture ("production and consumption") as "debasing". Whitehead says of the search for the "mass audience" :

This process of "playing down to the lowest common factor in us all" is at work to some degree in all popular entertainment, popular journalism and popular fiction. Clearly it is flatly counter to all the English teacher's efforts. (73)

Worpole, examining an extract from an example taken from "a very popular series of commissioned novels for teenage readers", says:

As an English teacher, I would feel that I had failed if a child I had taught for some time presented me with this kind of writing, full of false sentiments, comic book stereotypes and literary opportunism. Yet no doubt, thousands of these books have been presented to children in the classroom as part of their reading diet, sanctioned by all the authority of the school. Teachers all over the country are presented by their pupils with writing far inferior to this every day of the year, yet this gets published and the children's work eventually ends up in a waste-paper bin. (74)

Worpole accepts that much literature produced for children has quality:

I doubt whether any sixteen-year old will produce a Tom's Midnight Garden, a Carrie's War, or any of the best books written by adults for children, and these should always be part of the reading of young people. (75)

(72) Op. cit: p. 79

(73) Op. cit: p. 57

(74) Op. cit: p. 87

(75) Op. cit: p. 86

The crucial difference between Whitehead and Worpole lies in the latter's insistence on the democratisation of the production of literature (he is, in the article under discussion, introducing a novel written by two boys uncompromisingly about their school experience (76)). Both share a child-centred insistence on literature as a means of personal growth and both reject the debased elements of imposed popular culture ("the lowest common denominator" as Whitehead puts it; "false sentiments, comic book stereotypes and literary opportunism" as Worpole puts it). Both would accept Jenkinson's main distinction. But Worpole would not see such works as part of a cultural heritage in the sense that Whitehead would. Their function is not to provide a continuity of past values but have an honesty about and insight into experience which is not alien to the reader and which allows their work to have a "hearing in the dialogue of the classroom". Worpole's rejection of the cultural heritage and belief in "the wider alienation of production and consumption that characterises the wider society" necessarily leads to the notion of working class alienation from the prevailing, "legitimised" literary culture. The most detailed relevant account of such alienation is that given by Searle in The Forsaken Lover (77), the specific references in which are the imposition of a white culture on a coloured society in Tobago. Nevertheless, he pointedly relates the processes he describes to a British situation in terms of "class rather than colour" and refers to Bernstein's restricted and elaborated codes as a parallel image of alienation. He also deals almost entirely with literature for adults and for children older than those who

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- (76) Mildiner, Leslie, and House, Bill: The Gates Centreprise 1975
(77) Searle, C: The Forsaken Lover : White words and Black people
Routledge and Kegan Paul 1972

are this study's concern. However, to understand the cultural debate at this stage, examples have to be taken from beyond the limits of this study. The bulk of Searle's book is taken up with presentation of and comment on the writing of West Indian children as response to experience: the cultural heritage an educational system controlled by Examinations Boards in London and Cambridge imposes cannot be a valid item in this experience. The alien nature of its literature inhibits growth in the child: the cultural assumptions it makes do not tally with his experience. Searle is not disputing the greatness of the literature per se. Commenting on Florizel's speech in The Winter's Tale as he takes Perdita's hand, Searle says

The blackness is merely the background to the brilliance of the white and its function is to expose and glorify that whiteness. The white man's language speaks this. He makes great poetry out of it. But when the black man speaks it too, he condemns himself and sub-serves the white man. (78)

Great literature is not itself always liberating. It has the power also to confirm deprivation when it asserts alien values. Confirmation of an alien cultural heritage aggravates deprivation. Searle uses an illustration of this deprivation the central situation of V.S. Naipaul's novel A House for Mr. Biswas:

Biswas becomes absurd. His ideals are dissociated from his life, and his mythology from his environment. He is chasing a distant illusion - the English life - which his education and social standards have projected before him. (79)

There are echoes here of the situation outlined by Hoggart in his chapter Scholarship Boy (80).

(78) Ibid: p. 30

(79) Ibid: p. 36

(80) Hoggart, R: The Uses of Literacy Chatto and Windus 1955, pp.238-49

The indigenous literature, says Searle, is that which should be read by this developing society.

Why teach Jane Eyre for O level, when there is a very fine Caribbean sequel in Wide Sargasso Sea? ... Why study Mark Twain, Jules Verne, John Masefield or Jack London in the first and second years when there are novels for younger readers like Namba Roy's Black Albino or Andrew Salkey's Hurricane?

Because this literature has a relevance to the reader, because it does not impose alien values on him, because it enables the society he lives in itself to develop and become legitimised, because it deals with recognisable and thus shared experience, then it "earns" its place in the dialogue of the classroom.

To transfer Searle's notions to a British situation (vide his own Stepney Words) (81) is to provide, therefore, criteria for the acceptance of published reading matter into the life of the child; its relevance, not its greatness, matters. It may be objected that when Bantock and others recommend works in keeping with the interests of the child, they are doing no more than Searle is here. However, for Searle and the radicals, "relevance" and its potentialities as stimulus for individual writing is the main justification. They reject the idea that the greatest literature can only be appreciated by a few and "to the rest according to their need" - conversely, the Cambridge School never considers that the greatest literature can intensify deprivation by imposing alien values which, to the radicals, is as likely in a class-oriented society as it is in a colour-oriented society.

(81) Searle, C: (ed) Stepney Words London 1970
et. al.

(e) Synthesising documents (i)

Louise M. Rosenblatt and the American tradition: relevance
to British thought

Rosenblatt's work (82) occupies an interesting position. It was first published in 1938 in the U.S.A. but did not receive a British edition until 1970, four years after the Dartmouth Seminar. When it appeared in Britain, justifications of literature in terms of its "relevance" to the life situations of pupils were commonly being made: teachers were themselves, under the influence of the Humanities Project, expected to have knowledge of the Social Sciences as a means of accounting for the child's experience as well as sympathy for and empathy with the experience itself.

Rosenblatt's work can be seen in a tradition of American thought which has stressed as justifications for the study of literature the ethical element, matters of conduct and behaviour and understanding of a contemporary society. That there is a distinct difference from British thought in assumptions about the place of literature in matters such as these has already been indicated in examination of the work of Roody and Stewart (83). Always the stress is on the relevance of reading to "life". In 1954, Helen K. Smith said, speaking of U.S. High School Grades 10-14:

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- (82) Rosenblatt, Louise M: Literature as Exploration: A publication of the Progressive Education Association
(Washington D.C.) Appleton-Century Co. (U.S.)
1938. U.K. edition - (with a foreword by
Denys Thompson). Heinemann Educational
Books, 1970.

N.B. All page references and quotations are made from the 1938 U.S. edition. Pagination and incidental expression in the 1970 U.K. edition are different but the substance of the argument is unaltered.

- (83) See above: pp. 312-16

Literature is for delight. It is for the enrichment of personal living and the deepening of insight into human nature and human experience. (84)

In the 1962-3 NCTE publication in which this statement was quoted there is, together with assertion of the need for "deepening of insight into human nature", a greater emphasis on the nature of the text and the appreciative reaction of the child than in the parallel British progressive model. Thus:

Literature has its goal to provide aesthetic enjoyment of the cultural heritage ... (85)

Mildred Letton (86) is quoted as describing the features of a child highly developed in reading interest and taste as

... listening, independent reading, book ownership, widening of interests, functional use of reading, and recognising the contribution of reading to life.

It would appear that the American approach to the teaching of fiction was more functional, more geared to explicit ends capable of assessment and less child-centred than the current British progressive approach. No doubt a function of the Dartmouth Seminar was to fuse these approaches. Certainly Rosenblatt's work shows how literature can be given a centrality which takes account of the social sciences and looks outward to an understanding of society itself. Her work lends itself to the proponents of "relevance" and provides a means of reconciling literary-based progressivism with the needs of an inter-disciplinary and thematic approach to

(84) Quoted by Helen Huus in Development of Taste in Literature (Committee of the National Conference on Research in English) NCTE Champaign Illinois, 1962-3.

(85) Ibid: p. 24

(86) Letton, M: Sequential development of Reading Abilities Supp: Ed. Mon. No. 90, Univ. of Chicago Press 1960, pp. 150-156,

as quoted in Op. cit. p. 24

literature. Nevertheless, her child-centred approach is far closer to the sort of romantic-progressive thought we have become familiar with through Nunn, Wheeler, Phillips and Hourd than other American writers we have examined.

While Roody's justifications for literature included "activity" on the part of the reader, Rosenblatt's approach is both more subtle and energetic. She says

... the experience of literature, far from being for the reader a passive process of absorption, is a form of intense personal activity. (87)

The disciplines which study human relationships - psychology, social philosophy, ethics - enter into the study of literature. However, these elements should not be separated out for their own sakes but only as an aid to understanding.

... though the social and esthetic elements in literature may be theoretically distinguishable, they are in actuality inseparable. (88)

Just as the author is creatively selective, so is the reader, for in the art of reading, he recreates the author's work anew.

... out of the interaction between what the author presents and the reader's own personality, his own fund of past experiences, may come that moment of balanced perception, a complete esthetic experience. (89)

Here the centre of the argument is shifted from that of the literature-based progressives. By comparison with this statement, their ideal reader is relatively passive. Rosenblatt implies that

(87) Ibid: preface p. vi

(88) Ibid: p. 31 (p. 24 English ed. 1963)

(89) Ibid: p. 42

it is less the work itself, or the effect it has on the reader, which are important, but rather the reader's own interpretation of that work - what impressions he himself takes away from it. This interpretation is the result of the fusion of experience between author and reader. Once this supposition has been made, the way is open for the use of literature for non-literary ends. It assumes a pupil-centred approach subtly different from that of Jenkinson or Scott and a teacher's role which also differs.

The Teacher who is realistically concerned with helping his students to develop a vital sense of literature cannot then keep his eyes focussed only on the literary materials which he is seeking to make available. He must also understand the personalities who are to experience this literature. (90)

The exact meaning of "realistically" in this context is doubtful; however, Rosenblatt here shifts away from the teacher as "Alien" or discriminator for as proposed by the Cambridge School. "Understanding the personalities" here implies a quality more purposeful than they assume. While Rosenblatt seems to claim for literature qualities with which at first sight we are familiar enough, she later uses these same claims to underline her notion of "relevance" in ways which are at this stage unfamiliar. First she talks about literature's potentialities for increasing understanding.

Growth in human understanding is a necessary basis for literary understanding ... (and) literature itself may be a powerful means of increasing that understanding of life.

This reciprocal process is especially true of the young person's relation with books. Our efforts will bear fruit in his increased ability for future appreciation of literature

to the extent that we further the classification and enlargement of his personality and his insight into life. (91)

She is as concerned as Jenkinson to break down the barriers between children and books and again sees the teacher's role as vital.

... it is our duty to help the student overcome any timidity about books. Instead of looking upon them as something esoteric he must realise that for himself the important thing is what the work means to him and does for him. (92)

This point underlines an important difference. If Scott and Jenkinson accept the hierarchical society proposed by the Cambridge School, then they would not be able to accept the definite hint that "every opinion is equally valid" which lies here. The centre of balance in Rosenblatt's terms has shifted quite perceptibly away from the literary work itself. Even so, Rosenblatt's argument develops again on a seemingly familiar line as she asserts the empathetic qualities of literature.

The boy and girl are faced with the questions: What are the personal and emotional realities behind the world of appearances? What indeed does it mean to the individual - and potentially, to me, the adolescent, about to "live" - to be a leader or a follower, to be a member of a community, to earn one's living, to create a family, a circle of friends, to meet the ups and downs of fate, to know love and birth and death? What does it "feel like", from within, to be this kind of person or that? To be angelic, cruel, dominating, passive? What are satisfaction, what are the elements, of the many roles that may be played? He is no longer satisfied with a childlike acceptance of the mere external gestures and trappings as if silhouetted against a screen. He wishes to experience these things

(91) Ibid: p. 65

(92) Ibid: p. 81

from within. It is often to literature - and principally fiction - that he turns. Here he finds not only emotional release for the impulses already strong within him but denied satisfaction in his life as a minor; he finds also through vicarious experience the insight he craves into the possibilities that life offers, the possible roles open to him, the possible situations in which he may find himself. (93)

This eloquent assertion of the potentialities of literature for vicarious fulfilment is itself difficult to make explicit - to prove in any tangible way. What gives Rosenblatt's work its especial significance is her attempt to make it explicit. She broadens still further the duties of the teacher -

(English teachers) do have the responsibility
(a) to become aware of their own assumptions concerning human nature and society and (b) to understand at least the important basic concepts of the present-day social sciences. (94)

The responsibilities here are different from those proposed by the Cambridge School. The teacher does not merely have to be aware of the potentialities for debasement inherent in industrial society and be able to save the pupil from them. He has actually to understand the social mechanics of that society well enough to fit the pupil to cope with it - whether on terms of acceptance of it or revulsion from it is hard to say, and perhaps an irrelevant question. Because he is an English teacher and literature is his main weapon, literature becomes a sort of camera oscura for the child to find his bearings in the world. Here Rosenblatt shows that in the opposition between egalitarian progressive Romanticism and the suppositions of the Cambridge School, she stands with the former. She wishes to use literature as a vehicle for social

(93) Ibid: p. 101

(94) Ibid: p. 149

change: a means of making more positive life-choices than the discrimination for mental health which characterises the latter writers. One remembers A.N. Whitehead's "trained nervous energy" (95).

The task of education in our present era of social change includes, in sum, this twofold challenge:

1. To supply youth with the tools and knowledge necessary for a scientifically objective, critical appraisal of accepted opinion in order that they may be liberated from anachronistic emotional attitudes destructive of human values:
2. To help such emancipated youth create new emotional drives strong enough to counteract outmoded automatic responses and predispose the individual toward working out a basis for more fruitful living. (96)

Literature is potent because:

... (it) offers the closest approach to the experiences of actual life. It enables the youth to "live through" much that in abstract terms would be meaningless to him. (97)

In the power of the novel to form insights and stereotypes, lies its essential relationship with and relevance to life itself.

... literature can be an important means of bringing about the linkage between intellectual perception and emotional drive that we have agreed to be essential in any learning process. (author's italics)

Rosenblatt's wish to see literature in "life-terms" and her wish for the teacher to use current sociological perspectives does attempt to give an important element of explicitness to literary studies. It is a counterweight to "appreciation"; another form of disciplined study from Richards' close and critical reading: a way of expressing

(95) See above: p.189

(96) Ibid: p. 212

(97) Ibid: p. 214

what Elton called the "thing" element in literature (98); a way of dealing with the different elements of the novel which caused Hayward such trouble (99). More importantly for the teacher, it is a way of justifying the study of literature with non-literary children on the grounds of its immediate relevance to their lives and answers the cry of Pickering noted above. For these reasons it is an argument which carries increasing weight as this period progresses - until, through Applebee, an understanding dawned of how her account runs counter to the psychological processes he examines which were first defined by Harding and Britton.

Synthesising documents (ii): the Dartmouth Seminar (1966)
and Dixon

In the report edited by D.W. Harding of the Seminar on Response to Literature at the Dartmouth College Conference in 1966, there seems a conscious effort to synthesise the claims of literature- and language-based progressivism (100). The idea expressed by Harding of the "role of the onlooker", taken up by Britton as "spectator role" and to be examined in greater detail subsequently, finds great favour. The spectator, in "accepting or rejecting the values and emotional attitudes which the narration implicitly offers" (101) is entering into a social activity which entails connection with the dominant culture pattern.

Most values are culturally derived: at their best they are the currency given to the adjustments to experience of the most sensitive members of society. (102)

(98) See above: p. 218

(99) See above: p. 153

(100) Harding, D.W.: (Chairman) Dartmouth Seminar Report (in Response to Literature) - ed. J. Squire NCTE, Champagne, Illinois 1968. Edition used - as quoted in Meek, M., Warlow, A., Barton, G. (eds). The Cool Web Bodley Head 1977

(101) Ibid: p. 379

(102) Ibid: p. 379

The statement that it is the "most sensitive" who define the "best" values of a culture is unmistakeably derived from the Cambridge School: the later statement that "in entering into the 'virtual experience' of influential works of literature a child is offered a 'flow and recoil of sympathies' " (103) recalls D.H. Lawrence and the use made of him on the one hand by Holbrook (104), and F. Whitehead (105); on the other, by Britton (106). *With all these, concealed quotation of Lawrence is close.*

The section The Emergence of Response to Literature traces the development of children's response from infancy to adolescence in terms of sounds, events, roles and worlds - the emphasis is child-centred. The section World says:

When a story is being read aloud to a group a child may interpose; "He's a funny boy" (about Jan in The Silver Sword perhaps), and the group may begin to talk about his background, his relations with the other characters, etc.. A new variety of talk develops to relate and organise elements of the world of that story or to relate the world of that story to the child's own world. It will tie in all the four kinds of response, giving some a new articulation.
(107)

The connection between the fictional world and the child's experience is, therefore, formed through talk: the process outlined is exactly that referred to by Doughty (108) and it is necessary to children at all stages of development: thus,

works to be read should always be chosen both for their value as literature as well as for their possible bearing on psychological reactions of young people. (109)

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- (103) *Ibid* : p. 380
(104) See above: p. 341
(105) See above: p. 351
(106) See below: p. 401
(107) *Ibid*: p. 383
(108) See above: p. 361
(109) *Ibid*: p. 383

This claim echoes Roody and Rosenblatt in American thought and, to a lesser extent, Stewart in British thought. It also asserts the need for "relevance" and accords with a language-based notion of English teaching. Ideas of presentation consist of individual reading, literature as group experience and presentation and discussion of literary material. The age group 10-15 demands all three, as well as a "carefully organised programme of guided individual reading" (110). In making this guidance:

Clearly the teacher will need to consider the characteristics of particular children and young people based on his past experience with students of this kind, as well as his own reading of literature, and should select those literary selections to which he feels a high percentage of students may respond. (111)

The teacher, then, needs to know the child as well as the literature: psychological and literary understanding are complementary. In a discussion of the claims of thematic, extract-based literature teaching, the concern is mentioned "lest 'teacher-presented' material dominate literary study in the Secondary School". The understanding teacher should submerge himself in the needs of the class, as urged by Stenhouse. Nevertheless, the need for his own critical alertness remains.

... he cannot be content to leave students to their own unguided enthusiasms, although he may well be advised to start from those. (113)

He is, therefore, forced to take account of at least some version of the cultural heritage.

(110) Ibid: p. 385

(111) Ibid: p. 387

(112) Ibid: p. 387

(113) Ibid: p. 387

Certain works, because of the quality of their theme and treatment, have provided rich literary experiences to readers of varied backgrounds. Such writing, for instance, by Chaucher, Shakespeare, Twain, Lawrence, Melville, or Frost, though in some sense part of a cultural heritage, is not a packed to be transmitted inert. It is alive and changing; each generation takes from it what it needs and adds to it in its turn. (114)

This is a classic statement of the progressive version of the cultural heritage. That the works are not "transmitted inert" denies the traditional version, with its "acknowledged masterpieces". The changing, adapting tradition is very much what is outlined by Inglis (115) as the distinguishing characteristic of the novel. The relationship of the child to that tradition is expressed as follows:

At the present time, there is too much learning about literature in place of discriminating enjoyment, and many students arrive at and leave universities with an unprofitable distrust of their personal responses to literature. (116)

This adult distrust comes from the absence of enjoyment at school: there is once again the progressive insistence on "trusting the child".

In this document, several strands are brought together. The values of the Cambridge School are upheld. Nevertheless, notions of the primacy of literature do not contradict practices associated with language-based concepts of purposive talk, interest and the child's experience. Ideas expressed in the passage of the progressive view of the cultural heritage can be accepted by all

(114) Ibid: p. 387

(115) See above: p.354

(116) Ibid: p. 392

except the radicals, whose position, however, develops from the language-based practices accepted here. In any case, as we have seen, the radicals' rejection of received literature is not total. The practical synthesis outlined is given a more theoretical backing by Dixon in his later reconsideration of the proceedings of the Dartmouth Seminar (117). Dixon looks again at his earlier formulation of the models of English teaching which have frequently been referred to within this study. The consequence of the dominance of the skills model has been as follows:

Nearly a century of emphasis on the skills of English has brought about almost universal literacy in our countries - a literacy dissipated, for the most part, on the impoverished literature of the popular press (which grew in answer to it). (118)

The point made is essentially that of the Cambridge School, themselves re-formulating and re-defining a theme noted from the commencement of the enquiry, from Turnbull and Smith onwards and foreshadowed strongly during the nineteenth century. It appears to endorse the proposition that in literature "bad money drives out good": Dixon therefore, makes an assertion of value. However, the argument is developed considerably.

In the heritage model, the stress was on culture as a given. There was a constant temptation to ignore culture as the pupil knows it, a network of attitudes to experience and personal evaluations that he develops in a living response to his family and neighbourhood;
(119)

The idea of culture as a given has appeared as a feature of the traditional version of the cultural heritage basing itself on a text-centred approach. The developing progressive version of the

(117) Dixon, J: Growth through English set in the perspective of the Seventies OUP for NATE 1975

(118) Ibid: p. 2

(119) Ibid: p. 3

cultural heritage has seen literature not only as being part of a tradition which may well include the "acknowledged masterpieces" of the traditional version but which has taken into account the "network of attitudes to experience and personal evaluations" that Dixon mentions. Dixon appears to accept Jenkinson's term "books which compensate for the difficulties of growing up" in his own term of "impoverished literature", but implies exclusion of Jenkinson's "books which help children to grow up" as part of a progressive version of cultural heritage since these will be presumably part of culture as a given. He implies rejection of the definitions and functions of fiction proposed by, say, Inglis and Abbs, since, by working outwards from the text itself, they presumably "ignore culture as the pupil knows it". Dixon therefore appears to value less the notion that a work within the progressive version of the cultural heritage may modify for him "culture as the pupil knows it". As Dixon develops his argument, he brings into play a new set of assumptions.

But his personal culture is what he brings to literature: in the light of it he reads the linguistic symbols (giving his own precious lifeblood). What is vital is the interplay between his personal world and the world of the writer: the teacher of English must acknowledge both sides of the experience and know both of them intimately if he is to help bring the two into a fruitful relationship.

(120)

In the contact of child and book both worlds are of equal validity and the teacher's function, through empathy with both worlds, is to facilitate the "fruitful relationship". The emphasis is away from the artefact itself, unlike the emphases made by Inglis and

Abbs. Despite the earlier notions of the "impoverished literature", the nature of the child's reaction to literature is much closer to Marjorie Hourd's assertion - that the beholder's own resources ("the balance" or otherwise "of forces", which determines whether "there is a way of weeping Priam's tears in order to escape from our own") define the value of the response, not the work. Dixon further develops his notion of the role of the teacher in this process. First, he rejects the primacy of literature as a form of language use.

... the work of literary man is related to all work (whatever the subject) where language is used to "structure" experience, bringing it into new order, and taking account of new elements. (121)

The activity of making literature, therefore, is seen as a specific and necessary one because it "structures experience": however, Dixon implies - along with Doughty, etc., that it is only one way of doing this. Literature thus takes its place on the transactional-expressive-poetic spectrum of language as outlined by Britton and the notion of "spectator-role" is taken out of the context merely of reading novels. Dixon firmly rejects the primacy of literature and makes his most important departure from the thought of the Cambridge School and acceptance of language-based progressivism.

... a wide definition of literature was used throughout the seminar. Thus, when pupils' stories and poems, though necessarily private activities, re-emerge as experience to be shared and talked over with teachers and classmates, they become the literature of the classroom. The acceptance of pupils' work as embryonic literature carried important implications. It reminds us of

the need to encourage each pupil "through making discoveries about himself and about people in general to 'make small steps towards maturity' ". Further, insofar as a pupil succeeds, he has something of value to offer others in the class and thus "he has a right to expect from his audience (including us) a reply to what he has said" ...
(122)

The progressive emphasis on the child's works being as valid as that of the adult author is certainly one which is familiar from the radicals - notably Searle and Worpole - as well as from Britton and Doughty. However, it must be remembered that writers from the Cambridge School, notably Holbrook and Abbs, have seen a similar validity in the child's own writing as a grappling with and coming to terms with experience. Dixon's phrase "embryonic literature" to sum up the child's work is open to different interpretations; Holbrook and the Cambridge School would see it as showing a difference not of kind but of degree from the greatest literature. The similarity between the two would lie in "the incisive emotional integrity of the words". Worpole would see this "embryonic literature" reaching towards a democratised working-class consciousness, an expression of which would be a novel such as The Gates (123) since all views of the cultural heritage "mirror the wider alienation of production and consumption that characterises the wider society". (124) Dixon's thought may therefore, be seen as synthesising: both the Cambridge School and the radicals would find common ground in his criteria for inclusion of adult literature.

... adult literature earns itself the right to a hearing in the dialogue of the classroom ... literature has no existence "out there"; the written sequences of signs take

(122) Ibid: p. 55

(123) See above P. 370

(124) See above: p. 369

life from within us, from the personal experiences
that we as readers draw on and bring to them. (125)

For the Cambridge School, once again, the "earning" is through "the emotional integrity of the words": for the radicals, it is through the relevance of the offered experience to the experience of the child. Certainly in assumptions concerning the child's reaction to literature Dixon brings together Progressive and Radical thought. However, Dixon's subsequent remarks on the place of literature as the text offered to the class indicate a move nearer to romantic-progressive thought, reminiscent of Hourd.

