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SOVIET RUSSIA GOES TO SCHOOL

By the same author

CHANGING MAN : THE SOVIET EDUCATION SYSTEM

SOVIET RUSSIA GOES TO SCHOOL

A GUIDE TO SOVIET EDUCATION

Beatrice King

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Preface

THIS BOOK was first published in London in 1948 by William Heinemann Ltd. It has been thoroughly revised and brought up-to-date. It embodies all the latest important changes not as yet published anywhere in English. Further much new material and a whole new chapter on polytechnisation have been added.

Inevitably, in a system of education so geared to life as is that of the USSR and which is so constantly subject to challenge and criticism by the Party and the Government as well as by the ordinary people, there will be adjustments in the working out of the new decrees. Courses may be lengthened or shortened, though the latter is not so likely. The basic fabric of education however will remain stable for many years. The reader may stand firm in the assurance that the information contained in the book is not only up-to-date now; it will remain valid for many years.

London, 1955

B. K.

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Introduction

SOVIET EDUCATION SHOULD be of particular interest to the India of today, which is trying to deal with the many problems and difficulties it inherited from its own distant past, and more particularly, from its comparatively recent foreign domination. The similarity is greatest between India and that part of the USSR that comprises the Asian republics, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, etc. Asian lands, many with ancient cultures that had died, were conquered by a foreign imperialism, tsarist Russia. The purpose of the conquest was the same as always, exploitation of the native people and resources for the benefit of the imperialist power. There was a difference in degree but not in kind. The tsars were much more brutal and ruthless, and more stupid than the English. Unlike the English they made no contribution whatever to the country's development. We know that it is to the interest of the colonial power to keep its colonies backward industrially and educationally, but an experienced colonial power like Great Britain realised that it needs a certain number of educated native people, that it needs a certain amount of social services, however small, a certain improvement in the country's economy, however slight, in order to ensure its rule. The tsarist governments seemed to be quite unaware of this. They not only ruthlessly exploited the native people, they kept them in ignorance and superstition, denied them any development. Both powers subscribed to the theory of the permanent inferiority of certain races, the theory that one is glad to admit is being more and more challenged in Britain today by British people.

In these Asian republics what education existed was given in the Russian language. Most of the nationalities had

no written alphabets and consequently no books in the language of the people. In the few native schools, the Madrassehs, the education consisted of learning chunks of the Koran by heart. Girls of course were denied even that education.

The fight for education and modern development in the Asian lands of the USSR was very bitter and lasted many years. More than one Russian educationist fell a victim to the knife or the bullet of the hireling of a great landowner or even of the Imam in the mosque.

Since it is of great importance to India to know the methods by which success was achieved I propose to devote some pages to this later. Here I should remind the reader that the difficulties the young Soviet state had to meet in the task of educating its people were very great too in European Russia, and in some parts, as in the Russian North, were as great as those in Asian Russia with the severity of the climate as an added obstacle. Of the 26 nationalities of the North, few had a written alphabet. They were subject to poverty and disease, as well as to a primitive Shaman religion, reminiscent of that found among very primitive tribes in Central Africa.

It was not merely the heritage of backwardness that the new state had to fight. For several years it had to divert much energy from reconstruction to fighting the direct intervention and general hostility of the western world.

The success in the educational field is as astonishing as in the economic field. The answer to how good is Soviet education is to be found in the victory over fascist Hitler, in the victory at Stalingrad, in the rapid recovery from the immeasurable losses and destruction of the last war, in the rising standard of living, in the flourishing of culture, in the multi-millions active participation in the arts in every corner of the land.

It was the skill and inventiveness of Soviet trained scientists, educated in Soviet schools, evening classes and universities, that provided the material basis for victory over an enemy, highly educated, with a long tradition of

technical development, and highly industrialised. The young officers on whom so much depends in war were Soviet educated. Today the amazing achievements in industrial production, in changing the face of the land, making the desert literally blossom as the rose, and subjugating nature to serve the well-being of the people, these achievements have been won by Soviet educated men and women.

The ballerinas, actors, musicians, composers of the present generation who have taken their arts to so high a level are Soviet trained.

The great sportsmen and athletes winning laurels everywhere are Soviet trained.

Great as the educational achievements have been, it would be wrong to give the impression that everything is perfect in Soviet education. One has only to take up any number of *Uchitelskaya Gazeta*, or for that matter any other paper, to realise that shortcomings exist, and in many places. There is no severer critic of the USSR than the Soviet citizen himself.

We find criticism of schools, of teachers, and of teacher training. This only means that Soviet society, while it is a socialist society, has not yet succeeded in eradicating all human faults and failings or in eliminating all undesirable characteristics.

But Soviet society has developed ways and means of ensuring that harmful methods, practices and attitudes shall be exposed, attacked and eliminated more or less quickly according to circumstances.

The Soviet Union has set itself an upward standard in education as in other spheres that is to rise with achievement. Soviet educationists and Soviet leaders are aware that much effort and much vigilance, much courage and integrity, will be needed to ensure that all educational institutions are well run, that all educational possibilities are used to the utmost, that education does not become stereotyped, but responds to the changing needs of society.

The interest in education of the parents, of the trade unions, of the politically active and mature people, joined to the watchfulness of the leading educationists in school,

or Academy, encourages the belief that Soviet education will find ways to solve its many and varied problems, both those that exist today and those that may appear in the future.

To any country with an illiterate population and a poverty which drives parents to send children to work at an early age, and so keep them from school where schools may exist, the Soviet achievement in changing parental attitudes and in arousing in the community a pride in the education of their children as well as a feeling of responsibility can be encouraging and instructive.

It is with the hope that this book will help Indians seeking a solution to their educational problems that I speed it on its way. It has been brought completely up-to-date and contains the latest important changes. Detailed changes that are part of any vigorous, living education system are always likely to be ahead of books, but their importance is local and only of interest to the person concerned in a very limited, specific research.

From long experience I would say major changes are not likely for a number of years, that is, not until a new stage in social and economic development makes demands on education greater than it can satisfy.

Co-education lasted from 1918 to 1943, polytechnised education was practised from 1928 to 1937. It is not likely that the return to both these principles will be shorter lived. Therefore this book can be accepted as valid for very many years.

LONDON, 1955.

BEATRICE KING

CHAPTER ONE

Principles and Purpose

IT IS NOT easy to observe a clear demarcation between educational principles and those proper to the sphere of political philosophy or sociology. Yet for an understanding of the development of Soviet education, it is essential to see each in its proper role.

Educational principles follow politico-philosophical ones. Changing economic, political and social conditions are the stimuli which set men and women to think out new educational principles or new adaptations of the old principles, because the changes have rendered the old ones unsatisfactory, inefficient, or even harmful. That is, the old principles cannot in the new conditions produce the type of man required to deal adequately with the possibilities and opportunities being offered by life. Thus, educational principles may be described as the technique of the organisation of education and the methods and the approach to education in any given set of circumstances. Educational principles in this sense are dealt with in the two following chapters.

In this chapter, I shall deal with those principles which, because they shape the whole pattern of the country, because they are based on fundamental laws as the Russians understand them, are basic and prior to any educational principle. The Soviet Union shows particularly clearly how the translation into life of these fundamental principles influences educational principle and practice.

The Soviet Union began as a state in 1917, having inherited a social structure which still showed remnants of feudalism. Though it had centres of high scholarship and

learning, scientists of world renown, a great musical and theatrical heritage, it was yet one of the most backward countries in the world in 1914. The great majority of its people had lived for centuries under political oppression, in extreme ignorance and in extreme poverty. Except for the oases of progress, the country was a desert of backwardness. Tsarist expansion eastward had added states hostile in politics and religion, which made conditions in 1917, when the revolution occurred, still more complicated and difficult.

In such circumstances after a war which inflicted a loss of many million citizens and left the country completely disintegrated — whatever industry there had been was ruined — Lenin's Party set out to transform this morass into a flowering garden. The process could not be carried out leisurely, for the rest of the world, as expressed in its governments, was actively hostile. There was a desperate urgency to consolidate the revolution, to win time for the proper development of a socialist state which would prepare the way for a communist state. This task of unknown and incredible difficulties had to be carried out by people with little experience in running a state and no experience of a socialist state since none had hitherto existed. But the October Revolution led by Lenin and supported by the industrial workers attracted to itself the support of millions of peasants.

On this firm foundation of mass support, the leaders turned to education as one of the very important means of achieving socialism. Not only was it to give the education and training that would create the new and necessary practical builders of socialism, but it was to create a new mentality, a new outlook and new attitude to society and to the individual.

We see clearly in the Soviet Union what in those countries where change has been gradual is barely recognised, the use of education for the support of political ideas and ideals of the predominating and leading section of the people. The chapters that follow will help to explain how education has been used in the Soviet Union to make the political, social and moral ideals of the philosophy on which

the new society is based accepted wholeheartedly by the great majority of the people so that one may say the whole country acts, as it did during the Second World War and as it is doing in the work of restoration and development, united in aim and purpose.

This is not to say that there were no renegades or collaborators during this war or that there are no hostile or subversive elements today; that there are no people, who, still remembering their privileges under capitalism, would not welcome a return to capitalism. But the logic of facts proves them to be so small in numbers out of a population of nearly two hundred millions that the overall picture presented is one of unity on fundamental political principles, a result to which education made a very great contribution.

Today, the Soviet Union is a socialist state striving toward communism. Socialist economic principles based on Marxist-Leninist theory are already in operation. Thus, there is no private ownership of the means of production and distribution or of land which brings profit from the labour of others. The principle of equality—political, economic, legal and social—for races, nationalities, religions and the sexes has not only been established but is in full operation.

The economic aim periodically reiterated is to outstrip the most advanced industrial countries in the world; to free the people for ever from the fear of want, and to release them from hard drudgery and toil; to provide the leisure and the means for the fullest enjoyment of life in all its rich variety, and thus to release that creative force which the Russians claim resides in all human beings, and which in its turn will enrich the treasure-house of human achievement.

Running through all plans and principles is the insistence on the importance of the individual as such, and on the possibilities for greatness in the ordinary man, on the "glorious thing it is to be man." This naturally leads to a concern with the mass of the people, the millions and millions of so-called ordinary men and women, the factory and office workers, and the farm workers and their children.

Much educational theory and practice have their origin in this preoccupation with the masses and their children; in the conviction that the educational and cultural standard of the masses can and must be raised.

It was therefore to be expected that every effort would be made to put into effective operation the principle of a classless system of education. This is being achieved by the provision of equality of educational opportunity for all children, irrespective of race, nationality, or creed, irrespective of social origin and parent's income, irrespective of geographical location. This principle is not only the educational expression of Marxist-Leninist politics; it is the practical expression of Soviet Communism and the practical way of achieving the society desired.

Much has been written in the Soviet Union and will continue to be written, on the subject: "Communist Education", what it implies and how to achieve it.

Professor Kairov, director of the Academy of Pedagogical Science, writing in 1940 says: "By communist education we mean the education of an all-round developed person of a communist society. This education for the all-round development includes the sum of the following: intellectual and manual education, and moral, aesthetic and physical education."¹ He then goes on to deal with Stalin's pronouncements on each of these five aspects of communist education, remarking that Stalin was carrying on and developing the teaching of Marx, Engels and Lenin.

Dealing with intellectual education Kairov says: "It postulates first the understanding of the fundamentals of science, second, the development of intellectual abilities and aptitudes and third, the formation of a dialectical-materialist outlook," which requires political education and training in political thinking as an integral part of education. Dealing with this question of political education Stalin said: "The higher the political level . . . of the worker

¹ *Sovietskaya Pedagogika*, No. 6, 1940—Kairov is now Minister of Education for the RSFSR.

in whatever work, the higher and more fruitful will be the work itself and the more effective the results of that work.”²

There is equal stress on the importance of science in education, an importance that has not been diminished since that day, on the 16th May, 1928, when Stalin addressing the Eighth All-Union Congress of the Komsomols³ said: “In order to beat the enemy now, we must know how to build industry, agriculture, transport, trade. . . . In order to build, we must have knowledge, mastery of science. And knowledge entails study.”⁴

About manual education (polytechnical education is the term used in the Soviet Union) much has been written. “Stalin,” says Kairov, “regards polytechnical education as . . . a broad social movement for a new conception of work . . . which makes it possible through the union of the knowledge of fundamentals of science with labour, to advance toward the abolition of the contradiction between intellectual and manual work.”

On moral education, Lenin has said: “We must see to it that the whole of education and upbringing and learning of modern Soviet youth should be directed to their training in communist morals.”

Again, according to Kairov, “Stalin recognised and continues to do so, the very great importance of aesthetic education of the workers of our country” as essential for the full development of the individual.

Professor Rivess’s article on the subject of communist education in *Sovietskaya Pedagogika* of January, 1940, may throw more light on the subject. Communist education “arms the pupils with genuine scientific knowledge, develops in them a communist outlook and convictions, develops the habits of generosity, humanitarianism and of human sympathy: develops profound emotions, and develops all the intellectual capacities and interests of the pupils; it inculcates in them the habits of independent learning, and gives them

² *Ibid.*

³ Young Communist Organisation.

⁴ J. V. Stalin, *Works*, Vol. XI, p. 81.

the skill to apply knowledge in practice; trains communist habits of behaviour; organises and directs social activity and creative self expression outside the school."

The statements on communist education published in the last ten years in the main reiterate these aims, in a word—to bring up builders of communism.

It is considered essential that education shall be closely linked with life through every possible means. Text-books which are common to all schools, are written with that aim. For example, Ushakov's *Exercises in Spelling* for Class IV (ten to eleven years) have chapters dealing with Dnieproges and Magnitogorsk, and different industrial cities whose work is vital to every Soviet child and adult. He uses such terms as "iron or mine," "metallurgy work," "blast furnace," "coke-oven," and the like, all of which are explained in relation to Soviet life. *Problems and Exercises in Arithmetic* are based on Soviet industry and all terms have to be explained both in themselves and in their relation to the economic plans, either to those that have already been fulfilled or in which the country is engaged.

The principle of equality of opportunity has not been easy to achieve, not only because of economic backwardness but because of the multi-national character of the Soviet Union. There are something like one hundred and fifty nationalities speaking an even greater number of languages. Most of these nationalities had no written alphabet prior to 1917. But according to the Soviet constitution, every nationality has the right to education in its own language. Before this principle could be put into effective practice a great amount of work had to be carried out in the creation first of alphabets, then of grammars for the written languages, and of text-books.⁵ Up to date, some fifty new alphabets have been created.

As mentioned in the introduction, this was a hard and bitter struggle. In the Asian republics there was not only

⁵ For a detailed description of this see my chapter in *Unesco Report on Fundamental Education*, H. M. Stationery Office, London; and *Changing Man: The Soviet Education System*, Gollancz.

the opposition of the economic exploiters to overcome. Equally ruthless was the religious opposition. Where the education of girls was concerned there was added the opposition of the men generally, and of the mother who controlled the married children, particularly the daughters-in-law.

The first approach was often to the veiled young married women, offering medical help and advice for their children, help that was desperately needed. Everything was done to win the support of the downtrodden and the exploited by practical means. As soon as there was enough support legal means could be used to enforce the laws regarding education. At the same time modern industry began to be introduced, attracting the women. As factories arose, and men and women began working side by side, and as they began to realise the need for knowledge and skill, so the support for the government's educational plans grew and the opposition to schools, especially for girls, diminished.

It should be emphasised that the Soviet fight was always against superstition that hindered growth and development of the community. There was no attack, unless by an over-zealous and unintelligent person, on customs or traditions which expressed an inner need and which when fused with the new ideas and society would enrich life further. Modern life itself, once it was accepted, would show which customs and traditions could be retained and developed creatively, and which were harmful and should be given up.

While education was being popularised and made desirable, a great deal of scientific work into local ethnography and ethnology was being carried on, particularly in those regions where there were numerous small nationalities sometimes of no more than a few thousand people. The difference between language and dialect must not be ignored, and the danger of breaking up groups by mechanically creating written languages instead of unifying them where history and culture indicated, had to be guarded against.

Soviet experience in the education of backward peoples, their great achievements in this sphere make Unesco's efforts in Fundamental Education, well-meaning as they

are, sentimental, wasteful and unscientific. The Soviet Union has proved that if educational efforts are accompanied by industrial development based on modern techniques, and by political responsibility, progress can be swift and attainment high.

Every one of the sixteen republics has its university or universities, either an Academy of Science or branch of an Academy, research institutes and all the variety of educational institutions. Even the smallest nationality beyond the Arctic Circle now boasts of its university graduates and of its research workers. Any one who shows ability and a readiness to work will be found a place in a university wherever the nearest or most suitable may be.

The decree adopted in 1954 making the Ten-Year School (seven to seventeen years), compulsory and universal by 1960, applies to every corner of the Soviet Union. This is the real answer to those who believe in the inherent inequality of races, peoples or classes. It completely demolishes their case.

Thus, there has been the conscious use of education for a clear and well-defined purpose—the creation of communist citizens who will create the communist state. It is a purpose with a long distance aim, which the country has set out to achieve in stages. Each stage reflects not only the national but the international situation and each stage leaves its mark on education, both on its principles and practice. It is in this light that the various changes in Soviet education must be regarded.

Let us take the first period, the revolutionary and transition stage. It was essential for the time being to turn the people's gaze toward the new horizon, essential to have a complete break with the past. So for a period, the great Russian educationists were ignored and search was made abroad for the new educational theories and practice. Any new idea that had the appearance of being revolutionary was accepted and adopted. Freedom for the child, and experimentation, were the watchwords of that period. In the first period the schools were almost entirely run by the pupils and the universities by the students. This first stage

was followed by the adoption of all those methods heralded abroad as the salvation of society, of the Complex Method, the Project Method, the Decrioly Method, the Dalton Plan, all practised on a vast scale. All examinations were abolished, for political as well as educational reasons.

Politics and labour were the dominating factors. The country needed a youth that would support communism and at the same time would help to restore the war-damaged economic and industrial apparatus and proceed to the development of the industrial basis for security and life. In that early period when educationists were finding their way, there was a tendency to over-emphasize the group at too early an age and under-emphasize the individual. The small child who went off to play by itself had to be gently led back to the group. It was essential to bring up citizens who would put the interests of the community before their own personal interests, and until such time as conditions eliminated the conflict between the two, the community had to be stressed.

Throughout this whole period—and this is a permanent feature of Soviet education—there was careful observation by communist educationists of the effects on the individual and the results to the community of the education that was being carried on. Educational journals of 1926 were already discussing and challenging some of the principles and practices, and modifications showed themselves as a result. The introduction of polytechnical education into all schools was delayed until 1928 because not till then did conditions exist when the training of teachers and the theoretical and practical research into teaching techniques for the subject, and into workshop equipment, could begin on any adequate scale. Only now was it possible to demand that local authorities set about the provision of the necessary workshops in the school.

In 1932 with the fulfilment of the First Five-Year Plan the foundations of heavy industry had been laid, and the Second Five-Year Plan could pay attention to the more immediate improvement of the standard of living. **Fifteen** years of intensive communist education was bearing fruit.

A younger generation, accepting communism often with great enthusiasm, was entering the schools as teachers, and industry and agriculture as workers and managers. The majority of the pre-revolutionary university teaching staffs had themselves undergone a process of re-education and were prepared to give loyal service to the new society. A new stage in the development of Soviet society had been reached. New tasks making new demands were facing the country. To deal adequately with the tasks and to fulfil the demands, a higher standard of education particularly in the sciences, for ever more people, was required.

This situation led to the reorganisation of the education system in 1932; the reorganisation was carefully thought out, based on an assessment of previous experience and was the result of lengthy discussion.

The Project Method and Dalton Plan were dropped throughout the whole Union. Responsibility for the school was laid upon the Head, and for the university upon the Rector. Syllabuses were revised, new text-books were to be published, examinations were re-introduced. This stage too, saw the beginning of the end of political supervision as such in the class-room and in the school. Long before the achievement of the Second Five-Year Plan the post of school political "director" was abolished.

The period following 1932, a period of development, of economic growth and political maturing, saw the redressing of the balance between the community and the individual. The process has continued, until today the child as individual holds a supremely important place in Soviet educational theory.

The reader may here ask why was the Dalton Plan—recognised everywhere as highly individualistic—adopted soon after the revolution when the political emphasis was on the community and why has it not been restored today.

It should be pointed out that the Dalton Plan, like the other new education techniques, was adopted uncritically because it was experimental and had received the stamp of "progressive." It had never been discussed in relation to Marxist theory nor could it then have been put to the test

of Soviet needs. When discussion began and the testing time arrived it was found that the Dalton Plan resulted in a low standard of attainment. Pupils had a smattering of many things but no thorough knowledge of any one thing. Further, the role of the teacher was lowered. The Dalton Plan was given up because it was found incompatible with the academic standards demanded and because it tended to disintegrate the class.

Consideration for the individual personality does not, for Soviet educationists, imply treating the child either all the time or only, as an individual. Soviet educationists are not faced with the dilemma—"the individual or the community." In Soviet society there is no longer a conflict or contradiction between the individual and society. All the emphasis on the individual is as a member of society, and only through society will the individual develop to the full. The regard for the individual is expressed not so much through methods of teaching as through teacher-pupil relationships and through the special provision for the full development of each individual pupil's personality.

Under American influence, in the beginning, mental and intelligence tests and that branch of educational psychology Americans called pedology, which relied much on these tests, had become very widely adopted. Every school of any size had its pedologist. Children were assessed on the results of the tests and those that failed to conform to standard tests of work and behaviour were classed as difficult or backward.

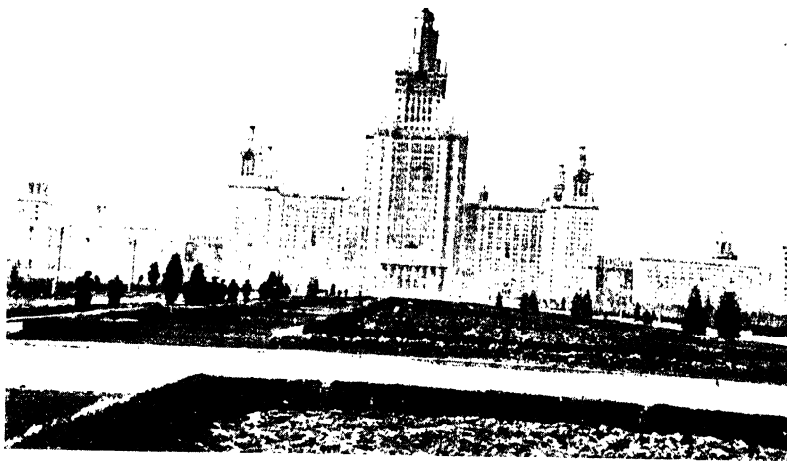
As far back as 1928 the authority of the pedologist and the validity of his findings had been challenged. Between 1932 and 1936 there were many conferences on the subject, and controversy was fast and furious between opponents and supporters. Much, very much, was written about the subject, and much investigation and observation carried out. There was particularly a check-up on the schools for "difficult" children which showed an alarming increase. The result of all this educational activity was a complete rejection of the theory arrived at by the pedologists, that there was, and always would be, a section of children inherently

inferior in intelligence and for whose mental development nothing much could be done. (These were not children that could be certified as mentally deficient. They were of ordinary "low" intelligence.)

This theory of a fixed unchangeable inborn "intelligence," unaffected by environment and training, according to which vast millions of children would be incapable of benefiting from secondary education, let alone higher education, is regarded as most reactionary. It is in complete contradiction to Marxist science which holds that man's characteristics, including his intellectual capacity, are the result of the action and interaction of environment and man. This action and interaction in due course affects his innate tendencies, which are not fixed characteristics. The work of Pavlov on conditioned reflexes has endorsed this claim. It is supported by the flourishing of culture and by the great economic development among the formerly backward peoples. It is supported by history. There is a firm belief in the Soviet Union in the perfectibility of man. What is required is greater knowledge than is yet available, of the working of the human brain and mind.

With the rejection of the above theory went the abolition of pedology as a branch of psychology, and authority in the class-room and responsibility for the general assessment of pupils were handed over to the teacher, who, it was argued, through daily contact and knowledge of home conditions and through training, was the right person to wield the authority and discharge the responsibility.

All forms of mental and intelligence testing were abolished at the same time, the argument being that they had proved to be unreliable and misleading, and that it was impossible for them to be genuinely scientific. There is no agreed scientific definition of intelligence it is argued; nor is it known whether, in fact, such a measurable entity exists. What is known is that reaction to environment, either free or in controlled experiments, is conditioned by the sum total of biological heredity, by the social past and social tradition, and by the immediate environment. As an illustration, up to 1936, while the course covered by the



Moscow State University on Lenin Hills, Moscow.

Today the Kirghiz Republic like the European ones has its schools with gifted children. Nella Kalybeyeva and Natasha Kshubabaeva, first year pupils in the Frunze Music School.





"Children of different people, we dream of peace..." sing the girls' choir of a Kiev school.