... whenever a group read together we can
reckon on a variety of satisfactions
developing, according to the level of invest-
ment each pupil has made in his response. (126)

Thus the quality of individual response is most important - this
leads unmistakably to Marjorie Hourd.

... we look to literature to bring order and
control to our world, and perhaps to offer
an encounter with difficult areas of
experience without exacting from us the full
price. (127)

This statement leads us nearer to the notion of "vicarious
experience", which Harding questions (128), rather than any notion
of contemplation implicit in the "role of the onlooker" (129) or
"spectator role" (130). Nevertheless, he claims that relevance
to the child's experience is the only test for admission of the
literary artefact. Later Dixon brings this "relevance" into an
account of the same processes that are outlined by Britton (131).

(125) Ibid: pp. 56-7

(126) Ibid: p. 57

(127) Ibid: p. 57

(128) See below: p. 379

(129) See below: p. 396

(130) See below: p. 400

(131) See above: p. 362 and below: p. 400

The essential talk that springs from literature is talk about experience - as we know it, as he sees it (correcting our partiality and his: exploring the fitness of his vision and ours). Conversely, only in a classroom where talk explores experience is literature drawn into the dialogue: otherwise it has no place. (132)

This talk about literature becomes Britton's "gossip" and is an extension of Harding's role of the onlooker. The function of the teacher is self-abnegatory - he is an arbiter of values, though as much questioning his own as the child's. His function appears to be much closer to that specified by Stenhouse - the teacher as neutral chairman, primus inter pares.

Dixon provides a view of the place of literature in the classroom which does not, in the processes it envisages, see great contradictions in practice between literature- and language-based progressivism and provides what is probably the most complete statement to date of a particular evolution of thought.

Part 2 Fiction as a particular form

(a) Ideas to be dealt with

The period 1960 to the present day has seen what is undoubtedly the most concentrated work on the specific nature of fiction in the classroom. Coincident with new definitions of the place of literature generally in the school which have been examined in the previous section has been the emergence of such specialist periodicals as Growing Point, Signal and Children's Literature in Education. Books examining solely the place of fiction in the classroom have been produced by such as Cutforth and Battersby, Hildick, Bolt and Gard, Calthrop, Hollindale, Chambers, Jones and Buttrey, Field and Hamley. Compilations of important writings on the subject have been frequently made. Two research projects - the NATE-inspired Children as Readers and the Schools Council Survey Children's Reading Interests - have taken place. The increase in both hardback and paper-back publishing, the emergence of the School Bookshop movement and the spread of Children's Book Groups have all been symptomatic of the extraordinary quickening of interest in the nature of fiction suitable for children - in as well as out of the classroom - which has taken place over the last decade. At the same time, partly through the courses associated with the Reading Diploma of the Open University, more teachers than ever before are being brought into contact with a sophisticated level of thought about fiction in schools.

Because the main problem in this section of the enquiry is the sheer abundance of material, sources must now be treated far more selectively. However, it is hoped that those chosen will be sufficiently representative to show the further development of

themes already noted. Certain general points may be made at the outset. Both literature-based and language-based progressives find common ground in the selection of fiction for children. As we have seen, the former will see infiction produced specifically for children work which can "define the moral values which live and grow in a civilisation" (1) or be "essentially preoccupied with time, vision, memory and the present moment running back into the continuum of lived time, which is history" (2). Children's fiction at its best forms part of the progressive view of the cultural heritage. For the latter, children's fiction will be that genre most likely to increase "the pupil's understanding of his own experience" (3) and thus make more effective "the interplay between his (the pupil's) world and the world of the writer". (4)

For the literature-based progressive the nature of the artefact will be the more important; most important will be the status of the values in the fiction. For the language-based progressive, the nature and refinement of the response itself is the more important; he will, therefore, recommend catholicity in reading and will wish not to censor or edit out elements which the literature-based progressive will regard as unworthy, but to see them as vital in the process of forming and refining responses. It is also noteworthy that the radicals, in talking of the primacy of the child's own written response to experience, come closer to the position of the literature-based progressive, rejecting on Marxist grounds the products of a commercial press the latter would reject on moral and aesthetic grounds.

(1) See above: p. 355

(2) See above: p. 357

(3) See above: p. 361

(4) See above: p. 385

The first part of this chapter, then, has defined the general areas in which the following specific debate will take place. These areas can be seen as follows: the nature of responses to fiction: fiction and the developmental needs of children: the responsibility of the writers themselves: the rival claims of catholicity and exclusivity in children's reading interests: methods to be used in presenting fiction in the classroom - which in themselves, contain implications about the nature of fiction itself.

The writers and critics to be examined are not necessarily to be regarded as either literature-based or language-based progressives. While their prescriptions may be seen in relation to the general map of literature already referred to, they are often working pragmatically from positions which assume the two types of progressivism are complementary rather than opposed.

(b) Theories concerning the role of fiction and story-telling
in human development

Throughout this enquiry we have noted widespread interest in, but confusion and imprecision concerning, the psychological processes the reader undergoes when in contact with a work of fiction. A feature of the period 1960 to the present day has been the development of theories concerning these processes, which also take account of values in fiction and questions of novelistic form. The development of these theories may be traced by examining the work of Pickard, Harding, Britton and Applebee.

Pickard (5) makes the point that horror in art is not merely gratuitous: art can see beauty in horror. Thus, horror in narrative is a means of balancing and coming to terms with natural fears in children. For this reason, an oral tradition of story-telling was essential: it was a shared experience. Printing has been a disaster. There is an immediate echo here of early progressive thought - story-telling, recapitulation, the Froebelian insistence on myth and legend and Townsend's statement that children's literature "has wild blood in it". (6) Pickard continues:

The disaster of printing for the children was that, in one brief generation or so, they lost the glorious panoply of oral tales told by masters, from which they had been quietly imbibing a complex and concentrated nourishment of incalculable value to their balanced development. In due course most children have been taught to read, but even today not one in a thousand is sufficiently gifted to gain from reading before the age of ten a fraction of what was being derived from the magnificent tales magnificently told. (7)

In his insistence on the healthy group activity involved in oral story-telling, Pickard makes a point which, from a formal point of view, is interesting in the extreme. Unlike the Cambridge School, he foreshadows McLuhan by asserting that the spread of broadcasting and television has done much to ameliorate this state of affairs for the under-ten child. However, Pickard is not implying notions of value in the medium itself: he sees in it a recreation of the partnership between the teller and the listener reminiscent of C.S. Lewis' "Composite personality". (8)

(5) Pickard, P.M. : I could a tale unfold: violence, horror and sensationalism in stories for children Tavistock Publications, 1961

(6) Townsend, J.P. : A sense of Story Longmans 1972, p.

(7) Op. cit: pp. 174-5

(8) See above: p.334

This partnership is important in any discussion of stories for children. For when dealing with "great" children's authors (Lewis Carroll, Charlotte Yonge) Pickard sees in the novel form sensitively handled a return to the ways of oral story-telling and a renewal of the essential relationship in terms of form.

Accomplished in the craft of writing, learned in their works for adults, they brought back a masterly level of tale construction. Previous writers, grossly underestimating the complexity of immature minds, had rushed to the end of the story anyhow, thinking this was all the children needed. These new writers, true to the highest canons of art, introduced nothing irrelevant; they picked up each thread at the appropriate time, and the conclusion became a matrix for the whole story. A really magnificent denouement brings back into consciousness the many threads of the story, so that, in the last few moments the total story is seen as a whole instead of a sequence. All the misunderstandings, all the mistakes and misjudgments, the hero and even the half-loved villain, are brought into a pattern that is truly satisfactory. (9)

It is remarkable that the most complete justification of narrative form should be contained in a book which is overtly psychiatrically-based. For almost the first time the various elements of the novel form - which caused such trouble to Hayward - are accounted for in a way which gives equal balance to the form itself and the needs and reactions of the reader. The "unfolding" of a tale has an aesthetic satisfaction inherent in it: this aesthetic satisfaction is a psychological satisfaction as well and has important implications for growth and the function of narrative within it.

The properly-told story helps in the child's ego-formation. Pickard sees part of this process as taking place within the parameters of the story-teller - child relationship and the mutual contract this

(9) Ibid: pp. 185-6

relationship entails :

The central factor in the importance of stories for children was this very aspect of, so to speak, jokingly widening and closing the boundaries of the ego with adult connivance. This sharing between adults and children of the disintegrative phase, together with adult demonstration of how to bring back a more advanced stage of integration in the conclusion, seems to have been one of the essential factors to have been overlooked. (10)

The relationship is therefore, two-way: the child, when reading or listening, does so actively and creatively. It is not necessarily the events of the story themselves he is involved in but the sequence and relationship of the events. The novel form itself places these events in a context and thus enables the child to evaluate and come to terms with them.

... the process of forming a sound and healthy ego occurs when the individual tries out situations in playful practice, whether in actual play or in creative art as an adult. Then, the moral striving in both play and art is towards better integration of the various aspects of problems, some of which have to be laboriously drawn up from repressed regions of the mind. (11)

Understanding of the process outlined by Pickard was undoubtedly influential in crystallising thought concerning fiction in schools. For example, there are definite echoes in the words of the Plowden Report (12) which, though written in a context which places it outside the specified age-range of this study, is important both in its own right, and also because it brought the 11-13 age range within a middle-school context.

(10) Ibid; p. 188

(11) Ibid; p. 189

(12) Children and their Primary Schools: A report of the Central Advisory Council for Education (England) HMSO 1966

We are convinced of the value of stories for children, stories told to them, stories read to them and the stories they read for themselves. It is through story as well as through drama and other forms of creative work that children grope for the meaning of the experiences that have already overtaken them, savour again their pleasures and reconcile themselves to their own inconsistencies and those of others. As they "try on" first one story book character, then another, imagination and sympathy, the power to enter into another personality and situation, which is a characteristic of childhood and a fundamental condition for good social relationships, is preserved and nurtured. It is also through literature that children feel forward to the experiences, hopes and fears that await them in adult life. It is almost certainly in childhood that children are most susceptible, both to living example and to the examples they find in books.

As children listen to stories, as they take down the books from the library shelves, they may, as Graham Greene suggests in "The Lost Childhood", be choosing their future and the values that will dominate it. (13)

This reassertion and amplification of some of the points made by Pickard is firmly in the progressive, child-centred tradition. Its stress on "trying on" characters is close to already-noted ideas of "identification" - for example, by Whitehead. Nevertheless, the notion of "identification" was questioned by Harding, also seeking a psychological rationale for the reading of fiction. Harding's earlier Role of the Onlooker (14) had outlined some of the points to be made in his far more influential Psychological Processes in the Reading of Fiction (15). Harding specifically rejects

(13) Ibid: Vol. 1, para. 595, p. 216

(14) Harding, D.W.: The Role of the Onlooker Scrutiny VI, 1937

(15) Harding, D.W.: Psychological Processes in the Reading of Fiction
(read to the British Society of Aesthetics on
10th October 1961) Aesthetics in the Modern
World Thames & Hudson 1962

some of the processes, such as identification and vicarious satisfaction, that have been supposed to occur in the reader. (16)

He refers to

a non-participant relation which yet includes an active evaluative attitude. We can say two things of the onlooker - first that he attends ... and second that he evaluates. (17)

In this evaluation of events by the onlooker there is a possible process of great importance:

... the experience of looking on at events does extend and modify, besides reflecting, the spectator's systems of interest and sentiment ... the events at which we are "mere onlookers" come to have, cumulatively, a deep and extensive influence on our systems of value. They may in certain ways be even more informative than events in which we take part ... the spectator often sees the event in a broader context than the participant can tolerate (18).

Harding extends the notion of "onlooking" to memory and imagination, "things past and things anticipated" (19). It is part also of the "imaginary spectatorship of fantasy and make-believe play", which has the "special feature" of allowing us to look on at ourselves. The "day-dreamer or child" can combine the roles of participant and spectator.

... in all his working fantasy he normally fills the dual role of participant and spectator, and as spectator he can when need be turn away from the fantasy events and attend again to the demands of real life. (20)

Harding traces further stages in this process, which leads to the making of drama and fiction. Gossip and narrative involve

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- (16) Ibid: p. 301
(17) Ibid: p. 301
(18) Ibid: p. 302
(19) Ibid: p. 304
(20) Ibid: p. 304

telling us about events we missed seeing (21).

This interest in events on the part of the onlooker accounts for there being no need for

formulating pseudo-problems as to how the contemplation of something painful can be pleasurable ... The spectator, whether of actual events or of representation, is interested in any of the possibilities of human experience, not merely its pleasures.

(22)

This leads Harding to consider the notions of "fantasying" and "substitute-living" which have been such a preoccupation of the Cambridge School. For Harding, the process of "wish-fulfilment" in the "fantasying" novel is the same in kind as appreciation of great literature.

What is sometimes called wish-fulfilment in novels and plays can, therefore, more plausibly be described as wish-formulation or the definition of desires. The cultural levels at which it works may vary widely: the process is the same. It is the social act of affirming with the author a set of values. They may centre round marble bathrooms, mink coats and big cars, or they may be embodied in the social milieu and personae of novels by Jane Austen or Henry James ... We may lament the values implied in some popular forms of fiction and drama, but we cannot condemn them on the ground of the psychological processes they employ. The finer kinds of literature require the same psychological processes, though putting them to the service of other values. (23)

This statement has important implications for future work on fiction, since it implies a greater need for examination of the values within the novels themselves. Harding's own affinities with the Cambridge School are strong: his account of the psychological process in effect places a higher premium on astringent

(21) Ibid: p. 305

(22) Ibid: p. 306

(23) Ibid: p. 313

literary criticism. For fiction, he says,

has to be seen, then, as a convention for
enlarging the scope of the discussions we
have with each other about what may befall.
(24)

Harding's concept of the onlooker, detached, evaluative, in some
sense contemplative, is close to Pickard's concept of the relation-
ship between the reader/listener and artistic form

... a pattern that is truly satisfactory. (25)

Harding, in focussing inwards to the processes involved in reading
novels, extended the penumbra of related activities outward, to
include, for example, gossip. This extension outwards and a
resultant emphasis on the extension is the main development of
Harding's thought which was later made by Britton from a slightly
different viewpoint. Britton's view of literature is language-
based; he does not share the Cambridge School's assertion of its
primacy.

Literature is a construction of language and
language is of all the symbolic systems or
modes of representation the most explicit, the
best fitted, for example, to present a running
commentary upon experience. (26)

He accepts Harding's point about the degree of responses differing
rather than the kind.

If, as I believe, satisfaction with the second-
rate differs in degree but not in kind from the
higher satisfactions, teachers should surely be
concerned to open doors; as the pupils advance,
other doors will close behind them, with no need
for the teacher to intervene. (27)

(24) Ibid: p. 313

(25) See above: p.394

(26) Britton, James : Response to Literature (in Response to Literature
ed. J. Squire, NCTE Champagne, Illinois 1968)
p. 3

(27) Ibid: p. 3

However, he does not - as Harding does - "lament the values" of the second-rate.

Our aim, then, should be to refine and develop responses the children are already making - to fairy-stories, folk songs, pop songs, television serials, their own game rhymes, and so on. (28)

Britton uses Harding's theory to support an important departure. Just as Hourd stressed the "balance of forces" in relation to the thing reacted to rather than the thing itself in determining the nature of the appreciation, so Britton is concerned to "refine and develop responses" to artefacts which might well relate to his own use of the term "second-rate". This attitude springs from his concern with the wholeness of the experience of language.

... the forms of language itself - its words with their meanings and associations, its syntax, its sounds and rhythms, its images - these contribute to the total form, not as fringe benefits but as inseparable elements of a single effect. (29)

This totality of experience has an inevitable consequence.

What a child writes is of the same order as what a poet or novelist writes, and valid for the same reasons ... we never cease to long for more lives than the one we have; in the role of spectator we can participate in an infinite number (30)

Britton, therefore, sees "spectator-role" in a far more inclusive context than Harding. "Gossip" is not just a less concentrated form of "onlooking". Such activities are no more or less valid than the novel itself; the child's work is as valid as an offered experience as the recognised work of art.

(28) Ibid: p. 4

(29) Ibid: p. 5

(30) Ibid: p. 9

It seems likely that the principal difference between the work of gifted writers - literature - and the spectator role writing of the less gifted and the young, will lie in their differing ability to handle linguistic forms and control the effects of formal arrangements. (31)

The work of art, conversely, is another aspect of spectator role which reaches right back into general experience.

It seems to me that for the spoken form of language in the role of spectator we must use, as the nearest term we can get, the term "gossip" and for the written form of language in the role of spectator, the word "literature" (32).

The full spectrum of spectator role language is expressed as follows:

Make-believe play, day-dreaming aloud, chatting about our experiences, gossip, travellers' tales and other story-telling, fiction, the novel, drama, poetry - these are the uses of language in the spectator role. (33)

Britton, therefore, sees the differences in different linguistic activities as being in degree and not kind. The child-reader as onlooker or spectator is carrying out another aspect of these activities.

... as children read stories they enter into the experiences of other people ... it is through sharing their experiences that he moves towards an impersonal appreciation of historical and geographical issues. Judgment on all human affairs ... is built upon the sympathy and understanding derived from both actual and "virtual" experience. (34)

This process of empathy undergone in the art of reading by the onlooker-spectator has within it the potentialities for action in

(31) Britton, J: Language and Learning Allen Lane, 1970. p. 115

(32) Ibid: p. 107

(33) Ibid: p. 103

(34) Ibid: p. 154

the participant role: the spectator implies the participant when he is reading narrative.

In reading a poem we turn, as it were, inwards ... it is from the stories read in school, therefore, that other activities, both practical and symbolic, in both participant and spectator roles, are likely to arise; it is the stories that will spread as they merge with the interests of the children ... (35)

Britton, therefore, adapts Harding's theory into one which sees fiction as one language use among many, which (unlike other forms of literature) can lead purposively out to participant role from spectator role. He therefore, is making a point very similar to Pickard's concerning "a sound and healthy ego" being formed when "the individual tries out situations in playful practice" (36).

It is important to note that the development of the concept of spectator role is not a theory which itself implies values in fiction. Harding, as we have seen, sees the process as identical no matter what the nature of the literature. "We may lament the values implied" but the process is the same. Thus acceptance of the theory in no way invalidates C.S. Lewis's distinction between types of fantasy and Jenkinson's own critical distinction. However, Britton's emphasis - because he sees the process as language-based and all enveloping - is on the need to "refine and develop responses" to "the second-rate". The teacher's role is to "open doors" - but the notion of the teacher as "discriminator-for" is not implied by Britton. If, therefore, the quality of the response matters more than the artefact responded to, Britton is closer to Hourd and "the balance of forces" which prevents us from "weeping Priam's tears in

(35) Ibid: pp. 156-7

(36) See above: p.395

order to escape from our own". (37). The most detailed subsequent examination of spectator role is Applebee's (38). He takes the theoretical notions of Harding and Britton, provides an inclusive theoretical psychological basis for them and draws practical conclusions from work with and detailed questioning of children. In doing so, he draws a new map which not only focusses the work of Harding and Britton on to specific school situations but also provides a new way of looking at fiction in schools which, it may be said, subsumes many of the disparate approaches we have so far examined. Like Britton, Applebee leans heavily on the work of Suzanne Langer. He attempts to provide a view of human personality related to Kelly's theory of personal constructs (1965) which involves Langer's ideas of Action Systems - Entrainment, Articulation and systems of implication. With entrainment,

... a stronger act is able to integrate other initially unrelated acts into its course. (39)

At the same time,

... sub-acts enlisted in the activity of a stronger, dominating impulse while maintaining a functional autonomy which can be reasserted when the stronger influence is removed. (40)

The obverse of this process is Articulation

... a single impulse is gradually refined into sub-units which can later be involved in other, independent processes. (41)

(37) See above: p.292

(38) Applebee, Arthur Noble: Theoretical and Developmental studies of ideas about and responses to literature, with special reference to four age levels.

Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1973.

(39) Ibid: p. 16

(40) Ibid: p. 17

(41) Ibid: p. 17

The parallel but opposite notions of Entrainment and articulation provide a description of the ways in which the personality both acts and learns by its actions - in other words, assimilates experience. The processes lead to a System of Implications, which

... provide a kind of template, a way of ordering the world that will be activated in dealing with a new experience. (42)

Previous experience, once assimilated, enables us to evaluate new experience, to form a gestalt involving a

... "tacit integration" of the elements of the context into a coherent whole. (43)

Applebee goes on to link all this with Piaget and Chomsky, seeing here a process akin to Chomsky's Generative Grammar. The process as a whole gives an explanation of Harding's "detached evaluation" but it goes further. Applebee, in seeing evaluation of narrative as another form of assimilating experience, differentiates between both the levels of experience offered by different works and differing complexities of form. Thus, of "best-selling literature" which does not provide any new emotional or aesthetic experience, he says:

... such works help us to gain control and precision in a way that is analogous both to "normal science" and to a child's play as he learns a new skill. The pleasure they offer is a pleasure of mastery ... the formula novel is dull only for those who have learnt its formula; but once it has been learned, we move on to works that offer a new challenge and hence the possibility of a new mastery. (44)

Here, for the process he has outlined, Applebee deduces a justification for the reading pyramid - the notion Field expresses when

(42) Ibid: p. 18

(43) Ibid: p. 19

(44) Ibid: p. 73

he says that to give a child "a copy of X, where X is a book we normally wouldn't have in the classroom ...

... is to give that child an opportunity to think and feel at a new and higher level. (45)

This idea of "assimilation" of experience, which is implied throughout by Applebee, is differentiated sharply from the ideas of "broadening" or "exploring" of experience. In what could be seen as a direct refutation of Rosenblatt as well as all proponents of "relevance" in literature for children

The American progressive educators in particular tended to conceptualise art, and particularly literature, as offering one or another form of experience. (46)

After criticising them for "lacking a psychological or philosophical framework", he points out what seems an inevitable end to the idea of "broadening" experience through literature.

... in the end, the concern with broadening experience degenerated into a concern with providing vicariously gained knowledge of the world - knowledge that could just as easily be gained in other ways. (47)

Applebee's implication is that "broadening experience" involves on the part of the reader the attitude of "identification" - as if the events are happening both to the characters and to the reader. If the experience in books is to be understood in this way, it follows that its relationship with real experience must be very close.

However, events in the world

... are unstructured; they are "raw experience" that will be given structure only when they are construed. (48)

The person in real life who is experiencing can construe: how can the reader? The theory of spectator role offers

(45) See below: p.
(46) Ibid: p. 342
(47) Ibid: p. 342
(48) Ibid: p. 342

... a second manner of construing the experience to be considered - the manner which makes us talk of the discourse as "verbal object" or "structural whole". (49)

Spectator role therefore implies detachment; detachment, in turn, leads to apprehension of the "structural whole". This is the basis of aesthetic appreciation. It also implies evaluation by the nature of the "second manner of construing".

... response to the spectator role is always a process of re-construing, never simply of construing; there is always another point of view the auditor is implicitly evaluating even if he does not realise it is there. (50)

Such evaluation also indicates a sharp distinction between the role of the onlooker and "identification". "Identification" alone implies that fiction is a special sort of language. The reader's stance of "detached evaluation" includes "identification". A reader observing a character entering unaware a potentially dangerous situation can say, in the role of the onlooker, "If I were you, I would not go in there", while the element of identification may cause him also to say, "If I were you, knowing what you know but not what I, as detached observer know, I would see no reason for not going in there". In this respect, the theory of spectator role comes close to an account of form. Applebee's notion of reconstruing and "the other point of view" come close to Bolt's and Gard's ideas of the special response to fiction and the concept of irony which they would point out but never name. (51) Further to this, Applebee points to another feature of "construing" a text -

(49) Ibid: pp. 342-3

(50) Ibid: p. 343

(51) See below: p.

The process of construing a text is always a social process in a way that construing experience can never be. (52)

"Gossip" which Britton and Dixon see as an activity different in degree but ^{not in} kind from the writing and reading of stories can here [^] be seen as part of this "social process", since the construing of a text and the assimilation of the experience it offers depends on the expression, sharing and comparison of the readers' experience. For this reason, "construing" can become a group activity. Such construing, when it leads to a new insight, becomes a once-and-for-all activity; the work can never be reacted to again in the same way except in retrospect.

A work which produces a true conversion from one basis of construing to another can have its effect only once; after he has become converted, the book becomes a reference point or summary statement of a point of view already agreed. (53)

Applebee's quoted remarks so far have dealt with all age-groups. He offers certain developmental constraints, however. These form themselves into three main areas:

- 1) The way in which the reader perceives the relationship between the experience of the work and his own life;
- 2) the extent to which he has mastered the techniques and conventions - the rules-of-use of literary form, and
- 3) the complexity of experience (both personal and literary) which he is able to master. (54)

The developmental pattern shows itself broadly in the child as the process of disengaging truth from fiction, fact from fantasy.