Uzbek SSR. Tenth Grade pupils of the Alisher Navoi School. There are 1,240 pupils in this school.

primary school amongst literate nations was four years, for backward nations, such as the alphabetic tribes inhabiting the Far North, it was five years. By 1936, the effect of eighteen years of Soviet environment in raising "intelligence" was so marked that the extra year was no longer necessary. Increasing numbers attend secondary schools and higher education institutions with benefit. The increase is greater in rural and formerly backward areas amongst whom "intelligence" was supposed to be lower. All this is adduced as testimony to the correctness of the Soviet attitude. In support of their contention we are reminded that it was planned as far back as 1937 to have secondary education (up to eighteen years) for all children of the Union by 1942.

It was not put into effect then because it was considered more important to enlarge the content of subjects taught and to raise the academic standard. And of course, the war was also a factor that played a role.

Now beginning with the school year 1954-55 and to be completed by 1960, the ten year school—seven to seventeen years—that is secondary education, is to be universal for the Soviet Union.

Intelligence tests to be at all scientific, it is argued, would have to be discarded frequently and as frequently replaced by new ones, and they must vary greatly with environment—a great waste of educational forces, when better results can be achieved by more obvious and simpler means. The Russians are great believers in the simple common-sense approach.

As selection for higher, or vocational, education will not now take place until seventeen plus, there is a long period for the development of those aptitudes which are likely to be the most stable and of which the teacher who has been with the same children for a number of years must be aware. As the opportunities for higher education and specialised training increase yearly in response to the agreed political aim of raising the standard of living for all the millions inhabiting the USSR, the need would be for a test which could show up genuine unsuitability, not for one

which is to select a few out of many worthy candidates. In such a case it is held that the ordinary examination, so well designed to test knowledge, ability and intelligence, plus the school record which is based as much on the teacher's knowledge of the pupil's personality as on mental attainment, is the best method yet discovered for testing. Finally, the facilities for training latent abilities as they come to light at any age, make any mistake easily rectifiable.

It is not testing that Soviet educationists object to, but what they consider the wrong kind of test for a wrong purpose. Tests have been introduced within the last years for manipulative dexterity, and for degrees of aptitude in the varied manual processes in industry, particularly in engineering. The tests are applied in the schools or courses which give the actual training.

It is in the leisure circles and clubs, where the attraction may be the presence of a friend as much as the urge to a certain form of self expression, that latent abilities under friendly encouragement blossom forth. It is in these circles, with their informal atmosphere and their emotionally satisfying background that difficulties, possibly unresolved in the class-room and likely to form a barrier to learning, are explained away or resolved. The co-operation between class teacher, circle instructor and the home, provides the teacher with an additional key to the pupil's mind and personality. All this seems to the Soviet educationist much more likely to result in an accurate appraisal of a pupil's aptitudes, abilities and personality than any tests.

If the purpose of testing is to discover the suitability of children for different types of education then, insist the Russians, the teacher, aided by the free activity in the different school circles and clubs is likely to be more accurate than any intelligence tests.

The year 1937 brought a major change in Soviet education; polytechnical instruction was abandoned. The explanation stated that it had ceased to be the study of the scientific principles of production and had become handwork only, an activity that could very well be carried on in clubs,

and so release time for scientific studies, which were to play an all-important role in the achievement of the succeeding plans, and for native language and literature with the standard of which there was serious dissatisfaction.

The growing might of Hitler and the appeasement policy followed by the democracies had their effect on Soviet education. The qualities which the school was now expected to develop in the children were such as would make them staunch and successful in the defence of their country. By 1939 military education in the ordinary school was expected to be taken seriously and text books published in 1942 had a heavy syllabus for military training, which was, in fact, mostly athletic training up to the age of thirteen to fourteen. Even with the older pupils, judging from reports in *Ouchiteskaya Gazeta*, this training was not very thorough or very military. Those who know the Russian people well will readily understand this, for they intensely dislike militarism.

The Russians, believing that another war was unlikely, and believing too in the good sense of the common people of the world to prevent a re-emergence of fascism, abolished military education altogether for girls and only retained it for boys for two hours a week in Classes IX and X (sixteen and seventeen years).

In the same year a decree was passed releasing the eighteen- and nineteen-year call-up groups from military service and directing them into industry.

The year 1940 saw two developments which aroused much criticism and surprise abroad. One dealt with the creation of a labour reserve and the other with the introduction of fees for certain stages in education. In spite of war threats the position is the same today.

The permanent elimination of unemployment meant that there was no longer that reserve pool of labour that could be drawn upon at need. Having so wide a choice of work, labour did not always flow into the most essential industries. At the same time general economic planning demanded the assurance of a regular flow of labour into basic industries. A decree was therefore passed making

compulsory the mobilisation of one million boys (girls were later accepted) of fourteen years of age into schools for the training of skilled workers for the basic industries.⁶

Every hundred adults in a rural area have to nominate two youngsters, and cities are divided into districts for nomination. The nominee must be a willing party. It was also open to any youth or girl to apply for a place voluntarily.

Before the decree was put into effect a great campaign to popularise these schools was carried out. So successful was the campaign that in the first weeks the voluntary applications exceeded the eight hundred thousand places then available.

So great, however, is the demand for pupils by the schools of every type which give vocational training, that these trade schools have never yet had their full complement, and in some districts the number of youngsters has fallen far below their full quota. No punitive measures of any kind would seem to have been taken, but there has been public reprimand and blame for particular rural and municipal councils, and especially for the local Communist Party for dereliction of duty.

Up till 1940, all education from the cradle to the grave was free. In that year fees were introduced (a) for the last three years in the full secondary school, (b) for technical and professional schools (fourteen-fifteen to seventeen-eighteen or nineteen)—two hundred roubles a year in the cities, one hundred and fifty roubles in the country—and (c) for higher education, four hundred roubles in main urban centres and three hundred in rural centres, with five hundred roubles a year for music, art and theatre institutions. There are, however, a great many grounds for exemption from fees, such as sick and disabled parents, attaining an Honours Class either in the final school-leaving examination or during the university course, and having parents serving with the Forces (by decree passed in July 1941). This last applied to men and officers of junior rank. By decree of 1944, all who have lost parents in the war, and

⁶ Detailed description is given in Chapter VI.

children who have been adopted for any reason, are exempt from all fees. Other categories who may claim exemption for their children are miners, teachers, doctors, certain other groups such as librarians and teachers attending extramural courses. All students from the Asian republics are exempt from fees. Further, good work brings with it scholarships ranging from two hundred and thirty to six hundred roubles a month according to attainment.

The introduction of fees was due chiefly to the fact that the state was spending vast sums on school building and equipment, and on the upkeep of a vast network of schools, while at the same time the income of the people had increased very greatly. This measure could be carried through without inflicting any hardship on the population. There is no family with children of the appropriate age who could not pay the fees. Special cases of widows, orphans, etc., receive special consideration. What is important is not whether education is free or paid, but whether existing conditions are such as to make it possible for every child in the country to develop its abilities to the full.

Where there is great poverty or great economic inequality, education must be free. A classless society with rising standards of well-being can adopt a mixture of policies.

The introduction of fees, as was hoped, has led to an improved standard of work in the universities particularly. Remission of fees and grants are certainly an incentive to good work.

The actual contribution which the fees made was small enough. In 1941 it amounted to three per cent of the whole educational expenditure, and less than two per cent of the higher education expenditure. It is considerably less today when we take into account all the categories entitled to remission of fees. In 1954, 95 per cent of students, who had passed their half-yearly examinations, were in receipt of varying grants, while students who received full marks in all their subjects received an additional 25 per cent of the grant as reward. Again, there is no limit to the number who may receive this award. Grants are paid for holiday periods as well, and a student married to a non-student will

receive the grant that is her due irrespective of her husband's income. All students' needs including meals, are provided at reduced, sometimes greatly reduced prices. We must bear in mind too the continuous reduction in prices generally.

The danger of undervaluing services which are supplied free was not absent from the Soviet Union. It appears that some boys and girls did not give of their best in schools and universities, knowing they could scrape through without any cost to their parents. It was reported at the end of the first year of the introduction of fees that there was considerable improvement of work, particularly in higher education institutions and, because the fees were low and incomes had been increasing, only those students who were not prepared to apply themselves to their studies with the required assiduity dropped the course. The numbers in any faculty that dropped out appeared to be negligible.

With the great increase in wages and salaries, and the decreasing cost of living, and with no increase at all in the education fees, there are not likely to be many families (if any at all) where children with ability would be deprived of opportunities for secondary or higher education. Again, the fact that admission to the university depends on passing an entrance examination obviates the danger of money conferring advantages.

In 1943, there was a change that was very startling to the outside world. Co-education, so long regarded by many as a bedrock principle of Soviet education was given up. Separate education was adopted in the first year in the Senior Secondary Schools (seventeen to eighteen years) in seventy-one large cities. It was extended to all Senior Secondary Schools in cities, industrial settlements and District Senior Schools in rural areas, and to Junior Secondary Schools (seven to fourteen or fifteen) in cities and industrial settlements where numbers warrant it. In primary schools co-education continued, as in fact it did even in secondary schools where numbers were small. The staffs were mixed, and it was possible for a woman to be Head

of a boys' secondary school. Even in the Suvorov or Army Cadet Schools there are women teachers.

In the trade schools, too, education was not by any means always separate for boys and girls. In the technical schools and all higher educational institutions, education remained mixed. Except for the subject military education, the curriculum was the same for boys and girls everywhere, with the addition of housecraft, which so far appears to have been chiefly needlework, and elementary child psychology for girls. This equates the time given to military training by boys.

The teachers for both boys' and girls' schools continued to be trained in mixed colleges and universities, thus ensuring the same academic approach. The same facilities for careers were open to girls as to boys.

There had been considerable discussion of co-education in educational circles some time prior to the change. The first request in 1940, of the Moscow City Education Department for separate schools was turned down. In 1942 Moscow was asked to experiment for a year with a number of schools. The results appeared so satisfactory that they convinced the authorities that the increasing demand for separate schools should be satisfied. The demand, however, was not by any means unanimous, either on the part of the teachers or the parents, and a great explanatory campaign was carried out before the principle for separate schools as enunciated was adopted. It was likely that some teachers would still have preferred co-education in the secondary school, but they loyally carried out the decree. Girls who had had some years in co-education did not in all cases like the separation.

Many explanations and reasons were given for the change. It was pointed out in the first place that co-education in the Soviet Union had been adopted not so much for educational as for political reasons. It was the swiftest and surest way to bring about the reality of the equality of rights and status granted to women by the new Soviet constitution. Equally it helped in the drive for universal education.

Both these objects had been achieved, the equality of the sexes to such an extent that women captains of cargo boats, or women professors in military Academies, are taken for granted.

As we have seen, new problems were continually being thrown up by the country's development. One arose directly out of co-education, which in the Soviet Union was one hundred per cent. Girls and boys even did physical training together, but as a concession to sex certain exercises were repeated a greater number of times by boys than by girls. No allowance was made for the natural differences between male and female nor was consideration given to the fact that there is a difference between the functions of motherhood and fatherhood. Indeed there was no preparation for either.

A factor of great influence was the demand for an increasingly higher academic standard of work and the demand for better discipline, that is a more serious attitude to the responsibilities of being a Soviet citizen. This was essential if the new tasks which successful economic planning created were to be fulfilled. War and the threat of war may also have influenced the deliberations which led to the decision to abolish co-education in the secondary schools. Different Soviet educationists gave different reasons for the change. One that was generally accepted at first, but did not last long, was that the different rates of physiological development of boys and girls make a mixed class of the same age group an unequal unit psychologically and mentally, with unequal responses, so that teaching becomes difficult and the desired standard of work and behaviour cannot be attained. Another reason given was the need to prepare girls for the vocation of motherhood and the need to teach sex physiology to both, which, it is argued, cannot be given to a mixed class of adolescents.

Since military training has been reduced to two hours a week for Classes IX and X, and this is to be mostly physical training, the military reason was certainly not valid.

When all the reasons given were summed up they amounted to this, that under the then existing Soviet con-

ditions it was thought easier, provided numbers allowed for this, to achieve the academic standard and the intelligent discipline required or so it was thought, in separate schools rather than in co-educational schools.

The leisure activities in the non-school organisations, such as Pioneer Clubs, Technical Stations, etc., continued to be carried on by both boys and girls in mixed groups. The practice, common in many schools in England, of entertaining a school of the opposite sex to a dance or party was greatly encouraged. Holiday camps were attended by boys and girls. The striking absence from Soviet life of artificial stimulation by posters, advertisements, films, etc., helped to prevent the unhealthy sex consciousness that might have arisen as a result of separate schools.

We should remember that Soviet educationists never made the claims for co-education made in other countries. It was for them a method of organising education rather than a principle. They have always insisted that education can only achieve great ends if it receives economic, political and social support, never by educational techniques alone.