... younger children live in a world of stories; their events "are as important

(52) Op. cit: p. 343

(53) Ibid: p. 345

(54) Ibid: p. 345

and meaningful to them as anything that happens". (55)

The separation of fact from fantasy can be deeply distressing. The child tends to accept the story if he thinks it true. The child who has not yet approached Piaget's stage of formal operations sees a difference between fact and fantasy, but:

... continues to view stories from the perspective of a unitary frame of reference: the events in a story remain "made up" correlations of events in the world. There is no question of differing interpretations of the same world. (56)

Harding specifically called his "role of the onlooker" a "psychological process": it goes on whether the reader is aware of it or not. The child entering adolescence, who is in the stage of formal operations, can recognise spectator role as a specific way of looking at experience, while the younger child cannot. Applebee comments:

Spectator role discourse begins to be recognised as offering simply a possible view of the world, one among many interpretations. (57)

However, the recognition that there are "one among many interpretations" can still be disturbing for the early adolescent: Applebee notes that

... (he) often rejects works which are not realistic presentations of the world as he sees it. (58)

The teacher's role in this is one which is familiar from the progressive mode:

(55) Ibid: p. 346

(56) Ibid: p. 346

(57) Ibid: p. 347

(58) Ibid: p. 347

... one of questioning and cultivating response rather than one of teaching critical principles; his goal should be to illuminate and clarify the order in the world which the work seeks to capture and effect. (59)

The prescription is close to that, still to be seen, of Bolt and Gard, though arrived at by a different route. This, in itself, indicates the influence of the theory which Applebee has shown to be widely-ranging and the most influential and dominant account yet given. It may be accepted by both literature- and language-based progressives. It can be assimilated into both the progressive version of the cultural heritage and the radical rejection of the cultural heritage. It accounts for the "therapeutic" element pointed out by Richardson (60) and can also be seen as a basis for an account of values in literature.

(c) The theories in relation to children in Schools

Most justifications for fiction made during this period which depend on either the function of story in human development or the child's response bear similarities with Pickard, Harding, Britton and Applebee. We have already noticed that Harding's rejection of such processes as "identification and vicarious satisfaction, that have been supposed to occur in the reader" (61) does not seem to prevent the terms from being used. For instance, Whitehead sees identification and "vicarious satisfaction of a wish-fulfilment kind" as one of the major motives for reading at all (62); when he speaks of the "extension for the capacity for

(59) Ibid: p. 348

(60) See above: p.295

(61) See above: p.397

(62) See above: p.352

experience" he is assuming - in accordance with the influence of the Cambridge School which is strong on him - that this effect is confined to works of quality. The notions Harding rejects are for Whitehead features of a lower level of response. We have noticed Harding's claim that the process is unvarying whatever the worth of the work of literature: the onus is on the writer to demonstrate finer values in fiction (63). Britton's extension of this notion into an acceptance of all levels of literature as fit objects of response indicates the extent of the move from literature-based progressivism - a move which, in Britton's case at least, questions the primacy of literature but does not deny a vital intrinsic worth to it as a specific language use.

As already hinted, the nature of response to fiction defined by the notions of the onlooker and spectator can still have a number of interpretations which seem to lend support to the various ideas of the place of literature. Mock (64) for example, uses terms which seem to refer back to Harding's article while taking a view of creative response which owes more to Marjorie Hourd. In talking of the relationship between real experience and fictional experience, she says:

It would be a fantasy for one to suppose that I am a wholly different person or in a wholly different situation - a successful politician, for example, or that I am living on a tropical island ... I should form an irrational concept and enjoy believing myself to be this other personality, or in this other situation, but I should do nothing to deepen my understanding of,

(63) See above: p. 398

(64) Mock, Ruth: Education and the Imagination Chatto & Windus, 1970

and sensibility to, either one or the other. But as soon as I do extend by a mental effort my awareness of circumstances other than my own, I am engaged in an act of creative imagination. (65)

To Mock, then, the "non-participant relation which yet includes an active evaluative attitude" - to Harding the central activity of the role of the onlooker - is itself a creative act. Such "imaginative re-creation" is as we have seen, central to all progressive thinking on the nature of the child's response to fiction - a matter which Mock continues to speak of specifically.

... a story for children in which an animal is dressed in human clothes ... merely tells us with realistic detail of a fanciful situation. The story may be appealing because of its quaintness, but it adds nothing to a comprehension of either animal, mechanical or human existence.

On the other hand, allegories, myths and legends (and in these I would include fairy stories and such books as The Wind in the Willows and those by Beatrix Potter) reflect universally shared experiences and conditions and they deepen our awareness of them ... The fox and the crow in Aesop's fable, for example, underline human greed and vanity, Icarus in the Greek Myth on aspirations, and Beauty and the Beast the place of compassion in all our relationships. (66)

The progressive insistence on the Jungian aspects of myth exhibited here completes the equation of experience offered in the artefact with the experience brought to bear by the responder. Mock's earlier account of the creative imagination involved in entering into other's experience places the emphasis on the response rather than the artefact: here she echoes Hourd. The amount of refinement in the creative response determines whether we are "weeping Priam's

(65) Ibid: pp. 28-29

(66) Ibid: p. 29

tears in order to escape from our own". In turn, this insistence on the response places Mock close to Britton and further away from Whitehead. Britton's acceptance of "the second-rate" counters Whitehead's "the satisfaction which is easy, immediate and ready-to-hand" and is fully supported by Mock's assertion:

A profusion of excellence can overwhelm a child, and each has to live in the world as it is, coming to terms with it by knowing for himself its best and worst aspects. (67)

It is hoped that the differing conclusions which can be drawn from consideration of the nature of the role of the onlooker have been demonstrated: that the emphasis may be placed on the artefact or on the response; that when the values of the artefact are emphasised it is assumed that the right response will follow; that when the emphasis is placed on the response, it is assumed that the response may be refined no matter how "second-rate" the work. Further selected examples will illustrate both aspects. First will be the language-based progressives who emphasise response; second, writers who, while not necessarily literature-based progressives in the sense so far accepted in this enquiry, are nevertheless asserting a specific place for children's fiction in the school and for our chosen age group. As has been stated, it is not always easy to assign commentators to one side or the other. For example, Summerfield (68) appears to justify reading aloud to children at the younger end of the secondary school in terms which imply concern with value just as much as they imply concern for the relevance of the experience of the book to the experience of the child.

Our concern for cognition tends to drive the felt experience out of the classroom.

(67) Ibid; p. 92

(68) Summerfield, G. Prose Reading (in Directions in the Teaching of English, ed. Thompson, D. 1969) (CUP)

What we are offering to, and sharing with, our pupils is a "valued experience" and the proper response may well be silence, the silence of gestation, of reflection, the settling, descending from the heights (69).

The Jamesian echo of the "felt" experience, and the notion reminiscent of Raymond Williams of the "valued experience" to be transmitted certainly maintain the notion of fiction as an initiator for the child into life. The notion of "sharing" is broadened out into a description of activities close to those of "contemplation" and "evaluation" at the heart of spectator role. When Summerfield goes on to say that the child's own experience offered back in talk is the only required comment he is not only echoing Doughty but he is claiming that "gossip" is part of the essential evaluative activity.

We must learn to use our prose reading communally, as an occasion on which "life" - vicarious experience - is shared in a congenial, unforced way, and also as an opportunity for sharing or pooling all our lives. (70)

Inherent in this proceeding is a view of the teacher's role closer to that of Stenhouse than that, say, of Whitehead, Inglis or Abbs. All experiences offered in the classroom - including the author's - are of equal validity. Indeed, the central educative act is the bringing of the private experience to the "virtual experience" - the experience offered by the author.

The "virtual experience" may well form the ostensible subject of our conversation, it may well be to this that we initially attend, but if into the conversation the pupils do not, explicitly or implicitly, introduce their lives, then one may well argue that little of value is happening. (71)

(69) Ibid: p. 101

(70) Ibid: p. 102

(71) Ibid: p. 103

Literature, whatever the worth of the experience it offers, is used primarily to enable the child to come to terms with his own experience. Summerfield is moving closer here to Rosenblatt:

... it is through such conversation that tentative orientations are created, that the pupil will find his bearings, will be relieved of the burden of believing himself odd, bizarre, eccentric, abnormal, privatus. (72)

Summerfield is careful to state that the children's conversation after the shared experience of reading aloud is more important for the child below the age of 13; beyond that age silent reading is more important - a point emphasised by Chambers:

Young people ... experience moments of very strong desire to be on their own ... it is the time of life when Literature of Recognition is the most meaningful of all art forms. (73)

It is before this stage that Summerfield finds the shared experience and the increase in understanding through "gossip" the more important proceeding. The juxtaposition of the words of Summerfield and Chambers imply a further function for the artefact of fiction itself: that in silent reading the older child is able to find the consolation that the experience of others relieves him of "the burden of believing himself odd, bizarre, eccentric", which would further imply that the stage of "gossip" to find shared experience is only an intermediate stage before the one-to-one encounter between artefact and reader. Nevertheless, it is important for our purposes that Summerfield isolates the "gossip" and "reading aloud" stage more or less within the chosen age-group. The Rosens emphasise the immediately preceding age-group (74). They too, stress the language-based

(72) Ibid: p. 103

(73) Chambers, A: The Reluctant Reader Pergamon 1969, p. 7

(74) Rosen, C; Rosen, H; The Language of Primary School Children

Penguin 1973

procedure of "gossip" and accept fully the notion of spectator role. Their acceptance of the necessity of myth and legend is akin to that of Mock and their assumption that all children need to write stories as a central function of the human mind is firmly in the Progressive tradition.

As thinkers, we are all story-tellers composing our fictions as though they were memories. This suggests that story-telling is one of the ways in which our minds work. It is regrettable that the Flowden Report seems totally uninformed by this kind of awareness. With its eyes fixed on the product and ignoring the process it reserves for the ablest children the privilege of writing stories for fear of producing stereotyped imitation drawn from comics and television ... (75)

The emphasis on process rather than product and the consequent assumption of the equal validity of all utterances is to be seen as a staple of language-based progressivism and counters firmly the assertions of value made by literature-based progressives. For example, it seems to contradict Abbs when he complains of the English teacher's seeing "the constant effect of the mass-media or creative work" when free drama "enacts a plot on last night's television; a mundane plot with the stereotyped characters ... (76)

The Rosens are not afraid of the mass-media in the way that Abbs is: like Britton, they tend to assume a pyramid of taste and they also trust the response far more than the artefact. The response is actualised in terms of the familiar progressive insistence on imaginative re-creation.

... for young children, certainly receiving, re-telling, and composing stories can be seen as different parts of the same process (77).

(75) Ibid: p. 181

(76) See above: p.357

(77) Ibid: p. 181-2

The process here referred to is reminiscent of G. Stanley Hall, recapitulation theory and even Charlotte Mason's notion of "telling back". For the younger child, stories can act as stimuli for creativity as well as sources of parallel experience.

If the stories he hears are sufficiently compelling, not only will they help him to make sense of his world, but by the same token offer him the raw materials (at different levels) for the complementary process of composing. One way of talking about a story is to tell a different one or one very like it. (78)

The last sentence of this quotation implies that story-making is part of spectator role and the notion of "gossip", an implication made manifest by subsequent remarks about the nature of story.

Stories are about the world of possibles. They begin with children listening to gossip, to anecdotes about other people's lives and, like daydreams, stories may range from the nearly impossible to the practically impossible. (79)

Thus all language uses, from gossip and anecdotes to the creation and reception of the "practically impossible" story, take their place on the spectator-role spectrum. In this respect the Rosens are very close to Harding and Britton. Nevertheless, the Rosens see the "practically impossible" story in one of its guises in a way very typical of progressive thought. For, not only is:

... the receiving of stories ... part of a child's cultural inheritance providing him with models, patterns and symbolic figures for his personal story-making. (80)

but also:

The great legends and folk stories jostle for attention with comics and shoddy material on television. (81)

(78) Ibid: p. 182

(79) Ibid: p. 192

(80) Ibid: p. 182

(81) Ibid: p. 182

When the Rosens refer to "models, patterns and symbolic figures" they are repeating the progressive insistence on the place of myth most recently outlined by Mock. When they see that the great legends "jostle for attention with comics", they at first sight seem to be inconsistent with their earlier distinction between "product" and "process" and not contradicting Abbs at all. Indeed, they continue in a similar vein.

... for most children school is the only possible point of encounter with the alternative to stories which have the minimum of imagination put into them ... the imagination is a tireless magpie. But a diet of thin recipe stories is not the best help to the story-teller. If the stories children are offered by the school are no better than those which usually come their way by other means, then they will never even glimpse the possibilities of a great popular tradition. (82)

The interest of this passage is considerable. First, the Rosens claim a role for the school in providing stimuli more worthwhile than elsewhere - and in so doing, make a value-judgment concerning products of the mass-media similar to that of Abbs. However, the teacher acts as a provider of experience and not necessarily a critical arbiter, as Abbs, Inglis and Whitehead would assume. The difference between "the great legends" and "thin recipe stories" is one of degree, not kind; the distinction is in terms of the amount of imagination in each. It is noteworthy that the Rosens talk in comparative terms: Abbs talks in absolute terms, presupposing a difference in kind between the "mass media" and "creative work". If a distinction can be inferred from the Rosens work, it is as follows: on the one hand there is an art popular in the sense that it is the product of the mass-media and deficient in

imagination; on the other, "a great popular tradition" which through "legend and folk stories" provides the "symbolic figures to feed the child's imagination". The essential difference between the Rosens and the Cambridge School is that the response of the child (in the form of "story-ing") is the central element: the more there are imaginative elements in the "model" stories, the more "unrefined" (to use Britton's term) is the response.

By comparison with the relatively tightly analytic tone of such writers as Summerfield and the Rosens representing language-based progressives, the prevailing note of writers dealing with the choice and use of books in the classroom betray - when they are not being purely practical - a tendency towards assertions less obviously based on observation and experience. Kamm and Taylor (83), for example, make a general, seemingly untested, claim for fiction.

Good fiction teaches us about ourselves and about our relationships with other people; it shows us too that others have a point of view ... it can demonstrate ways of treating matters of choice and conflict ... it can increase our awareness of the world by allowing us to share the experience of the author; it can extend our powers of imagination and exercise our strength of belief. Fiction that does any of these things is as truly "educational" as any text book or book of information. (84)

This passage is fairly representative of many such justifications: certain points may be noted in it. First, elements familiar from a consideration of spectator role are present - the idea of fiction's "increasing awareness", "sharing experience", "extending

(83) Kamm, A: Taylor, B: Books and the Teacher ULP 1966

(84) Ibid: p. 93

imagination". The stress on its teaching us "about ourselves" also refers to an aspect of spectator role. However, in the end the passage is book-centred rather than child-centred: it emphasises the artefact rather than the response. Always the stress is on what the book can do for the reader: there is no hint of the validity of the reader's own parallel experience; no hint of any notion of imaginative re-creation. In essence, whatever features of spectator role inhere within the passage, the total justification is far nearer to that of Rosenblatt or even Batchelder than Harding.

Hildick (85) makes a far more subtle attempt at defining the specific nature of fiction and the child's response to it. We have already noted Hildick's work both in The Use of English and in his own provision of a children's literature combining imaginative coherence with relevance and interest. We find in his own justification echoes of Lawrence and Holbrook:

But it is the power of a work of fiction to draw the reader into this process of identification that gives that work its quality - moral as well as aesthetic. At its lowest level of operation we speak of such a process as ... "providing an escape" from an often unpleasant reality. It can, however, do much more. By taking us into another world, it can widen our experience, and by widening our experience it can help to cultivate our sympathies, giving them depth and extending their range. And we should be unwise to sneer at mere escapism when the escape is from the confines of one's own ego. (86)

For Hildick, then, fiction of itself provides an entry to "another world" which, by virtue of being able to "widen our experience" and "cultivate our sympathies", is in constant touch with our own

(85) Hildick, Wallace: Children and Fiction Evans, 1970

(86) Ibid: p. 8

world. Like Harding and Britton, Hildick sees the responses made to the various offered "other worlds" as differing in degree and not kind. "Providing an escape" or "mere escapism" is a quality which has a place on the complete spectrum of responses. The cavil Hildick makes is that the escape be "from the confines of one's life". Only here can we find a trace of the sort of value judgment implied in Jenkinson's "books which compensate for the difficulties of growing up" or in C.S. Lewis's acceptance of a type of "fairy-land" where a child's "mind has not been concentrated on himself".

(87) Kamm and Taylor had before drawn attention to the type of work Lewis and Hildick had in mind:

... many novels for older children could well be dispensed with on the grounds that they do not really add anything to the child's experience of life, thus leaving more scope for those that do. Too many of these books concern burglars or smugglers ... defeated by a band of precocious children ...

The most pernicious thing of all in children's fiction is the recurring "reward" theme, the reward so often handed out to round off the book for a highly unlikely deed accomplished by children in a highly unlikely way.

It is simply a question of values ... it is this kind of ignorance, or refusal to face the realities of life, that spoils many books. (88)

Criticism of this sort goes far further than the Rosens with their "thin recipe stories" - thin because they lack imagination. A feature of book-centred criticism is precisely its ability to be specific in its adverse comment: Kamm and Taylor here imply - and Hildick leads on to it as his major theme - the responsibility to the child of the writer. This is a topic which will be more fully

(87) See above: p. 335

(88) Op. cit: pp. 101-102

dealt with subsequently but which is difficult to separate from the matter of response. For example, Tucker (89) sees reading by the child as "a type of internalised play" and this leads him to predicate a response more active than reflective.

... (the child) is testing himself out in the book, in language and in events which are easy enough to understand and not so much seeing events in a reflective light which we hope may come later. (90)

This function of "testing" Tucker sees as central to literature if it is to have any worth:

... testing ourselves out in an imaginary situation which in some ways is quite real and may in fact, be something we may have to do at some time. (91)

He goes on to make seemingly contradictory assertions - first, that:

Some experience of ~~far~~ is essential in reading. (92)

Secondly, he says:

... books should be about desirable experience rather than realistic experience. (93)

This seeming inconsistency can only be resolved in terms of Lewis's distinction between the types of "fairyland": once again, Tucker places the onus on the writer. For, on the one hand:

A widespread mistake about children which is made very often by people who talk about social realism in children's books is to imagine that familiarity breeds content.

(89) Tucker, Nicholas: How children respond to fiction: Children's Literature in Education No. 9 November 1972

(90) Ibid: pp. 52-53

(91) Ibid: p. 53

(92) Ibid: p. 53

(93) Ibid: p. 53

It is not a question of having details which they want to recognise. If we have a picture of a school, children will certainly recognise it but they won't necessarily like it. (94)

So the writer has the responsibility to entertain. But also he has a further responsibility which can here only be seen in terms of the child's response. Talking of moral judgments at the child's level, Tucker says:

... (if the writer) is good enough to recognise the child's condition and yet try to make the book concerned with growth in some sort of way, then this is a measure of literary value. (95)

In spite of his earlier insistence on an active rather than a reflective response on the part of the child, Tucker here seems to be thinking of a child's contemplative response: the "growth" involved seems to be in terms of evaluation of concepts new to the child:

A child reading a book which has a hero and a villain may sometimes find himself looking from the villain's viewpoint, which raises the question, what is truth? (96)

In the end, then, Tucker implies a process which seems very close to that of spectator role. "Testing" involves "evaluation". Both involve the acceptance of the fiction's offered experience. The notion of "internalised play" is close to the Rosens' activities of "story-making" in the sense that the telling of parallel stories is itself externalising the "internalised play". The justification in terms of response offered by Chambers (97) is in many ways close to those we have examined.

(94) Ibid: p. 52

(95) Ibid: p. 53

(96) Ibid: p. 53

(97) Chambers, A. Introducing books to children H.E.B. 1973

Always, the attempt in literature when it is at its best is to catch a truth of life ... by catching it thus, like a butterfly in a net of words, an author enables himself and others to lay hold of and contemplate experience, although the experience slips away beyond recall even as we live through it ... this power ... is one of mankind's primeval activities.

If verbal re-enactment is necessary to adults, how much more essential it must be to children. (98)

Chambers sees a contemplative function for fiction - the Author's contemplation of fleeting experience is, as it were, a service performed for the reader. Here there is a parallel with Harding's "detached evaluation". Nevertheless, Chambers, like the other book-centred critics, sees the experience embodied in the artefact as more important than the parallel experience offered by the reader:

Literature is therefore strongly influential in organising and sifting the attitudes which inform and guide choice of overt action. (99)

However, it is a two-way process, and, like Tucker, Chambers proposes an active element in any process of contemplation or detached evaluation:

Literature provides a way of participating. (100)

By this, Chambers seems to be moving towards a redefinition of the notions of identification and vicarious experience which, as we have seen, Harding questions but subsequent commentators retain. Certainly Tucker and Chambers present a view of the child's response which places a greater emphasis on the experience offered by the book and which therefore, enters a critical dimension. Two corollaries of the book-centred attitude are as follows: first,

(98) Ibid: p. 9

(99) Ibid: p. 13

(100) Ibid: p. 13

to assume that if the artefact itself is more important, then the type of book needs to be considered in relation to the child's stage of development; secondly, that if the values and imaginative power involved in the books are of such importance in the child's development, the author himself has a clearly defined responsibility. Obviously these two concerns are of importance to both language- and literature-based commentators: however, they tend to be treated in detail by those who are more obviously "book-centred".

(d) Some justifications for fiction in terms of child development

It is a remarkable fact that, in spite of the increasing interest in fiction in the school up to the beginning of this period, and in spite of the familiar and long-standing progressive insistence on growth and child development, it is only in the period after 1960 that a serious attempt is made to think specifically of types of fiction in relation to successive stages of growth. We have noted the Progressive insistence on myths and legends for younger children (in accordance with the tenets of the Culture Epoch theory) and writers such as Nunn and Whitehead have seen the approximate period of particular reference in this enquiry as the age of "wonder" or "romance". (101) However, it is only now that particular types of plot are examined to see how they match up to particular stages of development. The main impetus for this work was the gradual assimilation of the work of Piaget: while Richardson used the notions of accommodation and assimilation to explain a way of defining responses to literature, now these writers use the successive stages of development outlined by

(101) See above, pJ88

Piaget to assert the applicability of various sub-genres of children's fiction. This also indicates that the teacher's function is actively to perform the task of discrimination which F. Whitehead found necessary in the light of the negative correlation obtained in his survey for the term "imaginative coherence".

Field says:

... psychological information is of little specific use when planning a worthwhile reading programme, but it does suggest the general categories in which children read and the relationship of these categories to a child's development. It gives little or no help in choosing particular titles or authors. (102)

The teacher's requirement is for literary as well as psychological criteria. Nevertheless, the two interact to make literary criteria relative.

If, as we believe, the most important function of the teacher is to bring new and better experience to children and to stimulate and sustain their intellectual curiosity, are there not children whose immediate and imaginative lives are so incredibly poor that there might conceivably be occasions when to give a child a copy of X, where X is a book we couldn't normally have in the classroom because of its poor literary quality, is to give that child an opportunity to think and feel at a new and higher level? (103)

Paradoxically, this proceeding necessarily introduces a more stringent note of criticism and a greater emphasis on the artefact itself than one would at first sight expect from a study which depends for its rationale on the view of child development which is at the heart of progressive thought. Like Hourd, Field distrusts

(102) Field, C. and Hamley, D.C.: Fiction in the Middle School Batsford 1975, p. 42

(103) Ibid: p. 43

tendencies to over-value progressive "interest" theories. For Hourd, "interest (stood) in danger of becoming another marble monument" because it militated against true creativity. Field, who is working from philosophical as well as psychological bases, and who is heavily influenced by Peters, justifies a rejection of simple "interest" theories as follows:

... The word "interest" has two basic uses, one descriptive and one normative. We talk of "children's interests", of the kind of activities they habitually pay attention to and of using some of these interests in a lesson or scheme of work. The use of the word is normative, for example, when we point out that a particular course of action may be in someone's interest. This normative use is more often than not glossed over, for it savours of authority, of making children do things they initially might not like doing. But part of a teacher's job is to cause children to be interested in things which may never occur to them, but which are worthwhile and therefore, worth doing. (104)

The teacher, therefore, is the arbiter and, therefore, much closer to the mode assumed by the Cambridge School. Field (105) in an earlier work, relates the developing child's response to fiction in terms which owe much to Piaget.

... we should not normally expect a seven-year-old to make much of the complex, naturalistic world of The Silver Sword ... he is unable to reason as an eleven-year-old, who is able to relate facts and ideas, albeit at a concrete level. Because of these intellectual limitations, a seven-year-old has to feel his way into a problem situation ... Fantasy stories ... help children in a way which is similar to the effect of play. (106)

Fantasy, therefore, is central to the development of the young child, for, while:

(104) Ibid: pp. 41-42

(105) Field, G: Reading and Child Development in the Junior Years: The School Librarian Vol. 16, No. 2, July 1968, pp. 145-150

(106) Ibid: pp. 145-6

the brute fact of sudden death must be softened for children - in this case (Peter Rabbit's father being put in a pie by Mrs. MacGregor) by humour ... (literature) prepares us, vicariously, for experience to come. (107)

The six- or seven-year old needs this preparation for experience to come.

... the young child has one eye on the outside world, for he usually wants to know what it is like. He can satisfy this want in fantasy. (108)

For the 8-10-year-old, fantasy, though showing itself in infinitely more complicated works than Peter Rabbit, still mediates reality.

(Fantasies) treat reality obliquely, but without compromise. Children listening to a reading of The Hobbit, or reading it for themselves, are helped to experience what I have called "life affirming" themes because these are mediated through humour ... The violence, horror and unpleasantness (Bilbo Baggins) experiences are always tempered by humour and mediated through adventures which take place in an imagined but credible world. (109)

This echoes points made by Scott and Mock. However, the period beyond 10-11 is marked by an increase in peer-group activity and a lessening need for experience to be mediated obliquely through fantasy. The period 8-12 is roughly that of Piaget's developmental stage of concrete operations: the end of the period sees a greater ability to reason objectively. A group adventure story such as C. Day Lewis's The Otterbury Incident, becomes relevant to the child's needs. Of this work, Field says:

This is a model story, not only in the sense that it is a minor classic of children's literature, but also because it satisfies the psychological wants of the eleven-year-old in a way in which countless adventure

(107) Ibid: p. 146

(108) Ibid: p. 146

(109) Ibid: p. 147

stories do not. A boy reading this story identifies himself with the activity of the group or with one or more of the members of the group. Through the activity of the group and the realism of the story he is helped to see the variety of humankind and thus, one feels, develop the capacity for dealing with the real world. (110)

This is an important passage, for it puts the earlier stages of our chosen age-group in a developmental context and shows fiction playing an important role in that development because of its form. Field's argument is making more specific the assertions of Pickard: in the last sentence he refers to the function already outlined by Harding when he says fiction is a "convention for enlarging the scope of the discussions we have with each other about what may befall". In the later work of Field and Hamley (111) the account of development is extended further to the end of the chosen age-group:

... The child approaching adolescence may begin to feel a keener sense of identity and a need to come to terms with painful and disturbing experiences. Side by side with this develops a greater ability to reason about experience, and thus a lesser need for an author to mediate it through any form of protective fantasy ... Painful experience frequently comes to the child when he is alone, but in fiction it tends to be shared with, or interpreted by, sympathetic adults. (112)

In examining Steinbeck's The Red Pony for fictional enactment of the "painful experience" of the 12+ child, the authors draw attention to two elements: the first is the experience of the child himself,

(Jody) has grown up: he has explored various aspects of life and death in relationship with himself. (113)

(110) Ibid: p. 149

(111) Op. cit: see above, p. 425

(112) Ibid: p. 35

(113) Ibid: p. 38

The second is the role of the adult in relationship with the child.

... a vital theme of the book and an important strand to Jody's development (is) the child's trust in the adult, and the adult's own feelings of inadequacy in the face of presumed infallibility. (114)

The story as a whole explores

... the checks and balances of the child's relationship with adults: on the one hand the child's struggle to remain in some sort of equilibrium, on the other, the prices the adults pay to maintain the expectations of the child. A major theme concerns the different sorts of loyalties and responsibilities; Jody's to the adults, to his animals and himself, Billy's to himself, the animals and Jody. (115)

The child moving from 11 to 13 is thus able to cope with fictional experience on an individual and naturalistic level, because he is beginning to move beyond the central need for group activity and because at this point in Piaget's stage of concrete operations he has:

less need to solve pressing emotional problems in fantasy and play, for he can cope more and more objectively with other children, parents, teachers and other adults. (116)

Jackson makes a similar point concerning the child in the 11-13 age group. Jackson divides child development in Piagetian terms between the ages 6-8, 7-9 and 9+ as follows:

... from a more egocentric awareness of self and of the world to a greater concern for and interest in others - not just as extensions of

(114) Ibid: p. 38

(115) Ibid: p. 39

(116) Ibid: p. 26

self, but as persons in their own right -
from more primitive moral judgments to a
greater ability to distinguish accident from
intention, and to understand motivation; from
dependence on concrete experiences to an
ability to conceptualise and form abstractions.
(117)

Having established, like Field, the place of fantasy in the
development of young children, he too, finds the older child:

more ready to face death and change in
fiction, and to accept conflict
situations. (118)

The process by which children enter into the vicarious experience
offered by fiction is an unconscious one. Talking of Philippa
Pearce's A Dog so Small, he says:

Note the themes of Covenant and Promise:
reality and fantasy, blindness and sight -
but it's no use telling that to 10-year-olds,
or even 15-year-olds - you have to help them
live with the book in such a deep way that they
identify with it at a deep level and this can
only be done indirectly. (119)
(author's italics)

Nevertheless, the older child in meeting disturbing experience
mediated realistically may well be himself grappling with experience
beyond his years

... in real life they may be facing unemployment,
death, separation, without ever having the help
of an adult relationship in facing these experiences. (120)
(author's italics)

Jackson examines Meindert De Jong's The House of Sixty Fathers
as a realistic presentation of "human calamity" which the older
child is able to deal with because he is:

(117) Jackson, W: (Principal Lecturer in English, Hamilton College of
Education): Children's Fiction and Stages in Child
Development: Unpublished text of address given to
Scottish SLA, 1973.

(118) Ibid: p. 22

(119) Ibid: p. 22

(120) Ibid: p. 21

... more ready to face death and change in fiction, and to accept conflict situations ... The older child, too, has a greater ability to appreciate areas unexplored in his own experience, and he could gain from sharing in the experiences of this child (in the novel) from a simpler village community where, even in the midst of war, the young have security in their solidarity of relationship with family and community, and with the adult world around them. (This is very important as young person adolescent) (121)

The emphasis of Field and Hamley and also Jackson, all of whom are concerned with teacher education, is therapeutic as well as aesthetic. Both draw attention to the needs of the child in relation to adults - "the child's trust in the adult and the adult's own feelings of inadequacy in the face of presumed infallibility" can be set beside Jackson's "solidarity of relationship with family and community, and with the adult world around them." It is this feature, therefore, of consolatory preparation for experience which is isolated as the most distinctive feature to be possessed by fiction for the 11-13 child. Fiction is described by Hollindale (122) in a passage which asserts both the preparation and the consolation, and which paves the way for a consideration of the responsibility of the writer himself towards the child.

It is the function of a good children's book to set foot in unexplored country, to push back the boundaries of what a child knows and understands and bring him face to face with painful or strenuous experience. It is not the function of such books to put the stars out and take the compass away: whatever anguish is depicted, there must be enough light to steer by. (123)

The responsibility is great because the 10-13 child is under-

(121) Ibid: p. 22

(122) Hollindale, P: Choosing Books for Children Elek 1974

(123) Ibid: p. 23

going stress.

... A mass of new experiences, ideas and feelings have somehow to be assimilated during a short period of transition from childhood proper to the verge of adult life. (124)

In further deepening the potentialities inherent in the role of the onlooker and defining more closely a possible therapeutic as well as aesthetic function for fiction in the emotional maturation of the developing child, the writers considered have combined progressive Piagetian thought with literary discrimination. The effects of reading of fiction by children are encompassed by the various aspects of spectator role - the offering of parallel forms of experience for evaluation and assimilation. The discussion leads logically to a consideration of the writer's responsibility, especially to the age-group in question.

(e) Catholicity and exclusivity in reading

Restatements of the basic position: Alderson and Hindle

It has been seen as a rough but by no means unvarying distinction that while a literature-based progressive will tend to reject those elements of a child's reading experience which do not meet certain critical standards, a language-based progressive will tend to take a far more catholic view. This theme - of whether it is better to read anything or nothing - has been a recurring one in our enquiry. With Young Writers, Young Readers the proponents of exclusivity made what was probably their most eloquent and influential plea: the case for exclusivity has subsequently been restated but not particularly advanced. Paradoxically, the case for catholicity

has been considerably advanced - not least by many who are directly concerned with the provision of reading experiences of quality for children. However, the burden of their case rests on the notion of the pyramid of reading interests referred to by Britton. In essence, the case offered by proponents of catholicity has been that all items of children's reading - comics, "bloods", etc. - which are not actually immoral are all grist to the child's reading mill. The case of the proponents of exclusivity has been based on adherence to Jenkinson's distinction between "books which help children to grow up" and "books which compensate for the difficulties of growing up". While, to the proponent of catholicity, the author's paucity of imagination is purely relative, to the proponent of exclusivity the absence of "incisive emotional integrity" and the presence of the debased stereotypes of the mass media are features from which the child must be shielded. While to the proponent of catholicity the immoral and pernicious (which he would reject) do not necessarily reside in the unimaginative and puerile, to the proponent of exclusivity there is a demoralisation and degradation implicit in the "fantasying" book which panders to "the lowest common denominator in us all".

Two commentators who may be seen to express succinctly the cases offered by proponents of both views are Alderson (125) and Hindle (126). Both writers are dealing with those elements in children's reading often referred to as "comics, bloods", etc. - the sorts of publications which, even in 1902 Principal Burrell was accepting

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- (125) Alderson, Connie: Magazines Teenagers Read (with special reference to Trend, Jackie and Valentine). Pergamon 1968
- (126) Hindle, Alan: The literature under the desk: some exploratory notes on a college of education course. English in Education. Vol. 5, No. 1, 1971, pp. 40-43, 45.

as legitimate sources of experience in the classroom. (127)

Alderson's assumptions are firmly in the tradition of the Cambridge School. Her approach is similar to that of Q.D. Leavis in Fiction and the Reading Public or F.R. Leavis and Thompson in Reading and Discrimination. In examining the three magazines (Trend, Jackie and Valentine), she immediately indicates the relevance of her findings to this enquiry by showing that their readership begins at 10+ (128). In tracing the main themes of the stories, she draws attention to their central feature of wish-fulfilment:

... the girl gets boy, but not only a boy
but the RIGHT boy ... the word "love" is
thoroughly debased in the context of the
stories. (129)

The social assumptions accompanying this particular brand of wish-fulfilment are unrelated to the actual demands of life:

Success is depicted in one way only - that
of getting the boyfriend to agree to engage-
ment or marriage ... values of the real
world do not exist ... The anti-intellectual
or anti-serious element is strong. (130)

Alderson sees the sort of "fantasying" endemic in these productions as cumulatively debilitating in its effect. It is the very element which characterises Jenkinson's "books which compensate for the difficulties of growing up" and C.S. Lewis's "second (longing) ... back to the real world undivinely discontented". Alderson, like the Cambridge School, associates this "undivine discontent" with the debased values of a modern industrial society.

(127) See above; p. 139

(128) Op. cit: p. 5

(129) Ibid: pp. 10-11

(130) Ibid: p. 17

Most children are flung into commercial society without picking up a vestige of culture or even understanding of the world in which they live. There is a complete lack of ritual connected with values other than the material. (131)

The use of the word "culture" is positively Arnoldian: the notion of "ritual connected with values other than the material" reminds one fleetingly of the Cambridge School's vision of a pre-industrial organic society - or even a pre-democratic society of the sort which might be associated with W.B. Yeats.

How but in custom and in ceremony
Can innocence be born? (132)

The corollary of this is to propose a definite role for the teacher. He has to be an arbiter of values and a conscious guide towards discrimination:

The task facing the teacher in trying to combat the powerful forces of commercialised mass-media seem almost impossible. His aim is an obvious one - to try to guide children to discriminate, to evaluate and to reject much of the trash that is poured out on the printed page, over the air and on the TV screen. (133)

Like the Cambridge School - and also like the radicals such as Worpole and Searle - Alderson sees the commercialised mass-media as actively hostile, consciously attempting what the Cambridge School would see as debasement for economic and cultural ends and what the Radicals would see as alienation for social and class ends. Certainly Alderson sees in children potentialities which are confirmed by literature- and language-based progressives and

(131) Ibid: p. 110

(132) Yeats, W.B.: Prayer for my Daughter Collected poems Macmillan
p. 214

(133) Ibid: pp. 110-111

radicals alike. When Dohm says "there are few children who, if caught young enough, cannot respond to quality in one form or another" (134) and when Worpole points to productions such as The Gates, they are making the same point in their different ways as is Alderson here - the progressive notion of "trusting the child".

There is a tremendous idealistic potential amongst young people, but this is not fostered by the cheap superficiality of the comics and magazines which are produced for one reason alone and that is to make money for the publishers. (135)

Alderson's phrase "young people" indicates she is speaking of an end product which is an age-group above that which is our main concern. Her charge is that the debasement caused by these magazines is a cumulative affair: that as the readership starts at 10+, the task of the teacher is ~~most~~ important during the 10-14 period. Work on developing the child's taste must begin early because taste is not necessarily static. But taste can only develop when the child is brought into contact with what is tasteful and the teacher's role as arbiter is crucial.

A developing taste for what is good in a child of 16 can be reinforced, but where no initial flowering is possible there can be no strengthening and the child is most vulnerable to the pressures of all that is bad in mass-media. (136)

Alderson does not find anything pernicious in a narrowly moral sense in these publications - indeed, she is often at pains to point out how inoffensive and "bourgeois" in their morality they are. Hindle finds elements in them which are positively beneficial.

His basic premise is ~~that~~ the teacher must take account of his own

(134) See above: p. 339

(135) Ibid: p. 111

(136) Ibid: p. 112

history of reading interest before seeking to be an arbiter for others. He caused his students to recall all the various sorts of reading matter that had contributed to their own childhood - and then to find copies of them.

A childhood of reading was exposed, the secret culture of most of us at various stages, from papers of the pre-school years, to the glossy yet furtive romances that a number of students admitted were still part of their regular literary diet (137).

The latter description recalls Alderson's estimation of the girls' magazines. Hindle disapprovingly quotes the notion of Inglis that teachers must know the world of "the literature under the desk" because "down these mean streets a man must go". For Hindle:

The contrast between the back street of "pop" reading and the grand boulevard of the English literature course can be over-emphasised. Our indiscriminate childhood reading has contributed more to the formation of adult interests than we care to admit. (138)

In pointing to the fact that even Holbrook remembers fondly his childhood Wizard and Magnet which he compares unfavourably with "the lurid new comics", Hindle suggests that:

Behind what appears to be sharp educational and literary analysis is really the old cry that the grass was greener when we were young. (139)

Coupled with this accusation is the statement that any teacher must have:

... complete honesty in self-examination, as complete an understanding as we can muster in all of us, "the father of the man" in time and in taste ... (140)

(137) Op. cit: p. 41

(138) Ibid: p. 42

(139) Ibid: p. 43

(140) Ibid: p. 43

Once the comics, romances, etc., were analysed in terms of this "complete honesty", with no critical preconceptions allowed to colour adult response, it was found that comic strips rehearsed important themes and universal situations:

... however grotesque and inadequate the comic strip version might be, (it) is a genuine continuation of an authentic European tradition. (141)

Hindle proposes a definite function for "the literature under the desk". The first is comparative -

... the qualities of the greater can be made more apparent in contrast. The love poems on the back of Valentine can usefully be compared with genuine love poetry, with Burns, Shelley, the Song of Songs ... (142)

The second is that - in spite of a whole weight of comment denying the fact - there is a literary ladder from comic to masterpiece. However, the comment denying the existence of the ladder has been couched in terms of style - "the incisive emotional integrity of the words" as Ford put it. Hindle sees the progression in terms of theme.

The message that could be traced in many comics could also be found in the greatest literature we knew ... many strange romances in that submerged nine-tenths of our childhood reading, had given us that chill of the numinous which made the greater literature even seem familiar on first reading. We had been there before. (143)

Hindle's is an important argument because in effect it turns many other previous suppositions upside-down. It is a complete denial of the exclusivity asserted by Alderson. The themes she isolates are treated trivially in the magazines - but to Hindle they are basic themes and thus a preparation for greater literature.

(141) Ibid: p. 45

(142) Ibid: p. 45

(143) Ibid: p. 45

Hindle, in seeing a comparative use for the comic, makes the same assumption of the predilection towards quality in the child as does Alderson - but the fact that the comics have the comparative function indicates that in a real sense their reading is important. One remembers Mock's statement that "a profusion of excellence can overwhelm a child". Both Alderson and Hindle assume that the teacher is going to lead taste - but the attitude of honest humility that Hindle seems to favour is far closer to the function proposed by language-based progressives such as Doughty, Britton and the Rosens than that proposed by the Cambridge School. However, Hindle, in asserting comparative and preparatory functions for "the literature under the desk", is implying notions of value. He does not depend on a simple "interest" theory though he is prepared to use "interests" as a stepping-stone. The succeeding argument concerning catholicity and exclusivity will be couched mainly in ways reminiscent of Hindle. For, once it is accepted that the idea of catholicity does not necessarily imply less stringent evaluation of texts, there can be little development to the exclusivist position.

The argument for exclusivity : some re-statements

Such development as has taken place has been largely qualified by acceptance of the fact that values in literature and suitability for children are often hard to combine. In common with those commentators who argue for catholicity, there is a general acceptance of the progressive version of the cultural heritage and a realisation that the alternatives to "rubbish" are hard to find. Jones (144) stated in some detail a scale of values within an

(144) Jones, Antony: Children's Literature - the problem of choice
NATE Bulletin, Vol. 3, No. 2, Summer 1966.

exclusivist position which recognised the need for relevance.

Dealing with children younger than those of our chosen age group, he itemises rules for choice of literature as follows:

When we provide books for children we exercise choice, as far as I can see, at four levels -

- (i) According to what we think, at various stages, children will be able to read:
- (ii) According to what we think, at various stages, might capture children's interest:
- (iii) According to what we think children's needs are at various points in their lives:
- (iv) According to our judgment of the intrinsic value of the book. (145)

This is a complete statement: on their own, "ability", "interest" and "need" might constitute justifications for the magazines criticised by Alderson. However, the notion of the "intrinsic value" of the book seems in the end the most important of the rules.

When Jones says:

Let them meet in schools only what is authentic (146)

he is making a plea for the presentation of experience seen honestly: here we recall Ford's "the incisive emotional integrity of the words" as opposed to Hindle's emphasis on theme rather than language. Jones compares Francoise The Big Ram with Janet and John readers: his comment implies that Ford's dictum may be applied to any age-group.

The vocabulary (of Francoise) is simple, concrete, within the children's experience. It is not much denser than might be prescribed by - or for - the compiler of a primer. Yet, in its way, it has the quality of literature: the dilemma and the

(145) Ibid: p. 15

(146) Ibid: p. 16

suspension of action, are enacted in the language. (147)

Jones, therefore, finds identifiable literary qualities as being in the end the elements which justify Francoise over Janet and John. The implication is once again that the teacher is arbiter and works against the outside milieu of the child. Tucker continues this theme when speaking of older children (148). He stresses the present quality of children's fiction, drawing special attention to Philippa Pearce and Joan Aiken. He also draws the reader's attention to Jenkinson and Janice Dohm as he outlines a function for the teacher.

... our job as teachers is one of discrimination. What children read should be ART, not entertainment. ART is moral, if not always monumental, and a book like A Kind of Loving offers occasional insights in contemporary terms which make it as necessary a book as Middlemarch. Much of children's own reading will flatter and deceive. It may try to shelter children from the maturity they seek or it may offer them illusions of maturity. (149)

This passage makes the teacher an arbiter quite uncompromisingly. Tucker rejects "entertainment" - he shows himself in the tradition of Jenkinson in his final dismissal of much children's reading. His criticisms extend the idea of "books which compensate for the difficulties of growing up". He makes a move towards the notion of relevance when he values the use of A Kind of Loving; however, his phrase "ART is moral, if not always monumental" indicates that literary and moral criteria are for him intertwined but that in the end a work like Middlemarch has a superiority which (if A Kind of

(147) Ibid: p. 16

(148) Tucker, Michael: (Headmaster, Settle High School) Literature in the Secondary School NATE Bulletin Vol. 3, No. 2, Summer 1966, pp. 20-22.

(149) Ibid: p. 21

Loving is as necessary morally) can only be literary. There is also here a hint of the hierarchical society proposed by the Cambridge School. Those able to read A Kind of Loving may not be able to read Middlemarch.

What seems, therefore, to be a dilution of the exclusivist position towards acceptance of other levels of reading is really very limited. In these representative commentators there seems no acceptance of the idea of reading as a pyramid: the teacher's job is still to select and to guide - to present always the best work the child is capable of reading. The criteria are both moral and literary: other forms of reading beyond that which "helps the child to grow up" remain liable to "pander, flatter and deceive". Judgments remain exclusive rather than - as with those who advocate catholicity - relative.

The argument for catholicity : functions of reading

One point of the argument in favour of catholicity in reading taste as far as subsequent writers are concerned is that it enables children to make some sort of start in the acquiring of the reading habit. This feature is the obverse of the last point made in the discussion of Alderson and Hindle: if children are not reading at all then they will never be in a position to develop critical standards, while if discrimination is done for them exclusively by the teacher and his prescriptions are rejected, then no reading will be done at all. The argument for catholicity therefore, is almost bound to be favoured by most commentators concerned to promote fiction in schools: assertions of value,

though frequently strong, tend to be made in relative terms and the notion of reading as a pyramid rather than a ladder seems to be more and more generally held. Thus, Margery Fisher is reported to regard books by Enid Blyton as "slow poison" (150) if read on their own, while Sydney Robbins lays down definite criteria for children's fiction as follows:

1. Is it linguistically alive? Is the language individual, lively, sensitive?
2. Is it imaginatively and humanely worthwhile?
3. Will it draw children into its spell? (151)

More and more it is felt that such positive assertions of value and lack of value are made in relation to each other: that the educative, discriminatory function for literature defined as "quality" is important but other, lower-level, types of reading have different but still valid functions.

Spalding (152) makes two distinct but related pleas for catholicity. The first is that at particular times in the child's development the works of quality are not available and the reading habit may be lost.

At thirteen, most of them had outgrown the junior novel and the more intelligent are launching into adult literature. (Some give up reading; others) ... become readers for life provided they cross the gap between juvenile and adult reading which has been described as "that sad limbo of literature where so many readers are lost to libraries (and reading) for good". (153)

Allied with this is the attendant association with school, work and

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- (150) Moss, Elaine: The Adult - eration of Children's books: Signal No. 14, May 1974, p. 68.
- (151) Robbins, S: Editorial - Children's Literature in Education Vol. 1, No. 1.
- (152) Spalding, Elsie, L: Books through the child's eyes: the story of a children's library House of Grant 1960
- (153) Ibid: pp. 67-68

boredom of prescribed works of quality: the low-level reading represents the out-of-school values to the child.

There is so much reading "without blitheness" in school, it is no wonder that in their spare time children "defend their freedom of choice with great skill and persistence". It is a healthy sign. (154)

Catholicity enables children to "lighten the load", as it were, of school as well as helping them keep up the reading habit. A more subtle function is hinted at by Hildick (155) who, as we have seen, has made important assertions concerning values and the writer's responsibility. Speaking of Enid Blyton, a writer he has criticised on moral, aesthetic and technical grounds, he says:

A child of limited intelligence ... will derive great pleasure from a Blyton book's mechanical easiness alone: while a child of higher intelligence - to whom that form of easiness is irrelevant - will derive great pleasure from using it as an efficient screen on which to project fantasies of his own. (156)

This justification - using the stories in effect as stimuli for other fantasies (which may themselves be stories) is obviously related to the progressive notions of imaginative re-creation and the closely associated "story-making" of the Rosens. It is an essential element of spectator role. However, there is an important difference. Hildick appears to come close to making the distinction between "product" and "process" for which the Rosens criticise the Flowden Report. He also makes the assumption that works which are, by his own analysis, lacking in imagination and (in the Rosens' term) "thin recipe stories" can be stimuli for the brighter child only.

Moreover, the lack of imagination in them does not stunt the child's

(154) Ibid: pp. 57-8

(155) Op. cit. see above: p. 419

(156) Ibid: p. 192

fantasy. Hildick here shows himself to be far more "book-centred" than "child-centred" and also assumes the child's response to be far less active and creative than do the language-based progressives. Hildick's assertion of values and a definite hierarchy of reading functions remains untouched by his part-justification of Blyton. Dickinson, however - in what has appeared to be an influential article (157) - is far more uncompromising. Like Hildick, Dickinson is writing from the standpoint of the serious writer of fiction for children. That he accepts the responsibility of the children's writer is clear: nevertheless, the whole tenor of his remarks seems to indicate an agreement with Mock's doubt as to whether children can stand "a profusion of excellence". At first sight, this seems at odds with the understanding of children one would expect a children's writer to bring to his task - however, Dickinson shows a firm grasp of the relative status of his occupation. His definition of rubbish is straightforward:

... all forms of reading matter which contain
to the adult eye no visible value, either
aesthetic or educational. (158)

His defence consists of six main propositions. The first two are couched in terms of the child's own society and his need to be part of it.

(1) ... a child ... should have ... at
least (one) whole culture at his
fingertips. (159)

This culture is most likely to be that of the peer-group and its values are not likely to be those of the school. In this respect,

(157) Dickinson, P: In Defence of Rubbish. Children's Literature in Education No. 3, pp. 7-10

(158) Ibid: p. 8

(159) Ibid: p. 8

Dickinson is close to Spalding.

- (2) ... a child should belong, and feel he belongs, to the group of children among whom he finds himself and he should feel that he shares in their culture. Inevitably the group interest will be mostly rubbish. (160)

So rubbish is an important agent in the process of socialisation.

It is important also in a more solitary process. Here, Dickinson refers to a tenet of progressive thought current certainly since Adams and The New Teaching when he spoke of the necessity of "browsing".

- (3) ... the importance of children discovering things for themselves. However tactfully an adult may push them towards discoveries in literature, these do not have quite the treasure-trove value of the books picked up wholly by accident. This can only be done by random sampling. (161)

Here we have a suggestion which is close to the progressive "self-activity", where the child is making his own responses to stimuli he has chosen for himself. An implication here is that the teacher or other adult would be merely the "meddling interloper", criticised by Hourd. Dickinson sees "rubbish" as having a further, though related, function which is almost therapeutic.