When explaining in 1943 the change from co-education to segregated schools, I said then that it was quite possible that the end of ten years would see a return to co-education. In 1954, eleven years after, a decree was passed reintroducing co-education in those schools which had undergone segregation.

It was not always realised that the great majority of the schools remained co-educational, they were not big enough to make segregation feasible. The Minister of Education of the RSFSR, told a group of English teachers in 1954 that only 2 per cent of the schools and some 5 per cent of the children were receiving segregated education.

The Soviet return to co-education is of great importance to educationists everywhere. The experiment in separate education had full official support and was carried out over a long period under varied conditions in a considerable number of schools—2 per cent of schools in the USSR is some thousands.

About five years after its introduction a faint dissatisfaction began to be felt. Parents as well as teachers started to question the advantages of segregation. Once dissatisfaction was voiced local argument and discussion began, till finally in 1953 it could no longer be ignored by the authorities.

The results of segregation had not been as expected. The standard of work did not noticeably improve, neither did discipline. On the contrary behaviour had deteriorated. Boys had begun to show undesirable and sometimes unpleasant characteristics in the adolescent stage. To a lesser extent this applied to girls too. It was forced upon everybody that life demanded a return to co-education. In a society where there was equality in every sphere between men and women, segregation contradicted life, and segregated education was no preparation for Soviet life. In a society based on communist ethics and morality, co-education and not segregated education is the logical, common-sense principle for schools. In a capitalist society much more depends on the particular Head and staff because the environment works so much against normal healthy relations between the sexes. Commercial exploitation of sex surrounds the children on every hand.

Co-education was scheduled to return in full in the school year 1954-55 with the exception of Class X. As these classes were that year taking the matriculation examination for the university it was held undesirable to disturb their routine.

The re-organisation was a very complicated affair, and much thought, discussion and planning between ministry, local authority officials and Heads of schools took place. Often a return to co-education meant almost an entirely new set of pupils for a school staff. There was a general practice of teachers meeting their pupils before school began in September; studying their school records and even sometimes, in the case of some language teachers, going through the pupils' exercise books, all so as to get to know their pupils beforehand. The school and class parents' meetings

where the change-over was explained and discussed were found very valuable.

In many cases teachers gave their new pupils some small task connected with the school to be carried out before school began, so that they would already feel part of the community when they took their places in the class-room. Almost half of August was in some cases spent over this preparatory work.

Great care had to be taken in making up the numbers in the school. There was the very human tendency for a Head to wish to retain the best girls or boys and send the weakest to make up the numbers in another school. Many parents disliking change for their children, tried very hard to keep them in their old school giving varied and plausible reasons. Some of the younger children themselves refused to be separated from their friends.

These difficulties were all overcome and the former segregated schools have settled down happily as co-educational schools. On the teachers however greater demands are being made, both on their teaching abilities and on their qualities as upbringers. It was made quite clear in the preliminary discussions that more attention would have to be paid by teachers to moral, ethical and civic training.

There has been no serious change in the attitude to religion where education is concerned. As in many of the States of the USA, in New Zealand and in other countries, the Soviet schools are secular. There is no direct anti-religious propaganda in the schools of today though all education is rationalistic and scientific. There are now theological seminaries in Moscow, Leningrad and other cities and Mohammedans have their training centres. One has to remember the reactionary role played by religion in tsarist Russia and the part it played in counter-revolutionary activities causing much death, destruction and suffering.

Throughout the first years of the Soviet state the church encouraged and aided the well-off peasants to resist the modernisation of agriculture by every means including murder.

When the church (both Christians and Muslims) loyally accepted the new social structure, conflict ceased. It should be emphasised that no one was punished for practising religion. But if religion was used as a cover for sabotage and other hostile acts, then the person was treated as a traitor. ‘

Philosophically communists are opposed to religions based on supernaturalist doctrine. Where the ethics and the morals of a religion make for social justice, lead to the betterment of life for all and are *practised* by those who profess the religion, this philosophic opposition can be accepted quite calmly. The religion that needs to worry about the Marxist materialist conception, is the one that tolerates inequality, injustice, exploitation and commercial morality. What matters is the kind of life people lead.

As far as changes are concerned there will doubtless be further ones as new situations arise, and judging by past practice we may expect much serious consideration and discussion by the teaching profession, and by the community generally, before changes are adopted. The watchfulness to prevent abuses and excesses continues. This watchfulness, for example, led in 1936 to the abolition of the status of “model” schools because by that time they were developing a selective snobbery. Ever larger numbers among the general community are becoming actively conscious of their responsibility for their children’s education so that the principles and purpose of education have increasing support on all sides. The community does not however give uncritical support. Through a variety of means the people are learning to understand education, both its principles and scope. This helps to give an intelligent direction to the Russian habit of self-criticism, freely expressed at meetings and in the press. Thus the Soviet school while fully supported by the community is at the same time challenged by it to further improvement.

CHAPTER TWO

The Organisation of Education

PLANNING

TO SEE THE Soviet Union in proper perspective, whether from the educational, economical or political angle, one must always bear in mind its geography and history, as well as its political structure. The vastness of the land, and the remoteness and isolation of many of its inhabitants require special measures of planning and supervision to ensure a common standard of education for all. At the same time care must be taken to encourage local initiative and those local features whose development will enrich education and life generally. Much wisdom and skill are needed to achieve a balance between central control and direction, and local freedom.

Education takes its place in the national economic plan with every other aspect of the country's life. The State Planning Commission or Gosplan has its department for education and culture. Educational needs are integrated with economic needs—industrial, agricultural, administrative—and are related to the ultimate goal of a highly educated, highly trained and cultivated people. The national needs are to an extent affected also by the international situation. The budget for 1955 was forced to increase the allocation for defence because of the threat of war resulting from the West's policy to keep Europe divided into two hostile camps by the rearming of Western Germany and its integration with the Western bloc. Information on its requirements for education as affected by development plans is sent by an education body or an institution to its superior

authority until it reaches the Gosplans of the Union Republics. Here the information is analysed, collated and considered in its relation to other phases of life. The republics send their reports and demands to All-Union Gosplan because some of their requirements may make demands on All-Union ministries, and because a Plan is in the first instance one for the whole Union. A development plan which correlates all aspects of education and covers accommodation, equipment and staffing, is then issued from the centre *downwards*, appropriate for each organisational unit for a five-year period. This plan is also sub-divided into yearly, and where applicable quarterly periods and is sent by All-Union Gosplan to its immediate lower unit, say a Union Republic. Here the plan will be considered and broken up for the smaller units, the Autonomous Republics, with the peculiar conditions and needs of each one being given full consideration. This process of decentralisation goes on until individual bodies, as for instance an institute or a children's theatre gets its plan. It should be repeated that in the first place, before planning in the centre begins, institutions as well as authorities send in their requirements for the period. There is no restriction whatever on exceeding the plan, and there is a periodic check-up on fulfilment. There is great encouragement through nation-wide public recognition, through the award of banners and of additional grants, for overfulfilment of plans. These have been found useful incentives for the development of local initiative for which there is unlimited scope.

ADMINISTRATION

The USSR is a union of sixteen republics of equal status, each with the right of secession. Many of the Union Republics, as they are called, have within their confines large areas inhabited by ethnographically homogeneous peoples who form a nationality sometimes of considerable size and importance. These areas are known as Autonomous Republics, one degree lower in political status than Union Republics. Each type of republic has its Ministry of

Education, responsible for the work within its boundaries. A Ministry of Education of a Union Republic has final responsibility for the whole of the republic and therefore has a certain control and direction over that of the Autonomous Republic within its boundaries. For example, the RSFSR¹ Ministry can, and does, issue instructions and directives to the ministries of the Yakut or the Kabardinian Autonomous Republics. In the educational press one may frequently read the Union Republic minister's criticisms and reprimands of an Autonomous Ministry of Education.

There are different administrative bodies responsible for different types of education. The Ministry of Education administers everything that may be covered by the term "general," that is non-specialised education with the addition of most of the teacher training and most of the out-of-school provision for leisure. This covers primary and secondary schools (both junior and senior), the teacher-training schools, teachers' institutes, education bureaus, education laboratories, some education research institutes, general adult education, and in those cases where an individual unit in a district is very small, the nursery-infant schools or kindergartens.

Until 1946 there was a Committee for Higher Education attached to the Council of Ministers (formerly Council of People's Commissars). In that year a separate Union Ministry for Higher Education was set up. This ministry has sole responsibility for universities and a number of major single-faculty institutes. A Committee for the Arts and a Committee for Physical Culture attached to the Council of Ministers each administer the education for its field. The provision of specialised technical education comes within the competence of the ministries, so do industrial or agricultural administrations known as trusts, who require the particular kind of specialist. They are responsible for many single-faculty institutes, technical schools, agricultural schools, evening technical courses, industrial or agricultural academies. Every one of the ministries of a Union Republic

¹ Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic.

has a chief administration for higher education subordinate to the Union Ministry for Higher Education. To illustrate how this works: let us take for example the Ministry for Light Industry which has a number of trusts for the production of consumer goods. The trusts are organised regionally. A furniture trust for a region will require skilled craftsmen and designers for the actual production of the articles, and specialists in the technology of the materials used, that is scientists. The furniture trust will run technical schools for the training of the craftsmen, and may itself, if it is an important regional trust, run higher education institutes for the training of specialists, or this higher education may come within the purview of the ministry which will also take responsibility for the research work essential for the improvement and development of its industry. As further examples, the Ministry for Aviation has its aeronautics institutes for training specialists and for research, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has institutes for the training of its diplomats.

Training for the basic industries was in 1940 put into the hands of the then newly created Union Ministries of Labour Reserves. These ministries are responsible for the two-year industry schools and for the six-month factory apprentice schools.

The introduction in 1954 of universal ten-year education, to be realised fully by 1960, is affecting the Labour Reserve Schools as organised in 1940, as well as the technicums. The changes are described in later pages.

The Committee for the Arts administers technicums and institutes which train instructors for schools, for the different types of teacher training colleges, for universities, for the children's clubs and sports schools² and for the adult clubs. Much research is being carried on in these institutes.

In addition to all these bodies the All-Union Co-operative Society administers the vocational training for its workers.

Now let us return to a Ministry of Education to see how

² These are attended by children in out-of-school time.

that works. A ministry has its departments for the different sections of its work such as pre-school, primary and secondary, teacher training, out-of-school activities, building and equipment, curricula and syllabus methods, etc., with a director for each. There are commissions, cross-linked so as to deal with a subject from every point of view, which sit regularly and report on conditions and make suggestions. The minister is a member of the Council of Ministers to which Gosplan, the State Planning Commission, is attached and can thus make his or her voice heard and his opinions considered on the plan for education. He or she takes part in the deliberations and discussions of the Council of Ministers on all national problems, so that the link between education and life begins at the highest point of the administrative apparatus. Each Ministry of Education appoints its inspectorate and the heads of its schools. As already mentioned, each Union ministry is responsible for the text-books, for the curricula and for the syllabus in outline, all of which are common to all schools.

A ministry administers the funds for the education for which it is responsible. In accordance with the state plans, the state budget allots the necessary finance to carry out the plan. Each republic has its own plan and budget and makes its own allotment for its education. The money comes from the same sources as all state funds, from the trade turnover tax, and to a small extent from income tax. Every administrative unit has its own income and expenditure budget in which education has its place. Allocations are made direct to the school for its needs so that every Head controls the school expenditure and buys direct the text-books, stationery, visual aids, etc., and is free to spend the money within the budget as he or she thinks may be best for the school. There is strict book-keeping which is regularly audited, and any item may be challenged.

In addition to official allocations there is considerable voluntary financial contribution made locally. This was particularly the case, and was of great value, during the war, and it has not diminished since. In any town, rural district, or collective farm, the parents, the farm manage-

ment, a trade union or professional organisation, may bear the expenses of an improvement or addition to their local education. These local voluntary contributions take on a variety of forms, such as the building of new schools, repairs and redecorations for the new school year, the provision of special equipment or facilities for some kind of activity, additional food for the school dining room, etc., etc.

The specialised education and training is financed by the bodies responsible for each particular type and the crèche and nursery-infant schools by the factories whose workers they serve.