- (4) ... almost all children feel the need of security and reassurance sometimes ... rubbish has this negative virtue. (162)

Here, Dickinson sees a property of rubbish other commentators would see danger in. The sort of "security and reassurance" rubbish would provide might well be rejected as "compensating for the difficulties of growing up" by Jenkinson, or seen as "ravening and deadly serious" by Lewis. Britton and the Rosens, concerned

(160) Ibid: p. 8

(161) Ibid: p. 8

(162) Ibid: p. 9

with refining the response, would want the nature of the "security and reassurance" defined very carefully. Dickinson is not concerned to do this - however, he does indicate that his acceptance of rubbish is relative: the analogy of nutrition and dietary needs is convenient:

- (5) ... any rational reading system needs to include a considerable amount of pap or roughage, call it what you will. (163)

For, just as Mock fears the "profusion of excellence", so Dickinson fears the diet entirely of "pap" or "roughage" and thus allows a limited function as arbiter to the teacher. Speaking of children whose diet consists "solely of rubbish", he says:

- ... they should be slightly weaned. But not totally weaned. (164)

The limitation of function underlines Dickinson's insistence on "trusting the children", which in turn leads him to a final Romantic assertion.

- (6) It may not be rubbish after all ... the innocence ... of the child's eye can take or leave in a way that I feel an adult cannot, and can acquire valuable stimuli from things which appear otherwise overgrown with a mass of weeds and nonsense. (165)

Oddly enough, this assertion is more uncompromisingly child-centred than Britton and the Rosens and imputes an even greater importance to the intrinsic nature of "literature under the desk" than does Hindle. Dickinson's assertion of the need for "weaning" shows he accepts a hierarchy of reading interests and the analogy of the pyramid. However, the Rosens' dismissal of "thin recipe stories" indicates that they do not necessarily accept the "child's eye"

(163) Ibid: p. 9

(164) Ibid: p. 10

(165) Ibid: p. 9

as a specific element in the refinement of imaginative response. Dickinson, by saying that a child can respond personally, indicates that the stimulus of "rubbish" can elicit valuable response. When the Rosens say "a diet of thin recipe stories is not the best help to the story-teller" they assume the possibility of valid response but not necessarily valuable response. For Dickinson it is both valid and valuable.

Chambers (166) deals at length with the idea of catholicity, and in so doing, produces a certain synthesis between the notions so far examined. Like the writers already dealt with, he accepts the notions of a hierarchy of reading interests, an account of value in the novel, a need for discrimination and a recognition that different types of reading are necessary. Like Hindle, he lays considerable stress on the cumulative experience of the teacher honestly examined.

(Some teachers) have thought through their own development from childhood and acted on the implications thus revealed for their work as teachers. They have understood, to begin with, that the traditional "classics" are not only texts worth close reading, but that there is a rich body of "children's books" which merits just as much consideration by adults as by children. They have noted the separation between what they as teachers tend to bring into the classroom and the popular reading done outside the school, and have looked for ways of interleaving the two so that the one illuminates the other. (167)

Self-examination is itself a Romantic-progressive notion: the idea is that the teacher brings his own experience into the classroom, not as an arbiter or discriminator in the sense offered by the Cambridge School, but as a resource in its own right and an element in the necessary empathy with the child. Once judgment is based

(166) Op. cit: see above, p. 422

(167) Ibid: p. 24

on recognition by the teacher of his own childhood experience, then the way is open to the important function, for Chambers, of forming the "critical" or "literary" reader. But the stage of "interleaving" the school and out-of-school experiences has to be gone through. Chambers echoes Dickinson's second point in defence of rubbish when he emphasises the importance of peer-group activities in formation of reading interest.

(Children) mix with large numbers of their contemporaries and peers who assert an ever-increasing influence as the school years pass ... it plays an inevitable part in children's corporate and individual responses to them and what they are trying to achieve. (168)

By implication Chambers has spoken of "rubbish". Direct reference occurs in his chapter 10, Worrying about the rubbish, and once again, he develops points made by Hindle and Dickinson. First, he deals with the literature-based objection expressed earlier in such terms as Storm Jameson's "bad money drives out good".

... the objection seems to be that by reading rubbish, children cripple their own imaginative, linguistic and moral powers, as well as their ability to come to grips with and appreciate good quality literature. (169)

Chambers rejects this entirely.

... it is always better that children read something than that they read nothing at all. (170)

This is an uncompromising statement: Chambers backs it up by rehearsing arguments familiar from Hindle and Dickinson.

The sum total of the pleasure we have had from books owes something to the ephemeral, transitory material we have frequently read. (171)

Like Hindle, Chambers sees the "rubbish" as having the preparatory

-
- (168) Ibid: p. 24
(169) Ibid: p. 121
(170) Ibid: p. 121
(171) Ibid: p. 122

and comparative functions which are integral parts of the reading hierarchy. Closely related to this point is Chambers' restatement of Dickinson's third defence - the need for "browsing".

... by finding books in this unimposed manner we learn, however crudely at first, to compare, assess, select. There is no way this can be taught without direct, if haphazard, experience.
(172)

The stress on the validity of the child's critical responses and the probability of their development through contact with all levels of reading also implies rejection of the theory that "bad money drives out good". Chambers is at pains to reverse the book-centred approach - not because he ignores ideas of value but because he finds the child's response more important.

... what should concern us most is how and why children read, not what they read. (173)

The teacher as arbiter of taste may uproot the very plant he is tending:

... all children seem to find a source of security and comfort in certain kinds of books (usually "rubbish") ... to tamper at such times by trying to persuade the child to "choose" something better does not encourage an improvement in standards of choice. (174)

It is noticeable that, though Chambers accepts different types of reading and is more interested in response, he shares with Hildick a view of inferior literature as stimulus:

... Blyton provides an outline; the young reader uses the outline on which to graft his own embellishments. The more resource-

(172) Ibid: p. 122

(173) Ibid: p. 122

(174) Ibid: p. 122

ful the literature ... the less it can
be read in this way. (175)

Unlike Hildick, Chambers does not differentiate between abilities in children here. But, like Hildick, he does assume that the "rubbish" has a use purely as stimulus for "embellishment" (parallel with the Rosens' "story-ing"), while the work of quality, by supplying the full imaginative coherence, does not then have a use as stimulus for "embellishment". Here, like Hildick, he writes counter to the Rosens and the language-based progressives and sees a final virtue in fiction of merit for its own sake. It is through this sort of synthesis that the arguments for catholicity can be seen running together with the arguments for values within literature. As Hollindale (176) puts it:

I have never been told by anyone that his interest in reading was cut short by Captain W.E. Johns, but I have often been told that this was the result of premature exposure to detailed study of Shakespeare or the boredom of an ill-chosen "form reader". (177)

But the implied practice of "laissez-faire" is wrong: the struggle to attain values must still be made.

The problem is to open the way to richer experiences without pouring scorn on the current idol. (178)

Definitions of "rubbish" have, as has been stated, assumed the "non-pernicious". Consideration of morality, touched on in the discussion of the writer's responsibility, must also be dealt with in the terms of this argument - which will be the subject of the next sub-section.

(175) Ibid: p. 122

(176) Op. cit: see above pp. 2 and 431

(177) Ibid: p. 19

(178) Ibid: p. 155

The "pernicious" : the moral dilemma

During the debate about catholicity in children's reading, we have noted that all parties have rejected the notion of the "morally pernicious". There have, however, been no attempts to define the precise nature of what is "pernicious" during this period. Strahan's nineteenth-century assumptions would not necessarily be accepted: nevertheless, doubts about the moral ambiguity of the novel have persisted. Smith saw "cheap, trashy alternatives" leading to "hooliganism" (179). Ballard, asserting a suggestive influence for literature, feared that "the (morally) bad good book ... is more pernicious than the influence of a bad bad book" (180). However, it will be remembered that he was also one of the first strenuously to urge catholicity. Chambers, in defining "rubbish" for the sake of his own championship of catholicity, has presented it merely as follows:

... rubbish is neither pernicious nor particularly enlightening: it is merely absent of literary quality. (181)

This is a negative distinction, as also is Chambers' outline of how to deal with rubbish:

The way not to handle the problem (of the "truly pernicious") is by a ham-fisted act of unreasoned censorship exercised with deaf authoritarian zeal. (182)

Presumably to the Cambridge School the "truly pernicious" would constitute only a sub-section of the "fantasying": to the advocates of catholicity, lack of definition of the "truly pernicious" and ambiguous notions of censorship constitutes a distinct weakness in their case - especially when Harding implies

(179) See above: p. 136

(180) See above: p. 142

(181) Op. cit: (see above: p. 427) p. 123

(182) Ibid: p. 123

that, psychological processes in the reader being similar whatever the nature of the fiction, values within the fiction need to be defined.

Literary examination of the "truly pernicious" have at times been carried out, notably by Hoggart (183). The assumption continually made, however, is that the "pernicious" is always present and will always be read. For our purposes representative examples of acceptance of this view and its implications for the classroom may be examined in work on the phenomenally popular series of books by Richard Allen, Peter Cave and H.R. Kaye which included such titles as Skinhead, Suedehead and Bootboy, Chopper and Mama and A Place in Hell. During a period in the early 70's, the books were extremely widely read by children of the chosen age group. The books were dealt with in two juxtaposed articles by Salter (184) and Bardgett (185). The first was critical and analytical: the second practical. Salter, in examining the structure and language of the works by Allen and Cave (he rates Kaye's work as being of a higher standard altogether) finds the following two points: First is the obsessive repetition of acts of violence, particularly associated with "the satisfaction of breaking bone". Salter comments thus:

Violence is repeatedly underscored as a source of pleasure, and only rarely do any of the characters show shock or hesitation in inflicting pain. (186)

To illustrate the second he quotes Hoggart:

(183) vide Uses of Literacy pp. 210-223

(184) Salter, Don: The hard core of children's fiction. Children's Literature in Education No. 8, pp. 39-55.

(185) Bardgett, K: "Skinhead" in the Classroom Children's Literature in Education No. 8, pp. 55-64

(186) Op. cit: p. 40

By his choice and arrangement of materials, by the temper of his treatment of them, a writer is implicitly saying: this is how one man thinks we should face experience, or succumb to it or seek to alter it or try to ignore it. (187)

For though in these books there is always a surface assertion of the triumph of good and that "crime does not pay", the "tendency" of the novels is constantly to glorify the violence. Salter recalls Lawrence's advice: "Never trust the teller; trust the tale". The pernicious nature of the works resides precisely in this discrepancy between surface intention and inner tendency. The analysis has to be couched in linguistic, literary and formal terms. The question is, do such works directly promote the "hooliganism" feared in 1902 by Dr. Smith? It is noteworthy that the case made here is almost exactly that made by Strahan. (188) Salter reviews the evidence on either side for the view that the nature of the artefact (whether novel, television programme or film) provides a direct stimulus for the performance of acts of violence and comes ~~to a direct stimulus for the performance of acts of violence and comes~~ to no conclusion. While he finds it possible to make a case that Allen's language can be a stimulus to violence, he cannot say that it is a direct aim of the book and so is brought very near to a contradiction in his views on censorship. He is reduced to a statement akin to that of Chambers quoted above.

Carrying a big stick is no answer to the problem of censorship. (189)

Salter's attitude towards children's reading is catholic: he "trusts the child" when he criticises Holbrook for a move to

(187) Ibid: p. 45 (Quoted from Hoggart, R: The Critical Moment Faber 1964)
(188) See above: p. 21
(189) Ibid: p. 55

"coercion".

What happens when the child is genuinely puzzled about how to work out a morality for himself. (190)

Bardgett attempts an answer which in effect, extends the range of catholicity into the "pernicious", and, paradoxically, extends the role of the teacher beyond the function of provider of experience, yet not entirely towards the function of arbiter of values.

Bardgett notes a "large demand" in his Secondary Modern school for Skinhead and makes the following observation which is crucial to a proponent of catholicity in reading:

Many of those who read it avidly from cover to cover (in some cases more than once) are those who read no books either from the library or their own homes; they are the "reluctant readers" for whom we rightly express concern. Not only do they read it, they ask if I have read it, what I think of it, and give me, unsolicited, their opinions. They do spontaneously what we expect of them with other books - comment critically, consider issues raised. (191)

Bardgett's notions of the teacher's active role show that he is a "moral" educator as well as a "teacher of English": in relation to Skinhead this

... dual role can be fulfilled by considering both the "moral" issues which the book raises, and by considering the book as literature. (192)

Having made the children (in the 4th and 5th years) aware of the fact that he, too, had read the book, he moved on to consideration of it with the children first through one-to-one conversation and then through group work. Areas of the story such as "violence , pornography, themes, values, style, realism" (193) were dealt with

(190) Ibid: p. 55

(191) Op. cit: p. 56

(192) Ibid: p. 56

(193) Ibid: p. 59

by particular groups. Bardgett provides his own analysis of the novel which complements Salter's. Skinhead is an episodic novel with no "sense of an ending": its characterisation is mechanical yet inconsistent; its authorial stance is dishonest; its "realism" becomes mere pornographic fantasy. Bardgett establishes these points through a series of questions which can be edited, selected from and presented to the children working on the book.

The necessity for seeing Skinhead in comparison with other works ("more accepted 'by us' ") (194) is paramount. The main themes - which can be followed through by comparing Skinhead with such works as Animal Farm and To Sir with Love are as follows:

1. Rejection of authority
2. Portrayal of violence
3. The generation gap
4. Portrayal of sex in literature
5. Youthful, working class ambition
6. The "mindless" nature of mob or gang
7. The difference between middle-class and working-class attitudes to work, politics, "society". (195)

Though Bardgett is talking of children in the main older than those of the chosen age group, the problem he deals with is of course, still relevant and his conclusions are of interest. First, like Alderson, he deplores the values of the literature presented: like Harding, he believes that the psychological process of the reader is the same whatever the literature: like Hindle, he believes that "the literature under the desk" forms part of the child's experience the teacher must enter into. Like Britton, he assumes a pyramid of reading taste. First, Bardgett believes

(194) Ibid: p. 64

(195) Ibid: p. 64

that children can ascend the pyramid and that they must actively be helped in so doing - for we have the

... intention of leading so-called "non-readers" from pornography to literature. (196)

The way to do this is to "grasp the nettle" of the "truly pernicious" and - as with the language-based progressives - recognise and work from the child's interests. For Dixon, literature "earns itself the right to a hearing in the dialogue of the classroom". (197) Skinhead earns itself this right because it was an integral part of the sub-culture of those particular children. For Rosenblatt, literature offered:

the closest approach to the experiences of actual life. It enables the youth to "live through" much that in abstract terms would be meaningless to him (198).

By implication, Bardgett is close to Rosenblatt, though he would take her particular stance a stage further. He accepts the function for literature she outlines, but recognises that the "pernicious" must not only be "worked through" but also used comparatively with the constructive literature. However, for all that Bardgett implies the necessity of making comparative literary and moral judgments with and for children, he is still more concerned with the response than the artefact:

... isn't it time that we worried less about the quality of the work of literature and more about the quality of the educational process and the work which derives from that process? (199)

For this reason, the "truly pernicious" can be recognised as a part of the child's reading interest and can be used as part of the process to "refined response". Bardgett's emphasis on the

(196) Ibid: p. 64

(197) See above: p. 387

(198) See above: p. 379

(199) Ibid: p. 64

effect on the child places him with the language-based progressives and certainly on the side of catholicity. His firm rejection of the values implicit in works like Skinhead and his assertion of the role of the teacher in combating them indicate that in his statement is a synthesis of the catholic and exclusivist positions.

(f) The author's responsibility

The development of a serious body of children's fiction, recognised as such from the 50's onwards, entailed two complementary processes. The first was, as we have seen, the process of critical definition, involving notions both of value and reader's response, carried out by the critic, the teacher - the user. The second (already touched on in reference to the work of Trease and G.S. Lewis) is the process of accounting for and justifying the genre by the producer - the author. Complementary with this, of course, is the critic's own view of the authorial process, which also must be examined. It could be said - though it is not the purpose of this enquiry to follow the line of thought - that an artistic genre can only exist in its own right when its creators identify a shared purpose and a common set of critical assumptions. It is a feature of the period under discussion that many writers for children have identified such a purpose, have built up a common set of critical assumptions and have been at pains to explain them. The particular element of this process which is germane to this enquiry is that of the responsibility of the writer for children, for in this notion of responsibility lie both the distinctiveness of and justification for the use of fiction in schools.

It is useful to define the nature of this responsibility by first looking at some prescriptions for responsible children's fiction made by critics. We have already noted Hollindale's statement concerning the fictional experience which should be offered to children in this age group -

... it is not the function of such books to put the stars out and take the compass away ... whatever anguish is depicted there must be enough light to steer by (200)

Children's fiction has so far been seen as an important ingredient in growth: Hollindale is adding a moral imperative to the developmental notion and echoing Kamm and Taylor:

It is this essence of hope which distinguishes the best of children's fiction. (201)

A highly inclusive definition of what should constitute the best children's fiction, and thus, by implication, what the writer's responsibility ought to be is that of Margery Fisher: (202)

... a child's story must, ideally, be written from the heart and from at least some memory of and contact with childhood. It must appeal directly to the imagination of the reader, must create a unique world into which the child will go willingly and actively. It must, necessarily, contain some proportion of adult comment, but this must be delivered as from one intelligent individual to another, not in a spirit of condescension. And it must be written, within the demands of the particular story, as well as possible. (203)

The requirements noted here indicate clearly the distinctive values of a specific literature for children. The first sentence echoes Trease when he speaks of "vivid memory without emotional fixation" and implies his own function, "to tell the new boys about (the

(200) See above: p.459

(201) Op. cit: p. 104

(202) Fisher, M: Intent upon reading Brockhampton, 1964.

(203) Ibid: p.18

adult world)". (204) The second point - about imagination and "a unique world" - echoes C.S. Lewis's notion concerning "fairyl-land" (and thus the "book which helps children to grow up") (205) and is paralleled by Tolkien's notions of "the inner consistency of reality" and "man's proper function as a sub-creator" (206). These ideas of Tolkien's ally themselves to Romantic-progressive theory: they are Coleridgean and receive expression through Caldwell Cook's "Ilonds", Nunn and Hourd. The use by Fisher of the adverbs "willingly" and "actively" indicate a response which involves imaginative re-creation - whether this is purely in terms of responding as a reader to the book or with the composition of a parallel story through interaction between real and fictional experience does not matter. The third sentence of the passage quoted from Fisher echoes Lewis again -

... everything in the story should arise from the whole cast of the author's mind. We must write for children out of those elements in our own imagination: differing from our child readers not by any less, or less serious interest in the things we handle, but by the fact that we have other interests which children would not share with us. (207)

The last two sentences of the quotation from Fisher recall Lewis's central justification for the writing of children's fiction - "the third way ... consists in writing a children's story because a children's story is the best art form for something you have to say". (208)

Fisher, writing primarily as a critic, therefore, lays down

(204) See above: p.333

(205) See above: p.335

(206) Tolkien, J.R.R.: On Fairy Stories (Essays presented to Charles Williams. OUP 1947)

(207) See above: p.336

(208) See above: p.334

prescriptions which are answered to by writers themselves. The main requirements may be summarised as follows: empathy with the child's point of view; imaginative coherence; respect between child and adult; technical and literary proficiency. Not only are these, for Fisher, the criteria by which children's novels are to be judged, they are also the criteria by which the writers justify their own process and conceive of their own responsibility.

As mentioned before, the literature produced by writers about their writing has grown a great deal during this period. Much of it has been anthologised, notably by Blishen (209), though work selected for comment here does not necessarily appear in that work. The use of such writings was stated in a review of The Thorny Paradise by Margery Fisher:

... (it) surely has one use and one use only -
to send us back to the books where every author
is ultimately to be found. (210)

In selecting from such work, the aim has been to seek extracts which refer to Fisher's criteria above and which have particular relevance to this enquiry. First comes the notion of empathy with the child's mind - the necessity for the adult author to order his own insights in tune with the expectations and understandings of the child.

McDowell, writing as a critic, (211) seeks to isolate the essential

(209) Blishen, Edward: (ed.) The Thorny Paradise Writers on writing for Children Kestrel 1975

(210) Fisher, M: Growing Point Vol. 18 No. 3 p. 2705 (Sept 1975)

(211) McDowell, Myles: Fiction for children and adults: some essential differences. Children's Literature in Education No. 10, March 1973, pp. 50-63.

difference in scope this process entails between adults and children's fiction. In comparing a passage from Philippa Pearce's Tom's Midnight Garden with Angus Wilson's Night Call, he comes to the conclusion that

... a good children's book makes complex experience available to its readers: a good adult book draws attention to the inescapable complexity of experience. (212)

McDowell sees the use of the "old conventions" in children's fiction as being the means by which this "complex experience" is made available - the notions of the quest, time-travel ("to a relatively simpler and less cluttered time, where the issues can be presumed to be clearer and bolder"), initiation and the rise and fall of fortune. Through these "old conventions" runs the possibility of growth, for:

If the hero emerges substantially the same as he began the book, then the story has very little but romance to offer. (213)

The notion is advanced, then, that the children's author must present complexity through easily apprehended simplicity.

J. Paton Walsh, writing from the point of view of a children's author, sees the responsibility in terms of the following metaphor:

I imagine the perfectly conceived children's book something like a soap-bubble; all you can see is a surface - a lovely rainbow thing to attract the youngest onlooker - but the whole is shaped and sustained by the pressure of adult emotion, present but invisible, like the air within the bubble. Many themes can be treated indirectly in this way which crudely and directly broached would not be "suitable" for children:

(212) Ibid: p. 52

(213) Ibid: p. 59

perhaps one may hope their emotions may be
educated by the shape of the rainbow surface,
in preparation for more conscious understanding
of hard things. (214)

The metaphor is an interesting and apt one because it insists on an inclusive, interdependent relationship between the form and the underlying content. It conveys a notion of the "perfectly conceived" children's novel as being a product of Keats's "negative capability", and it, therefore, leads to an assumption of a high - and, therefore, responsible - function for the children's author. McDowell, in his view of the presentation of complex experience by the children's author, makes a distinction between "simplicity" and the "writing-up of experience simplistically" (215). Hildick (216) elaborates this point in terms of the writer's responsibility as follows, when he talks about the necessary presentation to children of adult characters.

... if we simplify them we are cheating- diluting
rather than concentrating, blurring rather than
focussing - unless and only unless, we are using
them in some modern fairy-tale, some allegory
or fantasy that is seen to be allegory or fantasy ...
would you be happy to let your daughter marry a
Biggles? (217)

Hildick's assumptions here lead us back to McDowell's insistence on "old conventions". The notions of "fairy-tale", "fantasy" or "allegory" indicate a strong affinity between the writing of serious fiction and the existence of myth, legend and the oral tradition of story-telling - Townsend's "wild blood". In the difference between "simplicity" and "the simplistic", in the responsibility of the writer to "concentrate" rather than "dilute"; in the need to present complex experience behind the "soap bubble" in terms of the "old

(214) Paton Walsh, Jill: The Rainbow Surface The Times Literary Supplem.
Dec. 3, 1971 (Reprinted: Tucker, N.Ed.)
suitable for children Sussex U.P. 1977

(215) Op. cit: p. 53

(216) Op. cit: (see above: p. 417)

(217) Ibid: p. 9

conventions" is a responsibility for the writer to act much as the oral story-teller in the "great popular tradition", since he is satisfying a basic need and performing a vital human function. This function can be equated with the progressive, Froebelian justification of myth and legend.

Hildick, nevertheless, sees further constraints upon the writer - a definite moral responsibility. After examining scenes from books by J.R. Townsend and Roger Collinson which deal with children alone in potentially dangerous situations, he says:

If a children's writer accepts the benefits of a subject's fatal attractiveness to children, then he must handle that subject with the very greatest care (218) (author's italics)

This moral responsibility is more that of the guardian and is further dealt with by other writers. Hildick resumes his examination of responsibility with a requirement complementary to the guardian's role. In comparing (from adult literature) passages from Lawrence's Sons and Lovers and Braine's Room at the Top, he comments on:

... the honesty and balance and total engagement of Lawrence. (219)

Applying this comment to children's fiction, together with criticism of Enid Blyton for the same features of "dishonesty" and "lack of balance" as he sees exhibited by Braine, he says:

Unevenness, lack of balance, the failure of an author to follow artistically and logically: these are so often at the root of what is potentially harmful in children's (to say nothing of adult's) fiction. (220)

(218) Ibid: p. 129

(219) Ibid: p. 134

(220) Ibid: p. 134

The children's writer has an artistic duty as onerous as that of the adult novelist: the implication is that lack of artistic responsibility itself can lead to the "potentially harmful". The aesthetic and the moral go hand in hand. Many of these points are developed by Collinson (221) (the same writer commented on earlier by Hildick for moral responsibility). Collinson, writing as author, teacher, and critic, examines the difference between didactic writers and those with no "obvious axe to grind". There is an echo here of Lewis's dictum that the story must arise "from the habitual furniture of one's mind" - a requirement Collinson does not find completely attractive.