There is much decentralisation of authority. The Oblast (region) which is the first administrative sub-division in a republic, is, through the Oblastny Education Administration, responsible for general education and out-of-school facilities within its boundaries. The Oblast is divided into Rayons (counties) each with its education department. Cities have their education authorities, in turn sub-divided into Borough Education Authorities. In rural areas a number of villages are grouped into a Rural District Education Authority. In each case the director of education is appointed by the executive committee of the Soviet or elected council; from the Oblastny Soviet down to the City and Borough Soviet. The education committee of a council is appointed by its executive committee from its elected members; those with educational experience either in a professional or voluntary capacity have precedence. The education authority has to approve the appointment of teachers, which is made by the Head. It is concerned with school building and the upkeep of schools; it has to be consulted on any grave measures affecting the school which a Head-teacher proposes to take. Every type of education authority must show active interest in the provision of facilities for the improvement of teachers in their profession and for their welfare. Each is responsible for the out-of-school provision for leisure within its administrative area.

THE INSPECTORATE

Inspectors are appointed by each Ministry of Education, an essential qualification for appointment being some years' teaching experience. There is no All-Union inspectorate. Their duties are many and their responsibilities considerable. Their task is to raise the standard of education and discipline in the schools to which they are attached. They are present at lessons and examine the work of the pupils. If a lesson in the opinion of an inspector has been given badly, he may call the teacher out after school and analyse it in detail to show what was wrong. He may take the next lesson himself to show how it should be done. His criticism must always be constructive. He co-operates very closely with the Head and he shares in some measure responsibility for the school's reputation. Together with the Head he can recommend a teacher for an award or honour. There is no general inspection lasting several days, as there is in England. To help them in their work, regular three months' courses are organised for inspectors. An institute for inspectors provides longer courses for those who wish and need to have more thorough training.

The Soviet system of administration sets out to ensure that the schools for the ordinary people, however distant or remote from a city, shall reach a rising common standard. It seeks to avoid the isolation of districts, to prevent any place being cut off from the education centre where there is continuous discussion, continuous checking of standards and achievements. With the great distances in that land, with the still existing insufficiency of good roads and of other means of transport, it is not always easy for Soviet education to achieve this aim. But the firm conviction that all people, everywhere, whatever their past, whatever the difference of race and culture, can benefit from, and need, a high standard of general education, stimulates educationists to accept the challenge of difficulties. There is now a considerable tradition and experience in overcoming difficulties. However a common foundation does not mean uniformity. Authority sets out to encourage local initiative

in every possible way. It makes considerable allowance for any differences in local conditions.

The common or "stable" text books ensure that the basic knowledge for each subject is the same throughout the Union and that the knowledge is up-to-date. Text-books are published by the Ministry of Education in its own publishing house. The manuscript for a text-book will undergo a severe probe before acceptance for publication. Senior text-books are often the joint work of two or more people, subject specialists, such as scientists or historians, and teachers. Sometimes a text-book will be handed to a school in manuscript to be tested in a class before final publication. There is continuous revision of text-books and out-of-date ones, or those that become unsuitable for some reason, are regularly discarded.

Teachers can, and do, supplement the "stable" centrally accepted text-book by any material they consider suitable. In any school methods' room there will be a library of additional books for the teachers' use. With slight variations the curriculum is the same for all the schools. In non-Russian schools, they have an additional language since Russian is universal for all such schools, and one European language, English, French or German is also compulsory. This insistence on a uniform curriculum ensures the same basic knowledge of history, of the sciences, of the arts for everybody.

In the out-of-school activities and in post-school education boys and girls can express their individuality and satisfy their special inclinations to whatever degree they are capable. This avoids the narrow specialisation and the great discrepancy between attainment in different schools found elsewhere. A change of schools from one town to another does not create difficulties for the pupil. The common outline syllabus ensures that the main facts of a subject are taught to all children, while the scope given for individual expression and elaboration of the theme prevents an undesirable uniformity. There is a fixed time-table but it is never adhered to so rigidly that an exception cannot be made. On one occasion boys and girls of a class were

handed over to me during a literature lesson and we spent the time learning about each other's schools and discussing literature in the USSR and Great Britain.

The teacher in the class-room has a direct say in education as it affects him or her. Before a syllabus is adopted by the Ministry of Education it is thoroughly discussed by the teachers, and the reports resulting from these discussions are sent to the ministry which treats them very seriously. Sometimes a syllabus like a text-book is used by a school in draft form for a year and is modified according to the recommendations of the teacher using it.

The efforts to create and keep living and vital contacts between the central administrative organ and education everywhere within its sphere are increasing.

Out from the centre along numerous communication lines go suggestions, plans, drafts and recommendations. Back to the centre along equally numerous lines of communication, come from the periphery, picking up additions on the way, criticisms, reports, suggestions and opinions. The centre—the ministry—analyses, collates, sums up the wide and varied experience and based on this as well as on the demands of the national economy, new decrees, new instructions and suggestions go out.

ATTENDANCE

The government wages a continuous fight to ensure one hundred per cent school attendance for the last three years of the Junior Secondary School, eleven to fourteen years. As long ago as 1937³ a decree was issued prohibiting the employment of school children in school time in work on collective farms, or their employment in looking after babies while mother was at work. The collective farm management was instructed to provide transport to and from school where it was required. The departments of education and agriculture were instructed to carry out an educational campaign among the collective farms to get

³ The age range was twelve to fifteen.

their full co-operation for compulsory education up to fifteen.

In a letter dated November 28, 1937, No. 23-24, the Public Prosecutor dealt with the unsatisfactory situation as regards the universal achievement of the Seven-Year School. He ordered the District Public Prosecutors to check up on the local education authorities as to whether they took the necessary measures with parents or others responsible who broke the law on compulsory education. Information on every parent who broke this law was to be sent to the Public Prosecutor of the RSFSR. The penalties for keeping a child from school for inadequate reasons included warnings, fines, or thirty days compulsory labour.

The Third Five-Year Plan, 1938-42, provided for Ten-Year Schools in all cities, rural district centres, and industrial settlements, and Seven-Year Schools in all villages and in all national republics. This programme was, of course, interrupted by the war when need compelled the employment of girls and boys of thirteen to fourteen years in factories and farms. Indeed numbers of youngsters left school at an earlier age of their own accord, and insisted on "doing their bit" in factory or farm. In the Fourth Five-Year Plan serious steps were being taken to ensure one hundred per cent compulsory general education up to fourteen plus. By the end of the period it was expected, in spite of colossal war devastation, that ninety-five per cent of the rural child population would be completing the Seven-Year School and fifty per cent of them would be attending the Ten-Year School.

During the Third Five-Year Plan the Presidium of the Moscow City Council issued a decree, on November 7, 1939, prohibiting children of school age from being gainfully employed in any capacity whatever. The sale of alcoholic drinks and beer to minors was prohibited. Restaurants and public houses, cafes, etc., selling liquor, were prohibited from admitting children under sixteen in the evenings. (They should be at school in the daytime.)

Anyone responsible for the employment of school

children was answerable before the law, and when found guilty, punished either by fine or compulsory labour.

Instructions continue to be issued to local authorities to see that all possible obstacles to one hundred per cent attendance are removed. Transport, clothing and footwear, school feeding, school heating in winter, must be dealt with, and where necessary there must be full provision of services and commodities.

Again, on January 25, 1943, the Public Prosecutor of the RSFSR issued an order (No. 416) dealing with the measures to ensure one hundred per cent attendance. These were to establish supervision over local authorities to see that they take all possible steps to achieve the desired end. Moscow again adopted additional measures to ensure full attendance at school.

On July 14, 1943, the then Council of People's Commissars, now the Council of Ministers—of the RSFSR—decreed: (1) "To approve the instructions on the Organisation of the Registration of all children between the ages of eight (now seven) and fifteen (now fourteen) and on the measures for controlling the fulfilment of the law on compulsory universal education." (2) "To make it obligatory on the Councils of Commissars (Ministers) of the Autonomous Republics and Regional Executives to set up the strictest control on the fulfilment of the said instructions by all the city and district executives and by settlement and village councils of workers' deputies."

The instructions give in detail the methods by which a full and complete registration is to be achieved in both urban and rural areas, and name the people responsible for carrying this out.

With the introduction of universal ten-year general education (seven to fourteen years) we shall see the drive for a hundred per cent implementation of the Seven-Year School intensified to clear the deck for a hundred per cent secondary education by 1960.

THE EDUCATION LADDER

All education is state education. There are no private schools whatever. The system is very simple, though it naturally becomes educationally complex after the Junior Secondary School (seven to fourteen years) stage, and will remain complex after the secondary school stage, because of the great variety of educational facilities provided. Compulsory general education since 1943 begins at seven years and will, by 1960, continue till the seventeenth birthday has been passed. This applies to the whole Union, and every effort is made as already shown to see that the law is fully carried out everywhere.

When compulsory general education ended at fourteen plus there was a further education period for all boys and girls before they took up a job. This period ranged from two to four years according to the work for which they were training. As already stated, great efforts were made to ensure that every child attended school until fourteen or fifteen, for without the basic general education provided by this stage, the younger generation could not go up the ladder that led to higher education. The Seven-Year School was the essential first rung. The war interfered considerably with educational continuity. It also gave a slack authority the opportunity to continue in its slackness. The re-enactment of a decree at the appropriate time acted as a reminder to such authorities. For example, because the 1932 decree on universal compulsory seven-year education was not wholly implemented, it was re-enacted in 1937, at the completion of the Second Five-Year Plan. This decree gave detailed instructions to local authorities on school building and teacher training, particularly for the rural areas, who received by far the greatest attention. The reader must not assume that little was done during the Second Five-Year Plan. On the contrary, an astonishing amount of school building went on. Between 1938 and 1939 sixteen thousand Seven-Year Schools were constructed in rural areas alone. Figures for the pre-war year 1940-41 showed that 90.2 per cent of pupils who finished the primary school

entered the Seven-Year School and remained there until they reached fifteen years, while 43.3 per cent of those who finished the Seven-Year School went on to and finished the secondary school—till eighteen. In England only 20 per cent of children from the State Primary Schools went on to Grammar Schools and, of those, the majority left at sixteen years. Various measures have been and are being taken to enable young people to complete the full secondary course of education, through a variety of educational facilities offered free of charge.

The first stage in education is known as pre-school and covers the age-range three to seven years. Under three, children come under the Ministry of Health. Attendance at pre-school educational institutions is voluntary.

The second stage is the primary school (seven to eleven years). Pupils of the primary school, provided they have passed the examination at the end of the fourth year, go on to the Junior Secondary or Seven-Year School which brings them up to fourteen plus years. In rural districts there are still very many Four-Year Schools, that is, buildings with only four classes which are known as primary schools. Schools which accommodate both primary and middle school, that is, from seven to fourteen plus years, are known as Junior Secondary or Seven-Year Schools. In all cities, and in industrial settlements and rural centres, for many years now there have been Senior Secondary Schools which include all the three stages—primary, middle and senior and have pupils from seven to seventeen plus years. The number in a Senior Secondary School in a large city is round about nine hundred to a thousand, with about twenty-two classes numbered one to ten which may give two or three parallel classes.

Owing to war devastation and the increase in the number of Ten-Year Schools, many of these are at present working double shifts, junior school in the morning, senior in the afternoon, with numbers well over a thousand.

Pupils leaving a primary school in a rural district will pass on to the nearest Junior Secondary School. In such places as the tundra beyond the Arctic, or the desert areas,

or remote mountain regions, conditions make boarding establishments indispensable for the Seven-Year School. In the majority of cases in the country there are sufficient Junior Secondary Schools to make a daily journey possible. Instructions were issued in August 1947 by the Ministry of Education of the RSFSR for the organisation of hostels to ensure a Seven-Year School for all children in rural areas. Boarding with families is encouraged.

From the middle stage in the Junior Secondary School in a rural area, those who pass the examination at the end of the seventh year and desire to go on to further academic studies, will go into the senior stage of the Senior Secondary School. Many country children will have to become boarders. In a Senior Secondary School in a city, transfer from the middle to the senior stage is merely a matter of going up to another floor of the same school building.

When the compulsory general education ended, there was a division into three main streams. Roughly eight hundred thousand boys and girls went, and some still go, to schools which train for major industries and provide a two-year course. Another stream went into professional or technical schools which are all monotekhnical; that is, all pupils in one school are trained for the same speciality. The course varied from three to five years. The third stream, comprising the more academically gifted, either remained in the same school or went to the Senior Secondary School in another district. From this stage the majority go on to higher education, which comprises state universities and many single-faculty institutes.

In addition to all the above, there is the variety of special schools, to be described in later chapters.

The introduction of universal ten-year education will influence the vocational training in special and technical schools. The time is not far distant when all entrants to specialised, professional or vocational schools training both for industry and junior posts in the profession or administration will finish the ten-year school. Hitherto this was only true of those entering the university. This demands a re-organisation of the specialised school. Soon the Two-Year

Trade Schools, which may still be taking fourteen-year-olds for a time, will have no reason for existence.

At present it is neither possible nor needful for all young people to be university trained. The majority of the leavers at seventeen plus will be needed in production. It has to be made clear to the pupils that going into industry is as honourable and as admirable as going to the university. New industrial training in a new kind of specialised school has to be provided. In fact, many such are already functioning and will be described later.

About the same time as the plan for full secondary schools was adopted a decree was published instructing authorities to re-introduce polytechnisation. This is so important that I shall give it a chapter to itself.

CHAPTER THREE

Discipline and Methods

RUSSIANS ARE MUCH like human beings anywhere. They have the same tendencies to virtue or vice, they share the same wisdom and the same foolishness. Like men everywhere they respond to environment, and their environment is, as yet, by no means perfect. The war destroyed much of what they had achieved at great cost.

The years immediately following the war were years of great hardship.

There are schools which are seriously criticised in the Soviet educational press. There are inefficient teachers and slack education authorities. There are people in positions of authority unsuitable or incapable of discharging that authority. There is no equalitarianism. Men and women are rewarded according to the value of their work to the community.

But beyond all this there is something new in the Soviet Union, a new spirit which all who have lived among the ordinary people recognise. It is the spirit which brought thousands of young volunteers as far back as 1928 from all corners of the land to build a youth city on the Amur river, which drove the peasants in the height of the summer season to build new secondary schools for their children. It is expressed in the elderly barely-literate Jewess who organised a club in an apartment house so that the children in her street should enjoy their leisure fruitfully; in the women office cleaners who held a conference in Leningrad to raise the standard of office cleanliness; in the forty thousand youths who volunteered to restore the Donbas coal

mines destroyed by the Germans; in the Asiatic peasant who volunteered to build irrigation canals. It is the spirit which nurtured the grim determination to set about restoring the war damage without a moment's respite from the strain of the most brutal and devastating war in history, almost before the war ceased. It is the spirit which in 1954 has sent thousands of young people into the uninhabited steppes to turn arid land into fruitful fields of grain—to create cities in the desert.

There is nothing miraculous about this. It is the response of the Soviet citizen to his environment which, despite its drawbacks and faults, does call forth the best that is in him; and it is achieved through education working in the Soviet society in close alliance with its planned economy and its special political system.

The rising standard of living and the economic security are visible evidence that good work and discipline are worth while. Learning and knowledge, hard work, initiative, devotion to the community, all receive speedy reward and public approbation. Ceaselessly it is pointed out to the people that without skill and knowledge they cannot have a better life, and the people have begun to see that this is true. And the first stage of this skill and knowledge is provided in the school.

The school and the home and society are striving for the same conscious goal. The virtues that are extolled and the vices that are decried in the school are similarly extolled or decried in the home and in society. The home and society support the school. The adult newspapers, the advertisements, the cinema and literature which are read or seen by young people are found to be in harmony with what the school teaches. The result of the consciously directed struggle to create a new type of man for the new society which he is himself creating, can already be seen in the gradual disappearance of the predatory characteristics and in the gradual evolution of a co-operative man who is beginning to put the good of the community before his own inclinations, a common man who is reaching out towards a profound appreciation of education and culture.

Now it is generally accepted that the discipline within the school is in some measure a reflection of the discipline in society outside the school. It is even more a reflection of social attitudes and standards of value and is subject to social sanctions. Therefore Soviet principles and practice as regards school discipline should always be related to this Soviet environment.

Generally the pupils of any class in any school go to school wanting to learn. They can see the purpose of education and it is a desirable purpose. It will help to fit them for that adventurous task of building a new society. They know from their parents, from the older members of the family as well as from the press, of the vast and exciting opportunities that are calling for their abilities and their skill. To build new towns, to make the desert blossom, to conquer frozen lands for man's service, to battle against the obstacles set by nature, to discover its secrets, to create great music, art or ballet; it is a limitless horizon which calls to the young, and without the school they cannot begin to march towards it.

Thus when a teacher arrives in the class-room in the morning, he will find the pupils are on his side, they are ready to learn and offer no resistance to the teacher, no discipline problem. But there may be one difficult child who can easily destroy the discipline of a whole class if the teacher is not equal to his task, if he does not know how to use the great support that is his, first to neutralise the opposition and then to convert it to support. This in a nutshell is the problem of discipline for the Soviet school. It is in fact a problem of the teacher, for always and everywhere the key point of discipline is the teacher. But the problem is not simple because the teacher has so many relationships. There is his life as an individual, as a citizen, as a member of a social group, as a member of a family, and as the trained expert at his job. All these factors enter into the art of teaching and play their part in deciding the discipline in a school.

There are still to be found teachers who are not adequate for the job. Indeed, to judge from criticism in the

press, there is much room for improvement. Again, not every parent knows how to bring up children, and not all relationships are happy. Discipline in education is therefore a problem that has persisted and will persist for many a day. This is a problem not so much of the so-called naughty or undisciplined child, as of the new standard of discipline demanded by the changing society at different stages of its development. Soviet educationists have perforce paid, and are paying, considerable attention to the problem.

It is a standing topic of discussion. In all their research and discussions they are concerned with causes which Soviet psychologists hold are to be found either in the environment or in the child's physique. They reject Freudian interpretations of any kind.

Arising out of their experiments in the early post-revolutionary years, when their education was characterised by a complete absence of any compulsion, Soviet educationists have come to certain conclusions. One is that because of their lack of knowledge and experience of life, children are not able to judge what is best for themselves or their fellows. Nor can they at an early age take decisions or form judgments on any except the most elementary matters, because they lack the experience which gives knowledge and develops the necessary faculties for arriving at conclusions. They believe that children require to live in an ordered community, whether it is the home or the school, with an accustomed pattern of living that is taken for granted, giving the security with affection which enables growth to be a continuously harmonious process. They believe that the common courtesies of life should be observed within the school and within the class-room between pupils and between pupils and teacher.

They also believe that the child needs opportunity, that is, time and place for free creative self-expression, so that he may be aware of his own uniqueness, and rights, and importance, as an individual. Great provision is made for this out of school, and there is once again a movement to persuade parents to set aside, if nothing more is possible,

at least a corner in the living-room which should be sacred to the children.

Further, they believe that it is essential to train children to overcome difficulties, that it is psychologically wrong to make work at school so easy that no effort is required from the child. There is a great emotional satisfaction in conquering intellectual obstacles. They believe that children must learn to do routine work and accept it as an inescapable part of life.

From all this, the reader should gather that there is nothing startlingly new about methods of discipline in Soviet schools. There are no school psychologists or child guidance clinics. There are psychologists who contribute to the training of teachers, both in the college and the school and to the training of parents, and there are psychotherapists available when necessary. There is child guidance, but this is given under normal school conditions by the teacher who knows, or should know, the child and who is expected to know the home.

No mental or other tests are used. In cases of serious anti-social behaviour when the teacher's efforts have failed to effect improvement, the first step may be a very thorough medical examination by a specialist to discover a possible physiological cause. The request for such examination would come from the Head of the school or possibly be suggested by the school doctor. Should such a cause be absent a variety of measures are taken, if necessary at special schools, on the basis of a careful investigation either by the teacher or a member of the Parents' Committee or the Head, into the child's home conditions.

Let us take an imaginary case and see how this works. Vanya has been behaving badly—he has been rude, he has disturbed the class and he has not done his homework. When the class teacher's efforts fail, the case will be discussed by the School Education Council at the teacher's or Head's request and the teacher concerned will receive suggestions and help. Suppose the new attempts are no more successful than the old. Vanya's behaviour grows worse. He is again discussed at the School Education

Council, which may then decide to recommend exclusion from school for a period. This is reported to the education authority which investigates the case. They find the complaints against the boy genuine. They may remove the boy to a school in another district, known to be very good, or they may send him for a period to a special school whose chief feature is the prolonged day—until bedtime. Such schools are staffed by tried and experienced teachers. Here, the youngster is fully occupied every moment of the waking hours. By the evening, he is ready to go home and go to bed. Both in the class-room and in the workshop or other activity-room full demands are made on his powers. Since all his energies are so fully occupied, the occasion for being “bad” is absent, and it is found that after a period—*provided the home helps*—the youngster is ready to return to the ordinary school.

In an actual case in Leningrad the cause of bad behaviour was antipathy between the class master and the boy, who was stopped just in time from hitting his master with a heavy stone. A contributing cause was the lack of understanding and neglect by the parents, two very busy highly-educated people. The boy was not in any sense “bad” but the attitude of the teacher called out the latent aggressiveness and also permitted him to feel himself blamed for everybody’s misdeeds. The education authority transferred him to a school whose Head was profoundly wise, deeply understanding, and convinced that if only she could find the right approach the worst case would respond. When the mother who brought him began the tale of the boy’s iniquities she cut her short very sharply, told her there was nothing wrong with her boy and that he would settle down happily, and dismissed her. She told the boy that she knew he had ability, that she expected he would behave like the other pupils and that no one, except herself and the boy in the school, would know the reason for his transfer. She called in the boy’s class teacher, introduced him, said a few words in the boy’s praise and attributed his arrival in mid-term to convenience for his home. She then took the boy into the class-room, introduced him to his

future class-mates as a desirable addition to the class, and explained his arrival in the same way. The boy finding himself in an atmosphere of friendliness, trust and respect, knowing that in any difficulty he could go to his new friend, the Head, settled down and did exceedingly well.

In another far more serious case of anti-social behaviour the same Head succeeded through discovering and encouraging the boy's passion for pigeons. On the second day of his arrival she sent a member of the staff with the boy to buy some pigeons. The money was handed to the boy and he did the buying. That was the first in a series of psychological shock treatments. He was allowed to breed pigeons on the roof, and to invite his friends. He was a much more difficult case; the war had left its scars on him, but he too in a reasonable time responded to affection, to security, to confidence, to the challenge of his new environment.

These two cases are typical of the approach of the genuine Soviet educationist to the problem of the undisciplined child. There is a reiterated emphasis on the need for knowledge and understanding of the individual child. Without this knowledge and understanding Soviet educationists insist that there can be no good discipline.

For delinquents and young offenders there are residential schools known as Labour Schools or Communes. These are described in detail in Chapter XIII.

To return to the school, much of what follows in this chapter and elsewhere has its parallel in many schools in other parts of the world, but in order to give an overall impression it must be described here. There is a fixed time-table to set the ordered atmosphere of the school, though it is never so rigid that it cannot be relaxed on a special occasion. A bell rings to announce the beginning of school and the end of lessons. A class has to rise on entrance of the teacher and give greeting, and must do the same on the teacher's departure. Pupils are not expected to talk or interrupt when the teacher is giving a lesson; hands are raised to ask or answer a question. Homework is set and is expected to be done.

In the primary school, monitors and prefects are

appointed by the teacher for short periods and the duties are many and varied, so that as many pupils as possible have their share in class responsibilities. In the Junior and Senior Secondary School, eleven to fourteen years and fourteen to seventeen years respectively, the class elects its monitors and prefects. Each class in these age groups has a mistress or a master who is responsible for the class, its behaviour and general attainment. This is a serious responsibility and carries with it payment additional to the ordinary salary. In both these age groups there is a class committee elected by pupils, with participation by the responsible form master or mistress. The committee elects its own officers. Over all there is a school pupils' committee, on which the Head has a seat, consisting of the elected representatives of the classes. These committees, particularly those of the senior classes, take on much responsibility for the general order of the school; good behaviour, good work, the cleanliness and tidiness of the building and attractive look of the school. Their responsibilities will include helping the slower with school work, home visits to find out the cause of difficult behaviour, setting in motion or even providing practical help in cases of need.

In addition to pupils' class committees, there are parents' class committees. On one of my last visits I attended a meeting of a Class X Parents' Committee. There were present, in addition to the parents, the form master and a representative from the factory with which the school was linked. The question for discussion was how to make their seventeen-year-old sons and daughters (co-education was then in existence) do better work. It was regarded as the joint responsibility of the home and school.

Another aid to good discipline and good work—the two are considered inseparable—is the Wall Newspaper for class and school. It is a large sheet put up on the wall, whose contents include literary and artistic material and short reports of local and national interest provided by the children. On this sheet may also go a reprimand, often skilfully illustrated, for bad work or "bad" behaviour, this for all to

read and see. On the school wall newspaper, which hangs in the hall, a whole class may find itself mentioned as rewarded or reprimanded.

Both reward and punishment are used, but it is always emphasised that if the school is run well, if the lessons are well prepared, that is, well thought out and well planned, and if the teacher has succeeded in obtaining the co-operation of the pupils in the task of education, the discipline will be good and there will be no need to seek ways and means of dealing with bad discipline.