... the "this-is-how-it-is-kids" Author may simply be confirming them in their prejudices or impressing them with his untroubled confidence. Moreover, I cannot, as a writer for children, escape the fact that whatever I write is presenting a picture of life as I see it. (222)

Both Lewis and Paton Walsh (among many others) have assumed, in their implied assertions of the author's high function of "negative capability", that the "whole cast of the author's mind" which "shapes and sustains" the "soap bubble" is going to be beneficial to the child in its unbiased and undidactic presentation of "complex experience". Collinson finds that the responsibility of the children's writer is more complex - that the aesthetic "laissez-faire" implied by the negative capability of Lewis and Walsh is not sufficient. He examines a number of works (Indestructible Jones by Showell Styles, The Galleon by Ronald Welch, The Ghost Downstairs by Leon Garfield and The Day of the Triffids and The Chrysalids by John Wyndham), and finds that there is much to

(221) Collinson, Roger: The Children's Author and his readers. Children's Literature in Education No. 10, March 1973. pp. 37-48.

(222) *ibid*: p. 38

criticise in the way of bias and intention in how the characters act and are presented although there is no hint of overt didacticism. The attitude of presenting experience according to Collinson's "this-is-how-it-is-kids" inevitably involves the transmission of the author's values and attitudes. But, repeatedly during a story, there is the necessity of choice on the part of characters. Of the author's choice of action in The Day of the Triffids (as to whether the blind should be ignored by or helped by the remaining non-blind) Collinson says:

... placed in such circumstances I don't doubt that many of us would look after ourselves. But not inevitably so, not because "that's how it is" but because of choice, because of what we decide is important. (223)

This moral constraint is important for the children's writer, for he

... cannot ignore his readers or afford to keep them at any distance further than the back of his mind. For the duration of his book he will be engaging a child's mind, and, by the nature of a book, in a singularly exclusive way. (224)

This "engagement" is in no way comparable with Lewis's first way of writing for children - that is no hint of the writer's "catering for the child's taste". Rather there are two aspects to the "engagement". The first is that the writer

... owes it to the child to share with him as far as is possible for him in the telling of his story, the truth and his honest pursuit of the truth. (225)

The second is in understanding, not of the child's needs, but of the processes which go towards forming those needs.

(223) Ibid: p. 42

(224) Ibid: p. 42

(225) Ibid: p. 42

To treat children just as adults is to reveal that one has no understanding of or concern for how children develop emotionally, conceptually and linguistically. I am not suggesting that one needs a diploma before one may write for children, but if the writer is not concerned about what children read books for and does not subordinate his talents to the needs of his readers, he may produce a book which could prove a damaging experience, or, more probably, one which the child will simply find unreadable. (226)

Collinson provides an illustration of this by referring to Garfield's The Ghost Downstairs. In asking what this story has to offer the child, he finds:

It is a very adult concern about a grown person's morbid relationship with his own childhood. (227)

Some elements were enjoyed by the children who read it, in particular " 'the creepiness' which is superbly done". Nevertheless

An intelligent, voracious reader of thirteen in my school with no record of maladjustment, returned the book unfinished to me with evasive and embarrassed mutterings about it being too frightening. (228)

In the end, Collinson's main justification for reading is fun: he regrets the "tone of moral uplift and highmindedness" the word "responsibility" has (229). Nevertheless, it is clear that Collinson only accepts with reservations Paton Walsh's image of the soap-bubble. Garfield's "creepiness" may constitute "the rainbow surface". But the "pressure of adult emotion" by which it is "shaped and sustained" may well not make "complex experience" available to the child. It may rather "draw attention to the

(226) Ibid: p. 43

(227) Ibid: p. 47

(228) Ibid: p. 47

(229) Ibid: p. 48

inescapable complexity of experience" and will thus, through being beyond the child's cognitive range, disturb rather than help. It will not "create a unique world into which the child will go willingly and actively". In this respect, the notion of the writer's responsibility is complementary to ideas of the developmental nature of fiction - that the writer's duty is to concentrate the presentation of experience into the capacities for apprehension of the children for whom he is writing. In Collinson's view, the authors represented in, say, The Thorny Paradise who tend to claim that they write for themselves are tending towards irresponsibility unless such a process of mental selection leading to such concentration happens during their own creative processes. Collinson is attempting a synthesis between the right of the author to write as he likes and the right of the child not to be "disturbed" or feel that "the stars" are "put out", and "the compass" is "taken away". He is also assuming that those who urge writers to provide what is felt will be good for the child (as opposed to the process of catering for children like an "anthropologist" or "commercial traveller") are also working against the writer's responsibility - a point made forcibly by J. Paton Walsh in another article (230). For while she implies disagreement with Collinson in one respect ("if a book is written in good faith and does unfortunately upset a particular reader - then I don't think the writer is responsible"), (231) she implies agreement concerning "truth" of experience.

(Children) don't only need sympathy for their

(230) Paton Walsh, Jill: The Writer's Responsibility: Children's Literature in Education No. 10, March 1973, pp. 30-36.

(231) Ibid: p. 30

problems, understanding of adolescent difficulties, exorcism of fear, confirmation of fantasies. They need a literary experience. (232)

For this reason, much outside prescription for the writer she claims exists, ("the green cross code stuff, the educational aids stuff, the writer as social worker") (233) she rejects as "irrelevant and potentially damaging", both to the child and to the writer.

The work examined here of Hildick, Collinson and Walsh is but a small proportion of the total amount written in this particular debate. Nevertheless, the assumptions of responsibility made by all three and the respective attitudes they express - Walsh's concerning the writer's duties to himself as guardian of an art form; Collinson's concerning his duties towards the child as reader; Hildick's attempting compromise between both - are representative of the main lines of argument. An attempt at synthesis and a fuller statement of the writer's duties to himself, his art form and his public was subsequently made by Leeson (234). Leeson notes that advice to the writer concerning the need for "relevance", for lack of bias and a need for classlessness usually comes from outside, from non-writers. However, he is, as a writer and critic, forced to recognise truth in the advice: his concern is how to enable the writer to follow this advice and still write effectively. Leeson's method is to look at advice hitherto regarded by writers as unnecessarily cramping and interpret

(232) Ibid: p. 36

(233) Ibid: p. 36

(234) Leeson, R: What were we arguing about? Signal No. 20, May 1976, pp. 55-63.

it more as increased opportunity.

... my experience has been that seen as an abstraction the question of removing bias from children's books can be a burden to writers. Seen as an index of the enormous changes ... it marks an opportunity. There has never been such a wealth of characters, such diverse motivation, such complexity of personal problems calling for reflection in our stories. (235)

The important word appears to be "reflection" - it is questionable here whether the word implies the novel as "mirror in the roadway" or whether the "reflection" is a mental activity on the part of the reader. In either case, Leeson would meet criticism from Collinson. If the novel is "a mirror" then the version of "negative capability" implied allows no personal involvement on the part of the writer. But, because he is human, attitudes and judgments may creep in unnoticed, as Collinson demonstrates with his examinations of Styles, Welch and Wyndham. If the "reflection" is on the part of the writer then didacticism is a danger, since "reflection" may well lead to a conclusion. An answer to these possible criticisms is contained in Leeson's subsequent rules for children's novels in which he implies aesthetic as well as moral considerations for the writer. The first rule is as follows:

- (1) A novel is a story about people with problems, not about problems looking for people to happen to ... (236)

The status of the novel as a presentation of experience is confirmed: Leeson agrees with Paton Walsh's impatience with "the Green Cross stuff". Leeson further indicates that this experience may not necessarily be in terms of the real world as long as its original -

(235) Ibid: p. 62

(236) Ibid: p. 63

the author's experience which is being drawn on - is in the real world.

- (2) No character, however fantastic, can be imagined unless its prototype exists in the world outside. (237)

This echoes the point made by Tolkien in On Fairy Tales where he talks of "the inner consistency of reality". Leeson, who writes historical novels and books of contemporary relevance for children and is children's book editor for The Morning Star, might be thought not to make the same sort of assumption as Tolkien does. However, it is clear that Leeson is totally out of sympathy with Midwinter (with whom he might be expected to have a fellow-feeling) who says:

... Do those books (in "your school Bookshop") ...assist directly in the development of an alert and active citizenry? And I mean directly; none of your "transfer stuff" about if they read about elves it will help them to be socially conscious later. In other words, how much reading for action is going on? (238)

"Reading for action" implies a different function from those so far examined. It leads to the matters of "didacticism" which troubled Collinson. Leeson turns to the nature of the story for a solution of the problem.

- (3) What a book has to say (its message?) should come out in the action rather than the statement. (239)

This statement appears to beg the question posed by Collinson, for his analyses of Wyndham and Styles indicated that the author's bias (if any) showed itself in the action, for the characters' choices

(237) Ibid: p. 63

(238) Midwinter, Eric: Books and the Socially Disadvantaged School Bookshop News 3: October 1975, p. 8

(239) Op. cit: p. 63

were presumably the author's as well. However, Leeson assumes a more actively contemplative role for children, implying a certain moral discrimination:

- (4) ... Love thine enemy, at least to the extent of letting him act out his case. Children can judge by actions. (240)

Leeson minimises the dangers of choice that Collinson raised: the danger in the author's choice being the wrong one is admitted and accounted for simply in terms of the difficulty of choice and the child's growing realisation of the "shades of grey" rather than the "black and white".

- (5) There are no simple choices. Ask any child who has the chance to stop some obnoxious bully by telling teacher whether life's a straight knock-down fight between good and evil. (241)

The continuing debate on the writer's responsibility has further defined and justified the use of fiction in schools: if a consensus has arisen it is that the writer's duty is to present the "complexity" of experience" through "concentration" rather than "dilution" in a way which does not assume the rightness of certain courses of action but presents them for contemplation and discrimination by the child at his own level. These processes of contemplation and discrimination refer back to the relationship between fiction and child development: while, as Collinson says, the writer does not "need a diploma ", nevertheless his realisation that he is catering for readers at certain stages of cognitive and emotional development underlines his responsibility. The realisation adds further to the number of justifications for fiction in the school.

(240) Ibid: p. 63

(241) Ibid: p. 63

(g) Fiction in the classroom : aims and method

The basic positions

So far in this investigation it has not been thought necessary to deal specifically with method. Certain writers - notably Hayward, Mason, R.T. Lewis, Pritchard, and Agnes Latham in her recommendation of the desirability of reading aloud - have dealt with method at some length: however, no concerted body of debate about presentation has emerged until the period with which we are now dealing. There may be good reasons for this. First is the possibility that until the 1950's the skills model and the traditional version of the cultural heritage held sway in secondary schools. "Method", in fiction, was associated with "language study", "stiffening" and "rigour". Therefore, the progressive insistence on "pleasure" and "interest" implied a negation of "method". Second may be that the rise during the 1960's of CSE-dominated thematic work, involving a view of literature as subservient to other ends, caused a move towards a revaluation of literature for its own sake. As Summerfield says:

The depressing characteristic of much current thinking about humanities programmes is that they have a very limited notion of the role of literature in such work: it is seen to be illustrative or exemplary, a useful way of giving specific density to a generalisation ...
(242)

The Rosens more pithily say something similar.

Treasure Island is not a handbook of piracy and Hickory Dickory Dock is not a footnote on the nocturnal habits of mice. They are oblique ways of symbolising the world of feeling. (243)

Both these extracts, from a progressive standpoint, assume the primacy of feeling: it is noteworthy that all these writers take

(242) Op. cit: (see above: p.4]2) p. 106

(243) Op. cit: (see above: p.4]4) p. 195

a language-based view. This appears to indicate once again that to assume that a language-based position undervalues literature is to misunderstand it. The corollary of this is that "thematic" approaches, although nominally language-based, misuse language by undervaluing a main and special form of it - literature for its own sake.

A third reason may well be the spread of active, progressive methods from the primary school into the secondary school and a consequent need to redefine method, especially in view of succeeding stages in the child's cognitive and emotional growth. Here a need to move away from "interest" and "enjoyment" into the cognitive modes pre-supposed by the start of GCE and CSE-based approaches becomes apparent. Closely allied to this is the question of criticism and discrimination and the child's own capacity for them. We have already noted the Cambridge School expressing need for discrimination and the inculcation of taste; on the other hand, a progressive approach has emphasised a refinement of response in which the salient factors have been the respective qualities of imagination brought to bear by both author and reader. The difference between "discrimination" and "criticism" on the one hand, and "appreciation" on the other thus becomes a fine one - a fineness illustrated by Paffard (244). Paffard's review of previous work shows that he tends towards a literature-based progressivist standpoint. He takes note of Jenkinson and C.S. Lewis and assumes the rightness of their distinctions between types of children's fiction. He also sees himself as carrying on

(244) Paffard, M.K. : The Teaching of English Literature in Secondary Schools. Educational Research Pt. 1, Vol. 4; No. 3, June 1962, pp. 218-239. Pt. 2, Vol. 5; No. 1, November 1962, pp. 18-28.

the investigative process of Carsley (245) and F. Whitehead (246). Having asserted the need for values in literature, Paffard then looks at the nature of "criticism" and "appreciation". He makes the point that appreciation is not necessarily deeper because it has been verbalised (247) and then looks at the accepted term "critical appreciation". For Paffard "critical" as an adjective is redundant: "critical" and "appreciation" he regards as synonymous (248). A relationship between "criticism" and "appreciation" he sees as follows:

It is certainly true, as Coleridge implies, that children must be led to admire before they are taught to criticise and that appreciation occurs long before the ability to make an ordered verbal response to a work of literature can be expected. On the other hand, "practical criticism" amounts to nothing more than reading literature carefully and without bias in order to come to an independent and responsible assessment. (249)

Paffard's "independent and responsible assessment" may, according to his paper, presumably not be "verbalised". It may - according to the Rosens - be made in terms of parallel "story-making". Or it may - according to Doughty, Dixon and Summerfield - be made in terms of talk in the classroom when the "virtual experience" is compared with the child's own individual experience. For "criticism" and "appreciation" to be synonymous, it would appear that Paffard makes no distinction between the cognitive and the affective in the "independent and responsible assessment". While his phraseology seems to imply a cognitive response, his acceptance of Jenkinson and C.S. Lewis implies an affective response. The

-
- (245) See above: p.318
(246) See above: p.316
(247) Ibid: Pt. 2, p. 19
(248) Ibid: Pt. 2, p. 20
(249) Ibid: Pt. 2, p. 23

The questions remain. How does one elicit (or detect) this response in the child? How does one - once it is detected - "refine" it? How does one present books so as to enable the child to gain a reading habit? How does one (if at all) use the books to deepen and "refine" the response? How does one balance the claims of the cognitive and the affective in one's attempts to elicit the response?

One may use Paffard's inclusive statement of aim (made with our chosen age-group in mind) as a jumping-off point for the subsequent discussion. The "independent and responsible assessment", crucially shorn of need for traditional language work or conscious literary criticism, is reached for in two main ways, which will be the two main sub-divisions of the rest of this section. The first is that which concentrates on the story itself, which therefore needs interpretation rather than activity on the part of the teacher and which - whether it values more the artefact or the response - sees the interaction between reader/listener and the story as the crucial encounter. The second is that which emphasises the teacher's activity as well as the selection of books, which either sees the stories set among other activities or assumes the introduction of other activities in relation to the stories as necessary to their fuller appreciation. Obviously in the first approach there are varying degrees of teacher intervention: in the second there are varying degrees of closeness to a "topic" or "thematic" approach in which the story itself may be subservient. In this way, it becomes clear that a debate on method is an integral part of the debate on teaching philosophies.

The story at the centre

To place the story at the centre of one's teaching indicates an attitude towards fiction which includes a fear of damaging it and the experience it offers as if it were a fragile thing. As Cheetham (250) says:

During the past decade an attitude seems to have been encouraged and developed in Junior Schools that to do other than read poetry and novels to children would sound the death knell of enjoyment, that children are so vulnerable, and that literature is such a delicate thread in their lives that it cannot be used with the same rigour as other aspects of the curriculum. (251)

Good cases, however, have been made for keeping some children away from fiction. Not all of them have followed the one outlined by O'Malley in the first issue of English in Schools, which implied a view of hierarchical society familiar from the Cambridge School. Thus Dyer (252) can say:

Fiction moves in the area of the imagination and the reading of fiction ought to be a personal thing ... the argument is not that fictional literature is necessary to all ... we must realise that, just as reading is a secondary skill, so there are ways of stimulating the imagination that spring from the primary skills of sight, movement and sound. Often these will be preferable to the individual than the chore of reading. (253)

In effect, Dyer is saying that the convention of fiction itself may mask the imaginative stimulus it offers: the central contact between author's and child's experience is so private that if it

(250) Cheetham, John: "Quarries" in the Primary School: extending the role of literature in the classroom. Children's Literature in Education No. 16, pp. 3-9.

(251) Ibid: p. 6

(252) See above: p.

(253) Dyer, Christopher: (Senior English Master, Beaconsfield Junior High School, Waltham Forest): Towards a Philosophy of School Libraries Vol. 17, No. 2, June 1969, p. 146.

can be conveyed through a "primary skill" (i.e. through another art form), so much the better for some children. On the other hand are those who wish merely for children and books to be brought together. Margery Fisher (254) says:

A book is not primarily educational. It is an experience for the reader ... All of us who are working with children must learn to fit the child to the book and not the book to the child. (255)

Blishen expands on this book-centred approach in a subsequent article (256), in which he is concerned to protect the idea of the story itself from attempts to misuse it for other purposes. The story is placed at the centre in the following extract:

The teacher has to intervene, has to be a teacher, an agent; but his activity, I believe, should rest on an acceptance in this field of certain utter simplicities, among them being that to bring children and books together, that's all. (257)

The teacher, therefore, stands back to let an encounter take place: the attitude to fiction is purist, allowing no scope for "using" it for purposes beyond itself.

When we speak of the uses-of literature, I think it's necessary for us to be sure that we are not trying to turn a book into some sort of gadget serving some wholly irrelevant inconvenience of our own. (258)

Fiction must not be "used" because to do so will do violence to its very concept:

(254) Fisher, M: Is Fiction Educational? Children's Literature in Education. No. 1, March 1970, pp. 11-19.

(255) Ibid: p. 13, p. 18

(256) Blishen, E: That's all! Children's Literature in Education, No. 2, July 1970.

(257) Ibid: p. 64

(258) Ibid: p. 66

The nature of literature is such that teachers' treatment of it in schools will succeed only if the treatment reflects that sense of a delicate, shielded mystery. For that, when the talking is done and all the questions are asked, is the inner character of literary creation itself. (259)

Such phrases as "delicate, shielded mystery" indicate an attitude of purism which some commentators find hard to translate to the classroom. Those subsequently to be examined are representative of commentators close to this purist attitude, who see the book as existing for its own sake, and who wish for activities connected with it to have no purpose beyond furthering response to it. Blishen has already suggested that in this encounter the teacher has to be "an agent": the activities connected with being an "agent" are, with these writers, mainly to do with presenting books, facilitating silent reading and themselves reading aloud.

Mattam (260) proposes a particular type of presentation of fiction which implies activity on the part of the teacher and which has as its central aim making closer the contact between child and book. This contact is important because fiction should:

prove to be a means of enjoyment and education in later years. The lesson devoted to the novel is preparation for later leisure as well as an immediate invitation to pleasure. (261)

However, the teacher's role is to lead the child on to greater pleasure:

... children can be led to an increasing awareness even though their conscious aim is enjoyment. It is indeed that very enjoyment that a teacher seeks to make

(259) Ibid: p. 67

(260) Mattam, D: The Vital Approach Pergamon 1963

(261) Ibid: p. 130

richer by his treatment of the novel or short story. (262)

Mattam's prescriptions are very much in terms of the children's novel previously defined as part of a progressive version of the cultural heritage (Garnett, Streatfield, Kastner, Ransome - as well as Blyton!); his main interest here is in presentation. So, to further silent reading, he proposes the Foretaste of Fiction lesson. A type or genre of fiction is chosen as the basis of a lesson: examples of this type are introduced, read from and commented upon.

Its main purpose is to introduce a section of fictional writing rather than a single book; it is a lesson which moves clearly towards the public library and leisure (263).

Mattam tends here to see the teacher as provider and impresario. The need to "package" the books into such a lesson as Foretaste of Fiction is reminiscent of Hayward and his "red-letter lessons"(264). Certainly Mattam, though placing the book at the centre, does not believe that the contact between child and book will be made unaided. Some commentators who see books to be "used" rather than presented tend to assume that the "book-centred" teacher will be totally self-abnegatory. Cutforth and Battersby (265), for example, state

Many well-meaning people believe that if a child can only be surrounded by a "rich background" of books and materials, some sort of miracle will occur and an intense interest in reading and literature will follow automatically. In fact, the very reverse may happen. (266)

What approach this leads Cutforth and Battersby to will be

-
- (262) Ibid: p. 130
(263) Ibid: p. 132
(264) See above: p. 152
(265) Cutforth, J.A., and Battersby, S.H.: Children and Books Blackwell
(266) Ibid: p. 118 1962

discussed subsequently. Meanwhile, it is necessary to point out that most commentators - such as Mattam - who value the book for its own sake, do not, in fact, make any such assumption. Blisshen did not - the teacher is an "agent" - nor, for example, do Kamm and Taylor.

... it is not enough merely to surround children with books. Children do not need books just because they are there. The reverse may be true and is often shown to be. (267)

This leads to consideration of the main way of being an "agent" which the "book-centred" commentators propose - that of reading aloud to children. This activity is purposive: Kamm and Taylor provide a graphic illustration of its possible results.

The case of a near-delinquent nine-year-old from a disturbed home who proudly claims to have bought for himself ... nineteen paperbacks (including some ... C.S. Lewis) ... is certainly a justification of the half-hour's reading aloud every day that his Headmaster insists on. (268)

Subsequently, the case for reading aloud to children within the chosen age group has been made forcibly: two representative examples are Adams and Pearce (269), and Field and Hamley (270). Adams and Pearce, rejecting class readers with mixed ability groups and asserting the primacy of enjoyment in reading, attach great importance to the proceeding.

The teacher's biggest contribution throughout the 9 to 13 age range is in reading aloud to his pupils. For many children, even quite able ones, narrative is difficult to read without any full meaning. They can register the sense

(267) Op. cit: (see above, p.418) p. 34

(268) Ibid: p. 38

(269) Adams, A., and Pearce, J: Every English Teacher OUP 1974

(270) Op. cit: (see above: p.425)

of the text, perhaps, but cannot transpose it into any kind of "internal performance". Children who are used to being read to at home are those who most quickly learn to read for themselves, so the support of good reading aloud is relevant to all children. The teacher's second great contribution is in saturating his pupils with books. (271)

The notion of the teacher's mediating the work through another medium (his own voice, providing the counterpart of the "internal performance") does much to qualify the diffidence implied in the statement of Dyer above. As a way of providing a familiarity with and a means of progression in reading, the teacher's reading aloud is seen as complementary to "saturating" the pupils and further deepens the idea of the teacher as provider and impresario. These ideas are further dealt with by Field and Hamley, who make four main justifications for reading aloud. The first is as follows:

It is a means for the child who has not reached this stage (of "wide reading to extend and enrich experience") to share in the experience of fiction at a higher level than his own reading competence will allow. (272)

Thus reading aloud is an experience which leads the child on and also provides "intrinsic reinforcement" to accelerate the reading of the final stage of reading.

The second justification lies in the works themselves - a justification which presupposes value in the stories selected for reading aloud.

A work of fiction can be responded to at a variety of levels - from that of the reading teacher enjoying some nicety of wit or the relationship between Arietty and her mother

(271) Op. cit: p. 69

(272) Op. cit: p. 49

in The Borrowers A loft, to that of the not very bright 11-year-old on edge with suspense and excitement during the escape from confinement by means of an ingeniously constructed balloon in the same book. (273)

The suitability of reading aloud for a mixed-ability class is implied - "the teacher is reading to a group and not an individual" (274).

The next justification, regarded by the authors as "more tentative", has to do with the group situation the teacher sets up. Passages which may disturb are quoted - from Steinbeck's The Red Pony and Garner's The Moon of Gomrath. These passages

reflect considerable feats of imagination on the parts of serious and highly talented writers who do not wish to disturb but who cannot compromise with their vision. (275)

The teacher's role as intermediary here becomes crucial.

For a child to come to terms with work of this sort in daylight, in company, as a shared experience given by a skilled interpreter, is itself a great advantage - a saving detachment enables aesthetic pleasure to over-ride acute and distorting emotional involvement. (276)

Thus the child is saved from the sort of experience of fear he might have in reading such passages "silently and alone in his own home - perhaps in bed before switching off the light". (277)

The last justification concerns the strongly episodic nature of many children's stories, which itself presupposes shape to reading-aloud sessions.

... a structural - and in the end aesthetic -

(273) Ibid: p. 51

(274) Ibid: p. 51

(275) Ibid: p. 50

(276) Ibid: p. 52

(277) Ibid: p. 51

element easily lost in the sheer pace of consecutive silent reading can be brought out and emphasised in the teacher's reading aloud. And, leading from this, the teacher can make the reading-aloud session, if he handles it carefully, a dramatic experience in its own right, bounded by time and the author's intentions, and with built-in motivation towards the next session. (278)

The story, then, is an experience which the teacher re-creates for the child until he can easily reach the final stage of reading competence. This form of presentation would be agreed on by most book-centred commentators. However, there is a certain difference in interpretation of what further experiences and insights this presentation should lead to. Various types and levels of understanding are predicated, ranging from comprehension at the most basic level of meaning to understanding of form and to re-creation of the author's experience.

A representative example of the most straightforward type of further work is provided by Walsh (279). Dealing with the junior-secondary age-range, Walsh stresses the child's memory for what has actually happened in the novels that have been read. He proposes comprehension exercises springing directly from the novels because they make the child return to and consider the text. Justifying this course, he says:

... first ... the children are forced by such exercises to consider language more closely, and that itself is worth doing. Secondly, they are made to see for themselves in what ways particular effects are achieved, and the insight gained can be put to use, if the teacher wishes, in "follow-up" composition work (the children writing their own descriptions of a man's combat with a wild animal, or of one wild animal with

(278) Ibid: p. 53

(279) Walsh, J.H.: Teaching English Heinemann Educational Books 1965

another). Thirdly, and this seems to me not unimportant - the children are helped to come as near as anybody can to the experience of "creating" the original passages; they do in effect, re-create it. It is a matter for great satisfaction and triumph for the child when he manages to restore the original exactly, as sometimes he does. (280)

It is noteworthy that Walsh seems to imply mainly written responses. The questions must be asked concerning these activities - do they effect "re-creation" (as Cook's "Ilonds" would or Nunn would wish), or are they to prevent the novel from becoming a "soft option", as are the rather similar activities proposed by "Scrutator" under the heading "literary lessons"? (281) Walsh, a literature-based progressive who contributed frequently during this period to The Use of English, would presumably not wish to be classed with the traditional, skills-based model represented by "Scrutator", Reynolds, etc.. Nevertheless, the similarity in the activities he proposes - disregarding the motives behind them - points to the difficulty facing those teachers who wish to extend the activity of reading beyond reception of the work. The fineness of distinction between "criticism" and "appreciation" pointed out by Paffard shows itself here. While it may well be true that "appreciation is not necessarily deeper because it is verbalised", clearly the teacher may want to make sure as far as he can that appreciation has taken place: it is likely he is going to insist on some form of verbalisation. By Paffard's definition, "appreciation" will tend to become "verbalised" criticism even if the child is not capable of it.

(280) Ibid: p. 100

(281) See above: p.172

An attempt to resolve this dilemma by working afresh at the nature of fiction and the reader's reaction to it was made by Bolt and Gard (282). The central point they make is that the reader brings a special sort of response and understanding to literature.

Somebody who reads a story or listens to one, expects a special kind of satisfaction. What is more, he regards these expectations as legitimate, so that if they are disappointed he has grounds for a complaint he would not make against a factual report ... Children ... nevertheless, feel them (the expectations), and the task of a teacher of critical reading is to develop their awareness of such feelings by inducing their expression, or conversely, the expression of corresponding satisfactions.
(283)

The authors claim that the child, at whatever age, understands fiction and the nature of story quite instinctively. The scheme of the book is to analyse stories suitable for various stages of development, from Goldilocks and Paddington Bear through to Henry James, Lawrence and Flaubert. They assert that the literary, formal qualities in the works are different in degree, not kind, and presuppose similar types of literary understanding which are present in all readers whatever their stages of development.

It should not be ... necessary to warn the teacher that his pupils are already in possession of all the equipment required to appreciate the story of Goldilocks (284)

Instinctive appreciation of story is indeed more likely from the child. The authors are reminiscent of Pickard when they say:

(The child has understanding of) the borderland

(282) Bolt, S., and Gard, R: Teaching Fiction in Schools Hutchinson Educational, 1970.

(283) Ibid: p. 17

(284) Ibid: p. 30

of fact and fiction. (He acts out fantasies) in accordance with rules which prevent it from getting out of hand. The imaginative processes of children are unconscious procedures, just like the imaginative processes of artists. (285)

Interestingly, the authors comment specifically on the procedures of Walsh outlined above, making the point that comprehension as such does not further a literary or critical response. Mentioning the factual comprehension questions Walsh provides for Chapter VII of Treasure Island, they comment specifically.

These questions ensure that the pupil understands what Jim sees more fully than Jim understands it. But in doing this, they also ensure that the pupil's experience of reading the book has been transformed, because up to this point the pupil has simply shared Jim's point of view. Now, however, he sees not only through Jim's eyes but also round him. The point of view is invested with irony. Mr. Walsh does not, however, suggest any question to confirm that his pupil has registered this transformation ... The most serious omission involved in the approach to a story which stops short at comprehension of the plot is that it neglects to chart the flow of the reader's sympathies with the characters involved in it. (286)

Not only is there here the familiar echo of D.H. Lawrence. There is also a precise statement - whether intended or not - of the difference between the spectator role and "identification". Seeing "not only through Jim's eyes but all round him" parallels exactly Applebee's "there is always another point of view the auditor is implicitly evaluating even if he does not realise it is there". Like Applebee, Bolt and Gard wish to foster response. For this reason, literature must remain a thing on its own: the approach remains text-centred.

Our approach precludes the complete integration of literature with other studies ... the unique value of literature can be discovered only

(285) Ibid: p. 32

(286) Ibid: p. 23

through its unique disciplines. (287)

The approach itself is in the form of the questions the teacher asks the children to elicit a critical response.

At the earliest stage, with Goldilocks, telling rather than reading aloud is presupposed. Other texts are "definitely readers"; nevertheless

... if critical reading is required, the only way to treat a reader in class is to read it aloud. (288)

The reading leads to the questioning: examples are as follows (for The Tower by the Sea by Meindert De Jong). These questions are meant to

... imply much more than mere comprehension on the part of ... eight- or twelve-year-olds. (289)

Bolt and Gard ask:

"Why is it that the cat's balancing of the cot on the sea is a 'miracle' and 'beautiful' even though we know how it came about? ...

Why do we feel that the vilely cruel treatment of the cat by the boys and men seems natural and even healthy compared to crossed brooms and irrational fears (even though it appears, at the end, as one of the features of Katverloren life which is explicitly condemned)? (290)

The qualification "even though" indicates answers which are to do with the novel's tone, intention and moral fable. Insights are implied which the authors assert are precluded by "mere comprehension" and which lead to "critical reading". This "critical reading" becomes something that the teacher can encourage in his pupils

(287) Ibid: p. 148

(288) Ibid: p. 35

(289) Ibid: p. 50

(290) Ibid: pp. 50-51

without necessarily the need to verbalise its mechanics.

Children might be alerted early on in class reading to watch for (the occurrence of the words "know" and "fact" in the book) - and then asked why such plain words are used thus. The teacher will have a bigger word - Irony. As we have noted he need not use it, but he could easily point to its effects - its real effects as opposed to its blanketing air of authority. (291)

Bolt and Gard, therefore, are concerned to foster in the child capacities to read for many different sorts of meaning. In this they show an affinity with Richards and the Cambridge School. (292) They also reject the language-based estimate of fiction typified by Dixon (293) - "it is certainly as quasi-sociology that we dismiss his view of fiction and its value". (294). Nevertheless, they imply agreement with Harding and Britton: throughout is an implied assumption that "spectator role" and the notion of the "onlooker" are valid concepts and presuppose a particular reading relationship. The "relevance" of fiction is found not necessarily in the context of the experience but the manner in which the experience is mediated. Method is defined as the means by which child and active, interpretative teacher can together understand the means of this mediation.

Such an objective, however, is actually not denied by Dixon: it may be that Bolt and Gard are mistaking a different emphasis for a different definition. Stratta, Dixon and Wilkinson (295) - like Bolt and Gard - reject "mere comprehension": they are against exclusively (focussing) on interpretation

(291) Ibid: p. 51

(292) Ibid: p. 148

(293) See above: p. 384

(294) Ibid: p. 151

(295) Stratta, L; Dixon, J; Wilkinson, A: Patterns of Language Heinemann Educational Books 1973

at a cognitive level.

However, they accept that fiction has an especial role to play: their approval of Harding (296) indicates that they accept the notion of the "onlooker". Like Dyer, they imply that the verbal construct of literature may itself be a barrier to understanding: therefore, they see a need for "workshop treatments" of literature, where the teacher "descends from the dais" to take on a role not as "supreme arbiter" but one in which he "needs to be more akin to a producer". (297)

The modes of literature (including fiction) contain dramatic reading, illustration of parallel experience (Browning's Porphyria's Lover was made "relevant" by a comparison with Charles Manson), dramatisation, video-recording, music, the making of radio-versions, collages, and similar activities. (298) All these practices more obviously involve "imaginative re-creation" than do Walsh's exercises. While the authors wish to promote silent reading, the other activities leading to "imaginative re-creation" are a vital stage in appreciation.

This ... is an essential function of novel reading, to imaginatively re-create for oneself the experience of the novelist. The task for the teacher of English is very great indeed, calling for an imaginative understanding of his pupils' difficulties. (299)

This statement explicitly unites the progressive thought of Cook and Nunn with that of the language-based progressives. The notion of "imaginative re-creation" stated here seems precisely that which is left out of consideration by Bolt and Gard when they reject Dixon's position. However, it is plain that the emphasis

(296) Ibid: p. 40
(297) Ibid: p. 43
(298) Ibid: p. 44
(299) Ibid: p. 45

of Stratta, Dixon and Wilkinson is on the experience offered by the artefact rather than its form. It is here that the crucial difference lies between the two approaches.

The need for 'relevance' is illustrated by the authors' examination of two dramatisations made by 11-12-year-olds of Serailleur's The Silver Sword and George Eliot's Silas Marner, where actions and motivations were interpreted in terms of the children's own experience and (in the case of Silas Marner) in terms of their own period of time (what modern equivalent would there be for long churchwarden pipes?). (300) A major point of this "re-creation" is that it gives meaning: the authors make a careful distinction between the sort of approach which sees the novel as a focus for other activities (much as Cheetham, to be subsequently examined, does) and that which in practice is book-centred. In the first approach (where literature is used)

... pupils engage in talking or creative writing parallel to, rather than arising out of, the novel. Here the novel serves as the core of the activities in the same way as a theme or extended project might. Such work is complementary to that discussed in this chapter, supplying a more general stimulus. (301)

The authors, therefore, do not reject a "thematic" approach. They are quite happy to see literature "used" for other purposes provided that such activity is seen as "complementary" and not mistaken for the central encounter. The creative work involved in the direct contact with the novel

... has a sharper focus: it is as exacting in the study of literary criticism: and at the same time it requires creation, not

(300) Ibid: pp. 74-79

(301) Ibid: p. 88

"freely" but according to constraints provided both by the original material and the new form in which it is to appear. And further it has an end product and an audience to mind, and thus as "communication" it is likely to avoid the defects of much "personal writing". But of course, the end product isn't its only justification. What might be imperfectly represented in the final version are the valuable insights generated, and the learning achieved in the process of making that final version. (302)

It would appear that insistence on the "right response" to the particular form postulated by Bolt and Gard and the "imaginative recreation" involved in transfer to another form are in one sense mutually exclusive, since different valuations are placed on form and experience. However, in a more urgent and practical sense, there is no difference in aim or objective, since both sets of writers place the encounter between reader and book unequivocally at the centre and seek to facilitate what Paffard called "the independent and responsible assessment". Where Bolt and Gard see the nature of fictional form itself as being close to experience and instinctively understood - thus the main agent of eliciting "the ... responsible assessment" - Stratta, Dixon and Wilkinson would take Dyer's point and agree with Nicholson when he says

Reading is no longer the only means of living in vicarious experience, and while this does not diminish its importance, it certainly modifies it. (303)

To see one art form in terms of another, possibly more accessible, art form is in itself an act of "critical appreciation".

The statements of Bolt and Gard on the one hand, and Stratta,

Dixon and Wilkinson on the other, are representative of the most

(302) Ibid: p. 88

(303) Nicholson, J.S.: (Headmaster, Delf Hill Middle School, Bradford),
The School Librarian Vol. 18, No. 4,
Dec. 1970, p. 393

detailed statements of book-centred methods yet made. The first exhibits a fusion of literature-centred thought based on the Cambridge School with progressive thought based on developmental notions; the second illustrates how language-based thought, while rejecting literature as the primary means of linguistic expression, refuses to undervalue it, seeing the central grappling of child reader with book as an encounter of supreme importance. Both approaches attempt to enable the child to reach Paffard's "independent and responsible assessment" by facilitating particular sorts of "critical appreciation" by means of active methods. Bolt and Gard proceed by questioning; Stratta, Dixon and Wilkinson proceed by co-operative work with the pupils involving the teacher's "descending from the dais".

"Quarries" and the "using" of fiction

Some commentators to be dealt with here might claim that they, too, were really "book-centred" and that they were as keen on reaching the state of "independent and responsible assessment" as any writers examined earlier. However, just as in (b) above, Cheetham was quoted as saying that teachers feared that any contact with books beyond their reading would spoil "enjoyment", so here Fox is quoted as sounding a warning note concerning the perceived implications for literature in the classroom for project methods and thematic approaches.

The project approach is increasingly popular in schools determined to work across the division of conventional subjects. Not all teachers of literature are convinced of the value of such work.

They fear that fiction may become a quarry-face, hacked about by well-meaning social studies teachers. (304)

Cutforth and Battersby (305), dealing with the Primary School and so having a certain overlap with our chosen age-group, propose a whole battery of work strategies, tests and assignments for children working with books. Already quoted have been their fears that the "rich background" of books will produce "no more than confusion or indecision". Cutforth and Battersby state uncompromisingly:

We believe in "purpose" as well as "interest" as a stimulant. (306)

Nevertheless, the assignments tend to be towards the finding out of information. Work is described which centred on a project on the Labours of Hercules: as part of the process

A large pictorial display of the characters and incidents from the book is put up in the classroom to stimulate excitement. This is changed and added to as the story progresses.
(307)

Unlike the creative work springing from the text itself and involving transfer to a new form, as recommended by Stratta, Dixon and Wilkinson (which, in turn, springs from Nunn and Cook), this process seems to act as a stimulus which may "distance" the work from the children. Creative work connected with particular books remains "parallel" and "complementary" rather than forming the "critical appreciation" of the text itself. Thus, while in the chapter "Literature," the authors see "library work" in the classroom with Literature" leading to imaginative reading and writing,

(304) Fox, Geoff: Children's Literature in Education No. 13, 1974, p. 68
(foreword to Taylor, A: Travelling in Time)

(305) Op. cit; see above, p. 480

(306) Ibid; p. 118

(307) Ibid; p. 43

the resultant creative writing leads on from the book rather than forms an encounter with it or a response to it. In looking at work by children (for example a poem by an 11-year-old based on his work on Treasure Island) the authors comment:

(The children) have been touched deeply,
have tried to express their emotions in
their own ways and show an outstanding
awareness of the possibilities of language.
Whatever their level of intelligence - and
some are of an IQ of 85 - something has moved
them strongly enough to make them articulate.
(308)

That this is a valuable response is undeniable: in some ways it can be seen to equate with the function of fiction to enable the child to "come to terms with experience". However, such "parallel" work is not in the end book-centred, for the response is couched in other ways than the various means of expressing the "independent and responsible assessment". The authors, nevertheless, see that their main task is to promote reading for its own sake. Reading aloud is important because it

... is the beginning, perhaps the only
beginning for some, of the road to the
enjoyment of books. (309)

Question on plots of myths and stories are important because they

... may provoke lively discussion and can
draw the children's attention to the
existence of subplots and characterisation,
even if only in a very elementary way. (310)

The authors seem to have in mind notions of literary form akin to those of Bolt and Gard - ideas of how a story works. Nevertheless, it is noticeable that this passage leads on to

(308) Ibid: p. 93

(309) Ibid: p. 10

(310) Ibid: p. 41

consideration of the "Hercules" project mentioned earlier and, therefore, away from consideration of the author's own words.

As already stated, Cutforth and Battersby would probably deny that they were anything but "book-centred" and certainly not wishing to make literature actually subservient to thematic approaches. However, a purist approach would say that they were. Certainly their prescriptions for reading books show little regard for the progressive version of the cultural heritage already defined and accepted by most commentators referred to during this period.

Croxson - as evinced by other writings of hers (for example, on E. Nesbit) (311) certainly would accept the importance of novel form and the progressive view of the cultural heritage. However, the approach to fiction in her major work (312) is rather similar in method to that of Cutforth and Battersby; the child works among books with a series of work assignments, exercises and questions. The preface to the book states that there are schemes of work presented "for pupils in the lower and middle years of the Secondary School". (313)

In the chapter entitled Selecting Fiction, exercises are proposed concerning plot, characters, setting, the notion of "Desert Island books". They are followed by questions and activities which imply the eliciting of both response to and parallel creativity with the books read - as suggested here.

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- (311) Croxson, Mary: The Emancipated Child in the novels of E. Nesbit
Signal No. 14, May 1974, p. 51.
(312) Croxson, Mary: Using the Library Longmans 1966
(313) Ibid: Preface

- 4) Write two or three sentences about each book in your top ten saying what you particularly liked about it.
- 5) Write the opening page of one of the following novels:
 - a) a group of friends on a school trip to Denmark:
 - b) a spy story, set in the Middle East, with an unusual hero:
 - c) a novel about the street you live in and the lives of the people. (314)

While these questions denote an advance on the exercises proposed by Walsh, they do not reach the pitch of concentration of those of Stratta, Dixon and Summerfield. The activity is mainly private and solitary, not communal. It is noteworthy, too, that Croxson sees the initial encounter with the novel as being a private one: reading aloud and the group situation thus set up does not appear in her account - though this is not to say she would reject it. This book is addressed directly at the pupil: the teacher acts as a guide and interpreter who does not initiate work. Thus a project, "Dalton-plan" - type format is adopted. However, the aim is involvement in the whole world of books -

... the capacity to select with discrimination and skill, to read purposefully and with appreciation - in short, to see the "world of profit and delight" in books which should surely be considered one of the aims of English teaching at the secondary stage. (315)

Methods one might associate with "parallel" and "complementary" activities thus have an essentially "book-centred" aim. Yet even the commentators whose methods most obviously depend on project

(314) Ibid: p. 101

(315) Ibid: Preface

method and lead out to other "parallel" and "complementary" work would claim that their main concern is to see the novel at the centre.

A representative example of such an attitude is that of Taylor (316). The work she describes was done by physical education students at the Northern Ireland Polytechnic, and involved, as discussion group leaders, pupils between fourteen and seventeen. In that sense it is not strictly applicable to our chosen age-group: nevertheless, the project method here described has reference to younger people and is certainly familiar, in procedure and philosophy, to much that may take place in a Middle or Secondary School. The Project was organised for the 1973 Books for Young People conference at Ulster College; the discussion group leaders professed reading tastes

... sometimes at variance with the more traditional notions of their literary advisers in the schools (317).

In selecting a theme for the conference, Anne Taylor asked herself the question:

"How do I present a work of fiction to a class and how do I develop and maintain interest?" (318)

This obviously crucial question is couched in such a way as to justify a project approach for the transmission of the work: the approach itself "develops and maintains the interest" and also determines the criteria for selection. The centrepiece of the

(316) Taylor, Anne: Travelling in Time - towards a project. Children's Literature in Education No. 13, 1974. pp. 68-80.

(317) Ibid: p. 68

(318) Ibid: p. 69

project was The Bell of Nendrum by J.S. Andrews. It was selected because it has

... immediate topographical interest ...
carefully researched historical background,
and the wealth of material ... suggested for
project work. (319)

The project work entails mapwork (of Strangford Lough and its environs); dramatic work based on the life of St. Columba (not, as Stratta, Dixon and Wilkinson would suggest, on the book itself); a study of the Vikings. Photography, tape/slide sequences, etc., on related topics were presented. Their justification was as follows:

From the point of view of the reluctant reader in school, involvement in such an activity might well lead him to tackle the novel with real attention, for only if he knows what he is looking for can he take photographs which will fit the text. (320)

Certainly such a justification allows for reading for comprehension. Most of the previous "book-centred" commentators, however, would query it on the grounds that only a low-level understanding would result, not dependent either on entering into experience or understanding form. The finding-out of other, related books, for example, by Sutcliffe and Trease, leads to wider reading and another set of parallel activities. Taylor's stance is towards "relevance": she draws up a list of requirements for children's books based on answers from children themselves. Under the heading Relevance she says

... (The children's writer) should be well informed on the likes and dislikes of the majority of people in our age-group. He

(319) Ibid: p. 69

(320) Ibid: p. 77

should deal with the problems of the young. (321)

The project as a whole was seen as

... a small contribution towards better
community relations through a clearer
understanding of our common history. (322)

This justification is very close to the objectives presented for the Humanities Project and is reminiscent also of Midwinter's "Reading for action". In effect, whatever attention is being given to the book, and however important the dealing with reading reluctance is seen to be, the end result is that the book is "used" and is valued for largely extra-literary qualities. Such a position could not be held by the literature-based progressive, and as we have seen, it is not necessarily held by the language-based progressive. If Taylor's position can be seen in any way "book-centred" it can only be so in the way that Rosenblatt's is: where fiction is worth reading for important but non-literary reasons.

Cheetham (323) has already been quoted as querying the idea that to do any work with novels spoils "enjoyment": his proposed aim is to put the book as the centre of the project. He explains himself as follows:

The elements of a novel that need to be explored are:

1. The story - the incidents and episodes that capture the children's imagination.
2. The various characters and their relationships.
3. The relationship between people and incidents in the book and the children's own lives and experiences.

(321) Ibid: p. 79

(322) Ibid: p. 79-80

(323) Op. cit: see above, p. 477

4. The physical settings and changing moods
of the novel. (324)

Obviously, these qualities exist only in the works which tell stories; No. 3 in particular echoes a frequent language-based concern. Nevertheless, they are not strictly literary, fictional concerns in the sense that Bolt and Gard would define them: Cheetham's proposed activities would not necessarily entail the sort of response they would seek. Cheetham sees all the "parallel" and "complementary" activities which so far have been seen as leading away from the story, as consciously intended to lead back to it.

The work prompted by the novel should come from these elements, which would become the touchstones of the project; however far one may go in the creative work there must be constant return to the novel. The aim of the project is the better understanding and enjoyment of the novel, and the criterion for all work done by the children is that it furthers this end. (325)

"Understanding" and "enjoyment" here stand for the ends themselves. The progressive "self-activity" which is part and parcel of the project method is here separate from the Rosens' "story-making": Cheetham's ends, while they pertain to the story itself, are not specified in terms of detailed response. Cheetham continues with an account of possible project activities centred on Meindert de Jong's The Wheel on the School - activities which in some way attempt to reproduce the action, processes and techniques undergone by the characters in that particular book (which involves fictional children engaged in a project and gives real children great scope for parallel craft, and related activities).

(324) Ibid: p. 7

(325) Ibid: p. 7

These few representative examples of method have been given to suggest that activities "complementary" and "parallel" are not necessarily intended to lead away from the book itself. It may be that one can draw a distinction between different ideas of response, so that the "imaginative re-creation" assumed by the "book-centred" teacher is that of the author's creative process while the "imaginative re-creation" assumed by the second set of commentators is that of the experiences and actions of the characters themselves.

(h) Towards an overview

Before moving to the conclusion of this study, certain texts must be examined which focus attention on the central problems which occur during a consideration of fiction in schools. The selection is neither exhaustive nor definitive. Those chosen represent the work of Kenyon Calthrop for NATE, Aidan Warlow and Malcolm Yorke in two widely diverse, relatively small-scale studies which both, in their different ways, make significant contributions, and finally the work of the Bullock Committee (insofar as it directly impinges on this study) and Whitehead et al for the Schools Council.

The work of Calthrop

Kenyon Calthrop's work (326) sprang from what F. Whitehead called:

a "user-survey" concerned with the best
current practice making use in schools
of prose books. (327)

(326) Calthrop, Kenyon: Reading Together: An Investigation into the use of the Class Reader Heinemann Educational Books (for NATE) 1971.

(327) Ibid: (Whitehead, F.) Preface

Calthrop sees the notion of the "class-reader" historically, as springing from what this enquiry has defined as a feature of the skills model and the traditional view of the cultural heritage. Nevertheless, his survey showed that the class reader was still in use and could be justified in ways much closer to progressive views;

All the teachers I interviewed felt that the shared experience of reading a common book was something of great value to themselves and their classes ... the resulting sense of community was a deeply educative process. (328)

This idea foreshadows that of Field and Hamley when they talk of the "group situation ... set up" when the teacher elects to read aloud. Calthrop sees this reading aloud as closely allied to the use of the class-reader, which certainly should not involve "a dreary reading round the class". (329) However, many teachers, while seeing the story as central and its appreciation as the most important end, also saw the class reader as providing the focal point for related activity.

... It is dangerously easy to follow one ambitious project with another, to dream up an ingenious and fruitful scheme of thematic work and then yet another, without stopping to ask ourselves what it will all add up to at the end. I am convinced by the teachers I have interviewed that part of the answer to this is sometimes to regard the class reader (as previously we regarded the course book) as the springboard and focal point of all kinds of related activities. (330)

Calthrop summarises schemes of work associated with four commonly used works - Moonfleet (Falkner), The Silver Sword (Serailleur),

(328) Ibid: pp. 2-3

(329) Ibid: p. 5

(330) Ibid: p. 8

Lord of the Flies (Golding), Short Stories of our Time (ed. Barnes). Of these, the first two are said to fall within our chosen age range and the first-named will be here examined.