Speaking at the August Conference of Teachers in 1954, Minister of Education Kairov had this to say about punishment:

"Punishment does not produce discipline though it may on occasions be necessary. Even so, it must not be regarded as the inevitable consequence of every naughtiness. Intelligent discipline is one of the most important features of Soviet man, whom the school has to produce. Discipline is both the result and the process of character formation. It cannot be reduced to a matter of punishment and reward."

Discipline in the Soviet school is regarded "as the highest moral quality. . . . It has to be trained and cultivated gradually, from simple obedience to the teacher to the capacity for the voluntary doing of one's duty without waiting for orders or instructions; from the ability to distinguish what is permissible and what is not, to the profound understanding of one's duty to society." The Minister of Education has stated many times, that intelligent discipline is the result of the total educative process in school. This includes "able teaching, well organised out-of-class and out-of-school activity, the strict observance of the school regime, strict observance of the Rules for Pupils, a well-knit children's community, an active Komsomol and Pioneer organisation, the intelligent use of reward and punishment, daily contact with the home. At the same time conscious-intelligent discipline is an essential condition for good work for a securely based regime and order in the school." Much importance is attached to the school regime as the solid foundation for behaviour. It is claimed that

only a firm consistent regime where everything has its appointed time and order, its recognised customs and pattern, can bring success to all the different approaches and techniques of discipline.

"The regime must be intelligent and not make impossible demands on the pupils. Nor must it conflict with the pupils' need for movement. It is stupid to insist that children must walk in the wide corridors in two's and must make no noise. Why should they not run? There should be an orderly entry into school, orderly behaviour at lessons and in breaks, to each other and to older people, orderly holding of meetings, social gatherings and an order in dress."

Great importance is attached to developing a Soviet attitude to work. "The school must inculcate in the pupil a love and respect for work (labour), a respect for the worker. It must arouse in him a realisation that every one, beginning with the earliest years, must work. ... The school must give the children definite skills and habits of work, as a mere realisation of the necessity of work is not enough. It is necessary to be accustomed to work and to be expected to work. ... Every form of labour demands discipline. Labour and discipline are the two sides of the medal."

Different educationists and teachers stress different ingredients in the discipline dish. Some emphasise the individual approach, others the collective, others the role of the teacher. In fact all three are equally essential and unless they are all present there cannot be an intelligent conscious discipline.

Rewards vary from prizes such as watches and books, special holidays and visits to the theatres, to commendation before the whole school or class. Punishments include reprimands such as standing in front of the class, being sent out of the class, being deprived of a privilege. The same punishments meted out by the Head, in cases where the teacher feels himself ineffective, are much more serious: and as already stated, in grave cases exclusion from school may be resorted to. No corporal punishment in any form

is allowed. It is an offence for which a teacher can be prosecuted.

On all occasions, in all educational literature, it is emphasised that the virtue of rewards and punishments lies not only in their immediacy and in their logic, but in their sparing use, that it is the poor teacher who has to rely on such extraneous aids to discipline.

A set of rules for school behaviour was elaborated in 1943.¹ The demands on the children are very similar to those made in good schools in any country. The rules are printed on a card which the pupil is always supposed to have with him and which he is supposed to regard rather as one might a membership card with rules of a highly honoured institution. From time to time, teachers are expected to have a talk about these rules, their significance and implication.

In 1946, school record books were introduced into its schools by the City of Moscow Education Authority. These books are designed to be a record for the year of the pupils' behaviour, work and general development. Each is prefaced by a list of duties for the pupil, which are:

- (1) To keep his record book clean and tidy and not to hand it over to any unauthorised person.
- (2) To have the book with him at school and to present it when requested to the teacher, Head or any other person connected with the school.
- (3) Every Saturday the book must be shown to his parents who will duly sign it as having been read, after which the book must be handed to the responsible class teacher.

There is a page for every month of the school year. On this are listed the subjects being taken with space for marks for each. There is a space for conduct, one for diligence and one for attendance and punctuality. Each subject has four columns, one for each week in the month. There are additional pages for special remarks and comments.

¹ See Appendix I.

The last page is reserved for the whole year's report by the School Education Council.

TEACHING METHODS

The methods employed in Soviet schools are what may be termed ordinary, but as is well known, in the hands of a gifted teacher the most ordinary methods become unique, while in the hands of a poor teacher the most extraordinary or rare method will be a failure.

The basic method of teaching is the class lesson given by the teacher, which does not mean that the children sit passive the whole time. With the younger children, for example the seven-year-olds in Class I, the actual time taken up by the teacher in talking is recommended by Professor Kornilov, the eminent psychologist, to last no more than fifteen minutes. That is the maximum period he considers possible for a child's uninterrupted mental concentration. The lesson which actually lasts forty-five minutes must therefore be broken up into varied activity. A reading lesson should have no more than fifteen minutes reading, and should then be varied by story-telling, by discussion of the material read (the children to do the talking), by drawing or modelling or other handwork to illustrate what has been read. An arithmetic lesson for Classes I to IV will have all possible aids, many home-made, for translating the mental process into action which produces a real visual image. According to the teacher there will be more or less activity.

As the pupils proceed from Class IV upward there is less physical activity and more intellectual activity during the lesson. For these children the class lesson by the teacher is supplemented by individual work both at home and in study rooms. Much more talking is done by Soviet children than by British children. For example, when knowledge is tested, it is not limited to a question which requires a brief answer. The pupil will come out in front of the class and give a reply that may take five minutes or more, illustrating on the black-board if necessary, and using

maps, globe or diagram, or science apparatus when appropriate.

Since the return to the lesson by the teacher as the basic method, considerable research has been carried on into what constitutes a successful lesson, that is, "one in which children acquire new knowledge, enlarge their understanding and strengthen (even if to a very small degree) the capacity for reasoning and logical thinking;"² that is a lesson in which though not physically active, the pupils are intellectually active. To achieve this, and no lesson is considered good which does not in some measure fulfil these conditions, attention is directed to the preparation of the lesson, its content, construction, the sequence of important points in the content, its presentation as well as to the teacher's use of language. The Studies' Supervisor in the Junior and Senior Secondary School is expected to help with the preparation of lessons, while in the primary school the older teachers within the school and the regular discussions at the Education Bureau aid the teacher.

Every possible aid to teaching is used. Research institutes carry on investigation and experiment with the best type of visual aids and the best apparatus for the sciences. Within the school itself, teachers are encouraged to be inventive and original in evolving new aids and techniques. Method is very important, and the continuous discussion of this aspect of teaching in education institutions, in the press, at educational conferences, as well as the research that goes on in education institutes, are all a measure of the importance attached to method in the Soviet Union. Yet method isolated from the other components of education will achieve no solid or lasting result.

First the teacher must have a belief in the educability of humans and so of children. No teacher who thinks his or her class, or the majority of its children, a lot of duds will get any real mental response from the pupils. Without a mental response there is no learning. All the processes necessary for the understanding and acquisition of know-

² Kairov.

ledge must be set going by the child because he wills it. It is the teacher's task to help the child to will it and to present the knowledge in such a way that the pupil not only apprehends it, but links it up with previous knowledge, begins to form deductions and is stimulated to seek further knowledge.

This demands a knowledge of the working of the child mind in particular and the brain and nervous system generally. Here the Soviet teacher is fortunate to have the teaching of the great physiologist Pavlov on conditioned reflexes. This teaching and the results of the research of his followers have greatly strengthened Soviet teachers and educationists in their belief in the educability of all normal children and are helping the teacher to understand the mental processes of the child.

Again for the methods to be truly successful the teacher must know the child's home environment and there must be social encouragement and stimulus to learning.

All this means that given a well trained, well educated teacher, who is herself always ready to learn, given support from research educationists, from the parents and the community, in a society which so evidently requires educated people, and which makes ample provision out of school for creative activities, method takes its place as only one of the factors in successful teaching.

Like all industry, the manufacture of school equipment, apparatus and other didactic material is a state undertaking. Whatever the educationists have agreed upon as desirable—this generally follows a recommendation of a teachers' conference—is, after approval by the ministry, put into production at reasonable prices. In addition to this, in the school amateur construction circles, in the physics and mathematical circles, excellent apparatus is often produced.

It is important to underline that school equipment, apparatus, and visual aids, are not produced by commercial profit-making enterprises. The original idea for a piece of apparatus or visual aids quite often comes from the practising teacher who may have had the idea translated into the object by the school circle of the particular subject. If

successful it will be described in some education journal, it may be on show at any of the Education Bureaus and if it meets with general approval there will be a recommendation that it should be mass-produced. The recommendation will be accepted. In other cases suggestions and designs may be sent direct to the Ministry of Education.

It has not always been so simple to get equipment and apparatus. In the early years after the Revolution much apparatus and many aids to learning were home-made from the simplest material to hand. Even today a visitor to any school will find the home-made additions to the factory products.

Educational visit and excursions are a recognised teaching aid and have their place in the time-table for the term. For nature study there must be at least three excursions a term into the country.

While the Project Method is not used anywhere, subjects are correlated, this being aided by co-operation between the appropriate teachers, and all subjects are closely related to the pupil's life.

Reading is the core of the curriculum for the first three classes and from it radiate many varied activities. "The pupils must know not only the words describing things, but the things themselves and the connections existing between them in actual life. . . . The reading therefore has to be supplemented for each subject that it deals with, by excursions, experiments, and demonstrations, by comparisons of facts and by the making of deductions. This will help to ensure training in observation and thought, and prevent the mechanical acquisition of facts."³

Children are taught first the sounds of the letters. It is important to get children to hear correctly, for the basis of language communication, speaking, is sound. Then comes the learning of the alphabet. The sounds build up the syllables, and words are first divided into syllables. There is the two-fold process, breaking up words and putting them together, analysis and synthesis. When the

³ Introduction to *Reading Syllabus for Primary Schools*.

sounds and the alphabet have been mastered and some of the peculiarities, which even a phonetic language like Russian has, understood, reading begins, the first words being made from simple syllables. Soviet educationists are convinced that once a child learns to read and to write syllables, it can become proficient in reading and writing.

Geography begins with a study of the district in which the school is located, and as it develops in succeeding years, it is linked up with the economic development of the country. It includes the geography of other countries and such practical activity as surveying, model and map making.

History begins in the primary school simply as stories of their people⁴ and develops into world history both ancient and modern as the pupil goes up the school. Pupils are expected to see the connection between historical events and contemporary events. Charts, diagrams, pictorial matter, excursions, and plays and films provided both professionally and by the pupils' amateur clubs, aid in the teaching of this subject. Plays are not used as an aid in the class-room. They are attended either in the amateur clubs or professional theatre out of school.

The approach to other subjects is similar. The sciences have well-equipped modern laboratories with some exceedingly ingenious apparatus. As far as I am aware, a school broadcasting service, such as exists in Britain, is not used in the Soviet Union. Broadcasts for children are used, but they have a more general cultural aim, to enlarge the horizon.

Music, literature and poetry-reading are broadcast, but after school hours, except for the kindergarten. The film, however, is very widely used as a teaching technique. A great many Senior Secondary Schools have special rooms equipped for teaching with films and used only for that purpose. In other schools, a room may serve other purposes too, but it is unusual to find a Junior or a Senior Secondary School now which is not equipped for the showing of films. Educational films, produced in collaboration with the subject

⁴ Remember the different nationalities.

specialists, have their part in the general film production plans. In addition to films, various types of projection, such as the alascopes, epidiascopes, the ordinary magic lantern, etc., are to be found in all Junior and Senior Secondary Schools and in an ever-increasing number of the primary schools.

This may all sound very formal. How is it then that Soviet education is succeeding in its task? I must remind the reader of the Soviet environment which produces a willingness and a desire to learn in the majority of the school children. Intellectual activity is as satisfying as physical activity and as essential. Given a good teacher, an apparently formal lesson can be exciting because the class is intellectually active, that is, it is learning, apprehending, deducing, applying the knowledge to new situations, in a word, discovering, the intellectual world. And for the physical activity, the doing of things, for the freedom to move about, the freedom to be occupied in the same task for a long period, for this there is ample out-of-school provision.

EXAMINATIONS

There are of course no examinations in the kindergartens, the transfer from group to group depending on the teacher's report. There are also no end-of-year examinations in the first three classes of the primary school. Term tests are given in order to check upon progress, and transfer is on the teacher's record for the year. At the end of Class IV there is the transfer examination set on the work for the whole of the preceding four years.

For the transfer examination for each of the three age-groups,⁵ primary, junior and senior secondary, the Department of Education for Primary and Senior Secondary Schools of the RSFSR issues examination cards. On each card—for each subject examined—are three themes and the complete series of cards is designed to cover the full syllabus

⁵ Seven to eleven, eleven to fourteen, fourteen to seventeen.

of work for the transfer year and the main themes of the preceding years. For example, in a geography examination on the year's work on the USSR, three headings on a card might be: the wheat belt, the waterways, the Pamirs. The actual questions under the headings are set by the teacher in agreement with the examination commission.