To start with, Calthrop examines discussion: points of morality, conduct and characterisation were discussed in relation to the novel. One teacher is reported as saying

"My main hope was that they would see the importance of characterisation and recognise that characters do not fall into simple categories of black and white. This emerged very quickly as regards Elzevir after we had read in class the opening two chapters". (331)

This parallels Hardie's distinction between two forms of readers' relationship to books:

Either we treat the book as a "silent companion", entering into a relationship with the scenes and characters in which we live through their experiences vicariously, or we use the book as a talking point and attempt to establish our own experiences in reading by bringing them out in conversation. (332)

The discussions outlined by Calthrop are methods by which the book (in Dixon's words) "earns its right to a hearing in the classroom." Calthrop makes the point that it is the "human relationship and experience within this book that are crucial". (333)

While this discussion enables children to enter into the experience of the book and judge it in terms of their own, the associated written work enables something of the "imaginative re-creation"

(331) Ibid: p. 29

(332) Hardie, Ronald: Literature in the Middle Years (in The Middle Years Curriculum ed. Raggett and Clarkson, Ward Lock 1974), p. 167.

(333) Op. cit: p. 28

of the author's process to take place. Calthrop distinguishes three types:

1. Written work remaining within the experience of the book ...
2. Written work starting within the experience of the book and moving outside it into other kinds of related experience ...
3. Written work allied specifically to the use of a tape recorder. (334)

These activities Calthrop sees as fostering detailed, creative, empathetic reactions to the book, as does his next category of Drama. Dramatisations of particular scenes imply a purpose, unstated by Calthrop, similar to that outlined by Stratta, Dixon and Wilkinson. Language work, Calthrop found, was not seen in terms of classically-derived language-study redolent of the skills model. Rather, schools tended to look at it as if it was poetry - examining metaphor and image with the child's own observation and personal writing in mind. One school ("so situated that Moonfleet Bay and Beach can actually be seen from the class windows") which "showed more concern than most with the language of the book" trained the children to look for "true flash pictures" (e.g. "the straight sunpath across it, gleaming and spangled like a mackerel's back"). As justification for this, it is said:

... the children became more observant of their environment and tried "to clothe their (own) thoughts in more vivid, or lucid, or aptly chosen words". (335)

Following discussions of separate activities involving the book -

(334) Ibid: p. 30

(335) Ibid: p. 32

means of eliciting a response - Calthrop reproduces a complete term's scheme of work based upon Moonfleet. This involves many "writing or talking points" - topics based on particular sections of the book which, in Calthrop's earlier words, "move outside it into other kinds of related experience". For Chapter XI, The Skirmish, topics are prescribed as follows:

- a) Describe the life and death of a coward and a brave man:
- b) Describe a skirmish with the enemy (past and present) (336)

While these exercises can be seen as implying parallel activities, their effect may well be akin to the Rosens' "story-making".

The children's imaginations are presumably extended: part of the author's own creative process is reproduced and understood. In this way understanding both of the characters' and authors' experience is effected. Subsequent questions concern characters, reporting, drama and discussion. Commenting on this scheme, Calthrop says:

While all this work is firmly centred on the book, none of it is purely imitative, most of it is derivative in the widest sense. Nowhere does he ask his children simply to reproduce incident or character "in their own words". He either leads them directly and deeply inwards to the book itself (eg. in in section on characters), or while using a particular part of the book as a jumping off point, he leads them outwards into all kinds of related experience. (337)

Calthrop, then, finds that use of the class-reader in the schools he examines is different from what one might have expected. It is freed from practices associated with the skills model; it can

(336) Ibid: p. 35

(337) Ibid: p. 37

be used as a focus for other English activities; properly used it can encourage responses to the book which can be understood in the terms brought to bear by the Rosens and Stratta, Dixon and Wilkinson. It is noticeable that all Calthrop's respondents see the book itself as the centre of the activity: even "parallel", "complementary", activities are English-based, dealing in language activities. The sort of related work - mapwork, photography, etc. - suggested by Taylor rarely occurs. It may be assumed that Calthrop's enquiry gives a reasonable picture of accepted contemporary uses of fiction in 11-13 classrooms, certainly in the early 70's, and probably at the present time. To put these uses into perhaps a clearer perspective one may say that they represent a decisive move away from the skills model and the traditional view of the cultural heritage; that while they do not necessarily assume the centrality of literature, they certainly see a pre-eminence for it among language activities; that the responses hoped for are fully expressed by Paffard's "independent and responsible assessment", though this "independence" is worked towards through group activity; that the activities proposed can be seen as placed along the spectrum suggested by the earlier distinction between the "story-centred" teacher and the teacher who introduces other activities to help with fuller appreciation. Reading Together may therefore, be regarded as a synthesising document as far as method in the teaching of fiction in the classroom is concerned.

Warlow and Yorke - differing perspectives

Two critics, Warlow and Yorke, provide a gloss on the work of Calthrop. The first finds the justification offered by Calthrop's respondents "vapid": the second takes justification very similar to those offered by Calthrop and looks at them critically.

Warlow's work (338) gains significance because of his later influence with the School Library Association and ILEA. Parts of his report appeared in The Cool Web (339). He allies himself in many ways with Britton: he accepts the implications of spectator role which give the teacher a questioning, guiding function rather than a teaching function. He opposes the Cambridge School, especially Leavis and Inglis, whom he sees as urging the study of literature. Both the "vapid" aims of Calthrop and the value-laden elitism of Inglis involve misunderstandings of the nature of fiction. Warlow's report aims to provide a rationale for pursuing a number of clearly defined aims.

The first suggests that literature can be learned from, directly

To ensure that literature is accessible to our pupils in such a way that they obtain maximum satisfaction. This satisfaction comes from the pleasure of learning how life can be lived, how experience can be communicated and what feelings the reader can discover within himself. (340)

Here, Warlow seems rather like Rosenblatt. The notion that fiction shows "how life can be lived" almost seems to equate it with the "raw experience" mentioned by Applebee. However, the second aim suggests that fiction is a "structured experience" and that there is an "evaluative" response in which the fictional experience is compared with the real experience.

To enable each child to learn from his social encounters with the widest possible range of fictitious characters, and to

(338) Warlow, J.A.F.: The Role of Fiction in Secondary Education: A report presented for the award of the Associateship of the Institute of Education, 1971. University of London Institute of Education (unpublished MS).

(339) Op. cit: see above: p- 380

(340) Ibid: p. 192

respond to them subjectively in terms of his own life experience. This involves a gradual dismantling of stereotypes and the diversification of his response to characters as individuals. (341)

Here, the spectator-role is assumed: the subjective response to the range of fictitious characters implies "detached evaluation": its function in "dismantling of stereotypes" parallels that proposed by Applebee. The process is akin to his "reconstruing" of the text: when Applebee says that the early adolescent "often rejects works which are not realistic presentations of the word as he sees it" (342), he is referring to a stage which comes before the "gradual dismantling of stereotypes".

Warlow is close to Applebee in all his prescriptions: his final statement imputes a mainly therapeutic function to fiction - books must be "applied to children in response to their own needs". The corollary is that " 'the study of literature' by children is replaced by 'the reading of books' and the dichotomy between leisure reading and 'work' is removed". (343) Warlow is not excessively "child-centred": his critical acumen is exact.

However, like Bolt and Gard, he sees critical judgments not as ends in themselves but as elements in the child's understanding. His report depends on far greater precision of terms than those offered by Calthrop.

Yorke, too, takes a less descriptive, more critical attitude towards the consensus of spurious opinions of the sort amassed by

(341) Ibid: p. 192

(342) See above: p. 408

(343) Ibid: p. 192

Calthrop (344). Yorke questioned 69 first-year college of education students concentrating on the 9-13 age range on the place of fiction in schools. The fifteen most popular justifications were as follows:

- 1) It develops the child's imagination ...
- 2) It leads on to written work ...
- 3) It teaches vocabulary ...
- 4) It gives enjoyment, pleasure and entertainment ...
- 5) It encourages wider reading ...
- 6) It improves spelling, punctuation and grammar ...
- 7) It gives a new and vicarious experience
- 8) It provides relaxation from more ... formal lessons ...
- 9) It broadens views, minds, outlooks and knowledge ...
- 10) It carries over into other creative subjects ,...
- 11) It sets the child thinking ...
- 12) It provides escape from social stress...
- 13) It improves reading skills ...
- 14) It assists the teaching of other subjects ...
- 15) The follow-up discussion improves oral skills
(345)

Yorke re-categorises these justifications, finding three main headings. The first category is as follows:

Reading literature is justified because it provides a starting point for other kinds of learning. (346)

(344) Yorke, Malcolm: (Senior Lecturer, Northern Counties College of Education). Why teach literature? A survey of student teacher opinions : English in Education Vol. 8, No. 2, 1974, pp. 5-9

(345) Ibid: p. 5

(346) Ibid: p. 7

Yorke finds that 8 of the justifications (Nos. 2, 3, 5, 6, 10, 13, 14, 15) come under this heading. He finds the fact that it was a major category rather disturbing.

If we select a book and read it with these criteria (e.g. facts, setting, etc.) then we are not reading it as literature and any literary merit it might have is only an incidental bonus. (347)

Yorke's fear, therefore, is that the text itself is becoming less important: the corollary that attention is focussed on the reader himself is obvious. His second category is as follows:

Reading literature is justified because it has a beneficial effect on the reader. (348)

Yorke here sees a

... general implication (which) seems to be that in a reader-book relationship it is the teacher's prime task to focus on the reader. This is obviously influenced by our modern stress on child-centred rather than subject-centred education. (349)

Yorke's third category is important because it is virtually non-existent in the fifteen student justifications:

Reading literature is justified because it is a self-contained art form which gives aesthetic pleasures. (350)

Yorke points out that nobody seems to ensure that "the literature read is of the highest standard" - his comment is significant.

This was easily the least popular category and thus possibly represents the biggest shift of direction in English teaching since the war. (351)

A further significance is that the respondents were all students.

While Calthrop's respondents tended towards text-centred approaches

(347) Ibid: p. 7

(348) Ibid: p. 7

(349) Ibid: p. 7

(350) Ibid: p. 7

(351) Ibid: p. 8

which included therapeutic aspects, these students were probably basing their opinions on their own experience as pupils. Yorke's tone implies (though he never explicitly states) that he favours a text-centred approach. Nevertheless, he and Warlow agree in seeing fiction as a "self-contained art-form". Together they form a reasonable gloss on the work of Calthrop.

Bullock and Whitehead

The period since 1975 has seen the appearance of three publications bearing the imprimatur of official bodies - the Department of Education and Science and the Schools Council. The earliest (352) is an interim version of the latest (353). The whole enterprise, often spoken as "The Whitehead Report", is the result of the Schools Council Research Project on Children's Reading Habits (10-15). The two publications will, therefore, be treated together, since the appearance of the interim report was completely overshadowed by the almost simultaneously published Bullock Report (354). It is not intended to look at any of these publications exhaustively since many themes already dealt with are rehearsed in them and lengthy examination would be repetitious. Only those elements will be referred to which relate directly to central themes of this enquiry and which can be referred to critically.

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- (352) Whitehead, F., Capey, A.C., Maddren, W: Children's Reading Interests: Schools Council Working Paper 52 Evans/Methuen Educational 1975.
- (353) Whitehead, F., Capey, A.C., Maddren, W., Wellings, A: Children and their Books Schools Council Research Studies. Macmillan Educational 1977.
- (354) A language for life : Report of the Committee of Enquiry appointed by the Secretary of State for Education and Science under the chairmanship of Sir Alan Bullock, F.B.A. HMSO 1975.

Like the Newbolt Report, the Bullock Report's function was to synthesise the best previous thought and provide guidelines for consolidation for the future. As far as literature was concerned, the compilers draw specific attention to the main finding of the interim "Whitehead Report". This is reproduced with special reference to the age-group for this enquiry as follows:

Almost half the 10-year-olds in this survey claimed to have read three or more books during the previous month, the percentage dropping to some two-fifths at 12+ and about a third at 14+. (355)

The background, therefore, is one of decline in the reading habit. In putting school literature into a historical context the Report points out the British tradition of personal and moral growth in literature teaching, yet is somewhat sceptical of the claims made for its influence.

It may well be that we lack evidence of the "civilising" power of literature and that some of the claims made for it have seemed overambitious. (356)

It is interesting to note that the Report takes one part of Jenkinson's distinction only.

The child gets most enjoyment from those stories which say something to his condition and help him to resolve these inner conflicts. Books compensate for the difficulties of growing up. (357)

"Compensation" here has no pejorative association (it is hardly conceivable that the phrase is not a concealed quotation). While it has been a function of this enquiry to tease out the implications of Jenkinson's distinction in the terms offered by C.S. Lewis, the

(355) Ibid: para. 9.4, p. 126

(356) Ibid: para. 9.3, p. 125

(357) Ibid: para. 9.3, p. 125

Cambridge School, et. al., the Bullock Report is not so concerned.

The present (the child) with a vicarious satisfaction that takes him outside his own world and lets him identify for a time with someone else. (358)

The process here is similar to that proposed earlier by the Plowden Report (359) and has been seen as a staple element in thought up to this point. However, subsequent statements imply that the compilers are fully aware that "compensation" can be two-edged.

Books may offer vicarious satisfaction and little else. Indeed, many do and the sympathies they engage and the antipathies they arouse may be far from what we would hope. (360)

Stress is, therefore, placed on the teacher's function. The teacher has to provide and know about the books, help in "discernment", know the child's reading progress after he has left reading schemes and graded readers. The two factors, "teacher influence and book provision" (361) are the major ones.

Subsequent remarks concerning method and book provision attempt to synthesise the best practice available. General remarks on the Bullock Report's contribution to the debate on the use of fiction may be made as follows. The compilers value literature for its own sake, see themselves in the broad "moral" tradition and seek a definition of the progressive version of the cultural heritage. While they assume, in Britton's phrase, a "pyramid" of taste they do not assume that the child will find his way to the top of it unaided. However, there is a distinct limitation in what they have

(358) Ibid: para. 9.3, p. 125

(359) See above: p. 396

(360) Op. cit: para. 9.3, p. 125

(361) Ibid: para. 9.4, p. 126

to say about response to fiction. Nowhere is Spectator Role mentioned and, as we have noticed, there is a stress on "identification". We have noted already a dependence on the interim "Whitehead Report" for information on the state of the reading habit. It may well be also that they had considered a further section in the same publication. Whitehead and his colleagues are concerned about the notion of "identification". They draw attention to Harding's work which led to the definition of Spectator Role and his stress on "the evaluative judgments which affect us particularly as we read". (362) However, they are loth to give up the idea of identification.

We do regularly find our sympathies very closely engaged with the fortunes of the protagonist; our feelings move in responsive harmony with his feeling as we are inveigled by the narrative mode into seeing events through his eyes; we experience tension and excitement at his proximity to danger or relief at his escape from it. (363)

For Whitehead, "no clear choice is possible between these two contrasting perspectives on the reading of fiction" (364). This statement appears to reflect the same limitation as that in the Bullock Report. When Applebee rejects the American view of "broadening experience" and talks of "re-construing" because there is "always another point of view the auditor is implicitly evaluating", he is indicating that "identification" and "detached evaluation" are part of the same process, that "detached evaluation" subsumes and includes within itself "identification". (365) Whitehead and his colleagues seem not to accept this point: however, when they give reasons for assigning authors to the

(362) Op. cit: p. 42

(363) Ibid: p. 42

(364) Op. cit: p. 142

(365) See above: p. 406

"quality" or "non-quality" headings there is implied a recognition that the "contrasting perspectives" are related.

In the second report, the compilers account for the "quality/non-quality" sub-division as follows:

... on the one hand those whose production has been essentially a commercial operation, a matter of catering for the market; and on the other hand, those in which the involvement of the writer with his subject-matter and his audience has been such as to generate a texture of imaginative experience which rises above the merely routine and derivative. (366)

This distinction (which the compilers admit is "not really very satisfactory") is highly reminiscent of Whitehead's own distinction between Biggles and Moonfleet in The Disappearing Dais (367). It is a further definition of requirements for the progressive version of the cultural heritage. However, in the earlier work, when the compilers are examining Black Beauty to account for its everlasting popularity and to justify it as a "quality" narrative, they seem to imply a distinct hierarchy of responses in the reader. First of all, "human anti-cruelty sentiments continue to make a strong appeal to children" (368). This becomes an "instinctual gratification", as does the following:

Clearly the child reader "identifies" (in some sense) with Black Beauty, but it seems that this identification bears a specific feeling - tone which can be localised in the persistent references to the folly, blindness ... of the adult human beings who are responsible ... for the sufferings endured by the horses. (369)

The "child readers' self-complacency vis-a-vis the adults" thus engendered would seem to be the result of "identification" and also lead, in Jenkinson's terms, to "compensate for the difficulties of

(366) Children and their books pp. 111-112

(367) See above: p. 253

(368) Children's Reading Interests, p. 44

(369) Ibid: p. 44

growing up". So far then, Black Beauty would seem to gratify at a low level and be a contender for the "non-quality" list.

However, there is another element present -

... the overall pattern formed by the episodes ... does embody a mounting vision of the irresistible march of events which make up equally an equine or a human life... (370)

Here is a perspective which is on the one hand formal, aesthetic; on the other a presentation of experience with which the child cannot identify vicariously but must evaluate as an onlooker to be able to assimilate it all. And if it is assimilated then there must be, in Applebee's term, a "re-construing" of experience.

The nature and findings of the survey, fascinating and valuable though they are, are perhaps outside the purview of this enquiry. The plea for the teacher's active role in helping the child scale the pyramid of taste, the plea for increased book provision in the shape of libraries, book buying schemes, etc., are all familiar from the Bullock Report. In dealing with so relatively small an aspect of both publications the aim has been to isolate an attitude to fiction per se--so that they may be placed securely within a developing tradition.

CHAPTER 6 : CONCLUSION

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What point has the theory and recommended practice of fiction teaching in schools reached? What stages of evolution have been arrived at by some of the developing themes we have traced? Has there been any fusion of opposites? To conclude, we shall examine a few of the key ideas dealt with in this enquiry.

The Cultural Heritage

What has been referred to throughout as the progressive view of the cultural heritage now seems widely accepted in prescriptive writing. It resides in the ever-increasing lists of serious children's fiction - Whitehead's "quality" as opposed to "non-quality" work. The progressive can accept it because it is child-centred, because it is (or should be) relevant to the child's interests and placed within the child's experience. The text-centred, literature-based teacher will accept it because it is written with a feeling for tradition, for values set against those of the meretricious modern society, with a care for language and "the incisive emotional integrity of the words". The radical teacher, even, might accept it because it lies outside the mandarin class-based official culture and because it can provide a spur to the emergence of a children's or working-class literature different in degree but not in kind from the mainstream literary culture.

There has been, anyway, a remarkable outpouring of series works - "Topliners", "Rockets", "Knockouts" - which have become very popular in schools. These works seem to be themselves aiming at a synthesis. While many consciously aim for "relevance" to the child's life by depicting contemporary problems, this is by no means an unvarying rule. Authors are often employed who are established in the mainstream of children's literature and who are willing and able to provide a greater level of

readability in their texts for the less able or reluctant reader. Such works aim at the very children who, if they read at all, will, without guidance, gravitate to the "compensatory" work often referred to in this study: that the various series prosper indicates that there is a progressive view of the cultural heritage. They certainly conform to Whitehead's definition of "quality" children's literature and, in Jenkinson's term, "promote growing up". The books, in their deliberate appeal and carefully worked-out presentation, attempt to bridge a gap between "Skinhead" and Rosemary Sutcliff - or, to use an example mentioned before in this study, Sweeney Todd and The Brothers Karamazov. Yet to use the phrase "bridge a gap" is itself misleading, since the whole movement towards catholicity in reading depends on what Bardgett calls:

the problem ... of putting the right book in the right hands at the right time, rather than ... an attempt to bridge a distance between one "superior" and one "inferior" culture. (1)

John L. Foster earlier justified the encouragement of the reading habit in the less able child in terms which indicate a value in their own right for these books.

It would be presumptuous to expect those who get pleasure from playing football to have to get pleasure from books instead. But books - the reading habit - offer more than just enjoyment: they also offer language and knowledge. Hence, they are more important than football and, unlike football, important to everyone. (2)

Therefore, just as the difference between "the great tradition" and the most demanding children's literature is assumed to be of degree and not

(1) Bardgett, K: The nature of reluctance: in op. cit. Reluctant to Read? (ed. Foster, J.L.) p. 11
Ward Lock 1978

(2) Foster, J.L.: A reading plan for a Secondary School. Children's Literature in Education. No. 17, Summer 1975, p. 52

kind, so is the difference between the demanding literature and the series works. Foster writes not only as a teacher but also as an editor of such series and an author and so there is a definite statement of editorial and authorial intent in his next remark.

... the books of Mayne, Garner, Garfield, Treece and Sutcliff are the right ones to recommend to certain eleven-year-olds, but many others find them totally inaccessible. For a pupil of eleven with a reading age below his chronological age the appropriate book might be one from Club 75 or Instant Reading series. (3)

There has, therefore, been since the 1950's a widespread acceptance of the new literature. While the phrase Sweeney Todd to The Brothers Karamazov implies a chasm in intention, worth and value - both kind and degree - a phrase such as "Topliner to William Mayne" would to many teachers imply a difference in difficulty but not worth and intention - degree but not kind. Perhaps the nature of this "staple fare" in schools is itself now due for a revaluation.

Bad reading drives out good

This notion has been largely rejected - though not completely. Certain pockets of resistance remain - notably Margery Fisher and Elaine Moss. However, only with the work of Harding, Britton, the Rosens and Applebee has any sort of philosophical justification come to the progressive notion that the catholic diet is the best. "Rubbish" is now accepted, the notion of "roughage in the diet" is frequently mentioned. The title of the recent compilation of the Schools Library Association (Variety is King) is significant here (4). Applebee has shown that - if the psychological process of spectator role is accepted - the progress from

(3) Ibid: p. 53

(4) Gulpan, N., and Waite, M: Variety is King SLA, 1977.

"rubbish" to complexity may be a developmental one. However, there is still a moral imperative in the "rubbish" and no one has yet seriously asserted that reading of the morally unacceptable strengthens the moral sense by comparison - which could throw suspicion on to the analogous notion that a critical sense is fostered best by experience both of the "good" and the "less good". Perhaps this doubt may be strengthened by the arguments contained in the book by Inglis to appear shortly which promises to be a significant advance on the exclusivist, literature-based position outlined earlier. (5)

Text-centred and activity-centred uses for fiction

Oddly, these seemingly opposed positions have in effect come together: to oppose them now seems to split hairs. General acceptance of the progressive version of the cultural heritage coupled with universal alarm at the decline in the reading habit has brought them together. Whether the reading of the book is the central activity per se or whether the work that comes from the reading is the point of the exercise, the first essential is that the reading takes place.

Perhaps, in the end, the dominant note to be heard concerning fiction in the 11-13 age range is one of general consensus. The process outlined in this study has reached a stage when most practitioners, whatever their underlying teaching philosophies, will largely agree on what books to use, and largely on how to use them. It may be that the seemingly contradictory parallel processes of the emergence of a new and generally acceptable literature and a widespread and serious decline in the

(5) Inglis, Fred: The Promise of Happiness: Value and Experience in Children's Literature C.U.P. To be published, Spring 1980.

reading habit explain this. As has been stated before, fiction is the literary form closest to popular culture. Within schools, the feeling of poetry's "respectability" has declined. Use of drama texts has also declined with the growth of improvisation, mime and the more general use of the drama specialist. The post-war movement towards a common culture has accentuated the tendency to teach what is accessible and acceptable to the great majority. Fiction's close proximity to comics, magazines and newspapers has made it the one form teachers can keep alive for most pupils, particularly against the direct competition of television. That it ranges from Sweeney Todd to The Brothers Karamazov is now seen as its most positive strength.

But no consensus lasts for long and perhaps even now a new movement is stirring which will seem to change the direction of the argument before itself being absorbed again into the dialectic of tradition.

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CHANGING PRINCIPLES AND RECOMMENDED PRACTICE IN THE TEACHING OF FICTION
IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS DURING THE PERIOD 1902 TO THE
PRESENT DAY, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE AGE GROUP 11 - 13.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate the changing place of fiction in schools in this century. Sources include Board, Ministry and DES publications, articles, surveys, English method books and specialist works on fiction in schools.

First, nineteenth-century attitudes to vernacular literature in schools are surveyed. Concepts of "Culture" and "Growth" are considered in the larger contexts of the rise of English studies, liberal education and development of progressive viewpoints. The perceived needs both to "humanise" the newly-emergent literate classes and shield them from corruption are noted, to account for widespread distrust of fiction in schools because of its links with popular culture and consequent moral and aesthetic ambiguity.

After 1902, resolution of the conflict between the cognitive and affective and concern to restrict fiction in schools to the accepted "cultural heritage" are seen as main anxieties of traditional teachers. Progressive educators recommend catholicity in fiction and consequently grapple with its moral and aesthetic ambiguities.

The socio-critical stance of the Cambridge School, progressive educators' emphasis on personal growth and the movement towards general secondary education combine to alter the debate's direction. The importance of A.J. Jenkinson's work (1941) is shown to spring from his fusion of the moral criteria of the Cambridge School and social criteria derived from the progressives.

This new formulation, together with post-war calls for a common culture, leads to revaluation of the cultural heritage and emergence of a specialist children's fiction. Its closeness to popular culture now becomes fiction's strength. Such concerns as catholicity in reading, moral and social perspectives, authorial responsibility, the centrality or otherwise of the text, changes in methodology receive detailed critical attention as children's fiction becomes an accepted part of the cultural heritage and a principle literary genre in the school.