For the primary grade transfer examination they are designed to test "the accuracy of knowledge, the degree of intelligent understanding of the syllabuses covered, and the ability to apply the knowledge in practice."⁶

For the matriculation diploma, at the end of the Ten-Year School, the examination cards are designed to test "The accuracy of the pupil's knowledge, his development, independence of judgment, and ability to relate knowledge to life and theory to practice."⁷

As soon as the cards are received by the school, they must be made known to the subject teacher and to the pupils to enable revision to be taken. Ten days before the examination the teachers must copy the themes or headings on pieces of paper or cards, complete each heading with relevant detailed questions, fill in anything that may be necessary to complete a question partly set, and set any problems required by the theme. The teacher must further prepare all the oral questions on the theme. Thus, while headings under which questions are set are the same for all the schools, the actual questions will vary with the different teachers. Again, while the children know what the whole class will be examined on, individually they do not know which card they will receive, nor what the actual question will be, because the card to be received on the examination day is not handed out until that day.

In the first transfer examination (Class IV) written and oral work is required in Russian and arithmetic, oral only in history and geography. In the second transfer examination (Class VII), written work is required in Russian and mathematics, and oral in all subjects examined.

In the matriculation examination (Class X) written

⁶ From *Handbook on Examinations*.

⁷ *Ibid.*

work is required in foreign language, Russian language and literature, history and algebra, geometry and trigonometry, while oral work is required in all subjects. The use of globes, maps and black-board for illustration—with a duster for rubbing out mistakes—and a dictionary in the foreign language examination are all permitted.

Every examination card for the Class IV, the first transfer examination in Russian contains a question in sentence analysis and in grammar. Every pupil is required to relate in his own words something read in school, and to recite a poem or fable. Reading—unseen—is examined and is marked for comprehension, accuracy, speed and expression. Time is given for a silent perusal before the unseen passage is to be read aloud. In arithmetic three questions have to be answered, one involving enumeration above ten, or sums, the second covering the arithmetic book used, and the third is a mental arithmetic problem. In the arithmetic examination the pupil is required not only to give the correct answer but to show the method by which he arrived at it. The history cards, too, have three questions. The answer to the first must be in detailed narrative form. The object of the second and third questions is to test knowledge of individual facts and of chronology. In geography the examination cards are so designed as to test a knowledge of maps, elementary geographical notions and facts, a knowledge of the compass and topographical maps.

The examining body for Class IV consists of the school Head, the class teacher, two other teachers, and a representative of the Regional Education Authority. For Class VII and the matriculation diploma examination (seventeen to eighteen years) the examining body is similarly composed, except that the Education Representative in an Autonomous Republic will be from the ministry itself, the teacher is the subject teacher, and the two assistants are those taking the same subject or related subjects in senior forms. In this examination each member of the examining body must have graduated from a university. Should any teacher not be so qualified he or she must be replaced by one with a university education from another school. In

the case of the Head not having such an education, he or she is replaced by a member of the education authority.

There is a very careful approach to examination. Every effort is made to create a calm yet responsible atmosphere. For oral examinations the class is divided into two, and those not being examined are encouraged to spend the time in music, games or other such activities. My own experience of some of these examinations was impressive. At a physics examination a seventeen-year-old had put up his apparatus on the desk and then proceeded to solve the problem theoretically on the black-board. He worked easily, with confidence. When he had finished, the examiner asked, "Can you solve this problem in another way?" whereupon after a moment's thought he proceeded to do so. The boy was followed by a girl who was obviously nervous. At once the atmosphere among the examiners changed. One could feel it relaxing and becoming warmer. In a gentle, encouraging voice the examiner put his question. Now and then, when the girl hesitated, he helped by a word. Such help is permitted but it is taken into consideration in marking when it is anything more than a slight jog to memory or encouragement to the nervous.

The Scientific Research Institute for Schools carried out a serious piece of research in 1939 on university entrance examinations which in fact are a test of the work in the last three years of the Senior Secondary School. Many of the instructions since issued on the technique of examinations are based on the results of this research. Much of this dealt with oral examinations which play so large a part. The report noted the importance of establishing a friendly atmosphere between examiner and examinee, the importance of the phrasing of a question, of the tone of voice used, and the importance of revision skilfully planned. It was an exceedingly critical report almost brutally frank in its strictures.

Since that was published in 1940, the improvement has been considerable, but observation of examinations and the collection of material on the subject continues. Soviet educationists consider both tests and examinations educa-

tionally important and, in fact, necessary. They are therefore concerned to discover the essential conditions for making examinations a genuine test of progress.

Marking is on a numerical scale today, the marks ranging from one to five, three being a pass. Those who pass the second transfer examination from Class VII receive a certificate which entitles them to proceed to the next educational stage, now into Class VIII.

Pupils who matriculate from Class X with five marks in each of the subjects examined, and receive five from the subject teacher for the other subjects and for conduct are awarded a gold medal; those who gain five for each subject in the examination and four in the others are awarded a silver medal. Gold medallists are exempt from entrance examinations for the university. Silver medallists have to take the examination and on passing are given priority over other applicants. Both receive free university education and scholarships in addition.

Soviet educationists are much concerned to find a system of marking and methods of assessing attainment which shall be uniform and shall not be liable to the vagaries and prejudices of the examiner. Research and experiment have been carried on and Soviet educationists believe they are on the way to solving the problem.

While examinations are held to be necessary as a means of testing the pupil's fitness for passing on to the next class or the next stage, it is repeatedly emphasised that both the Head and the teacher must be fully cognisant of the regular progress of the pupils so as to discover in good time where extra help is needed. Examinations in no way relieve the teacher of the responsibility for the day-to-day knowledge of the pupils' progress or lack of it. Great emphasis is laid on the teacher's record of the pupils' work and behaviour throughout the year.

As we have seen, no form of intelligence testing is used, either for transfer or for selection for different types of education. The knowledge of the child essential to complement the examination has to be supplied by the subject teacher and responsible class teacher together.

Here are some specimen examination cards of questions set for the matriculation examination:

Literature

- Card No. 6—(1) The significance of Chekhov's works.
(2) Griboyedov's comedy *Woe from Wit*, a description of three characters.
(3) A passage for grammatical analysis.
- Card No. 24—(1) Shakespeare's *Hamlet* — Hamlet's character.
(2) The terms epic, lyric, drama.
(3) A sentence for analysis.
- Card No. 25—(1) Goethe's *Faust*. The philosophy and its expression in the person of Faust.
(2) Griboyedov's Comedy *Woe from Wit*. The character of Chatsky. The significance of the comedy.
(3) A sentence for grammatical analysis.

Chemistry

- Card No. 1—(1) The chemical element as considered from atomic-molecular and electronic theory. Oxygen as an element and its allotropic transformation.
(2) Cellulose—Nitrocellulose—Artificial Silk.
(3) Problems.
- Card No. 9—(1) Phosphorus and its compounds.
(2) The theory of the structure of organic compounds.
(3) Problems.
- Card No. 15—(1) The structure of the atom: the atomic nucleus and its charge: the number of electrons.
Valence.
(2) Fluids and their transformation.
(3) Problems.

CHAPTER FOUR

Pre-School

BIRTH TO THREE-FOUR YEARS

THIS AGE GROUP is under the care of the Ministry of Health, but since education is as important as health at this stage, and since the establishments catering for this group are in the best sense of the word educational, it is proper for us to consider it here.

The feature that strikes one in pre-school provision is the conscious and scientific recognition of the physiological basis of growth and the consequent constant medical guidance received by all workers in the nursery and kindergarten. In the latter the educational and psychological approach and the equipment provided are very similar to those found in the best institutions in England, and some of the techniques in the kindergarten stage are reminiscent of nursery school procedure in England.

Repeated decrees by the Council of People's Commissars, now the Council of Ministers, have established the responsibility of the factory, enterprise, administrative organisation, collective farm, etc., for the provision of nursery (crèche) accommodation for the children of their workers. The war made this provision more urgent. Nearly all Soviet women worked outside their home in one capacity or another; measures, therefore, had to be taken to ensure the well-being of the children. The care of the child in the absence of the mother at work is the primary reason for the existence of nurseries. The other reason is a psychological-educational one, which still requires much discussion and research. Suffice it to say that for many years to come,

if not permanently, a nursery or crèche will offer facilities and conditions for physical, emotional, mental and moral development, which, by its very nature, a home cannot offer to the same degree. That does not mean that a country can afford to ignore the home in the upbringing of the child under three, or, indeed, at any age. But until such time as every potential mother has been trained in the art of bringing up children, and every home provides the necessary facilities, and until such time as economic necessity whether individual or national no longer demands that women work when the child is very young, children's nurseries are an essential service, one might say a service of great urgency. When all the desirable conditions obtain it may still be found that a nursery for some hours a day is a powerful educative force.

It is open to any body of people to set up a nursery. Thus, it is not uncommon for the housing committee of a block of flats to run a nursery for its tenants. New blocks often have provision for the special accommodation required. The nurseries are financed by the factory or other body out of their funds, though ultimately financial responsibility rests with the Ministry to which the factory belongs. Parents pay for the food, the amount varying with income and number of children. Families of four children or more pay nothing.

In the rural districts up to 1941 it was usual to have seasonal nurseries, either stationary or travelling, which took charge of the children during the summer months, when the mother was working in the fields. In the winter, the child would be at home with its mother. Since the war, and because of the war, a far greater number of women are working in the collective farm all the year round. To free these women from anxiety for their children during their daily absence from home, and to give these country babies the same care and attention as town babies receive, the number of permanent places in rural nurseries was increased in 1945 (by a decree in November 1944) to three hundred and eighty-six thousand. The cost of rural nurseries is borne by the collective farm.

Nurseries in urban areas have on an average, forty-six

children although there are some with as many as ninety. A very large industrial enterprise may have as many as four nurseries. All are located as near as possible to the place of work consistent with health, for the convenience of nursing mothers.

The staff varies, but for an average nursery it will consist of a Head, who is specially trained, a doctor, one or two medical nurses, a nursery nurse in charge of each group, and one or two nursery teachers for the educational work. In addition, there is the domestic staff, bursar, cook and maids, and often a handyman.

The nurseries are open for as long as the mothers work. There are nurseries which keep the children until quite late in cases where the mother works in the day and studies in the evening. There are also weekly residential nurseries for mothers who are on night-shifts, a particular war-time measure. The domestic staff is on duty eight hours a day, teachers six hours a day. Medical inspection by the nurse of throat, skin and temperature in a special reception cubicle takes place every morning.

Accommodation varies, from the indifferent to the very lavish. It depends almost entirely on local interest and initiative. Every age group (the maximum number in a group is fifteen but it rarely reaches this) has its own room, and frequently its own special veranda for mid-day sleep.

The equipment is designed to train the senses and the physique and particularly a sense of beauty and rhythm. There are special educational toys as well as the usual children's toys. The furniture is generally exceedingly well made, and such things as chests of drawers are designed so that the two-year-old may open and shut them easily.

Habit training begins at a very early age, at about eighteen months. By the early use of toys which one child cannot handle alone (e.g., large light building units) good-neighbourliness is encouraged. From four months onwards physical exercises for the children, designed and graded by the doctor, are carried out by nurses in order to aid growth and strengthen physique, the premise being that nature can be aided at a very early stage.

Soviet experience has proved the great advantage of the nursery for the child. A better physique is developed, there is less liability to illness and the children become more receptive and responsive to the well graded environment. They face their world with greater confidence. It is impossible to tell at present what will be the ultimate fate of the nursery. Like all mothers Soviet mothers like having their children at home, and a great many do, since so many families have a grandmother or elderly aunt who looks after the children when the mother is at work. It is possible, when the country's economy has been raised to such a level that women workers can well be spared while their children are very young, the small child will not go to the nursery until it is one or two years old and then only for a few hours a day.

As is the case in all educational establishments, there are regular staff meetings attended also by the domestic staff, by which means a common approach to the child is ensured on the part of all those who come into contact with him. The nurseries are, in addition, centres of parent training. Consultations with parents, either individually or in groups, are a regular feature of these places.

Continuity in the child's life is obtained in a very happy way. Those children who are ready to pass from the nursery into the kindergarten take their teachers with them into the new environment for two or three days or even for a week. And quite often the kindergarten teacher proper will have met her future charges in their homes before the term begins.

THE KINDERGARTEN

Like the nurseries, kindergartens have to be provided by the industrial, economic, administrative or agricultural organisations where the mother works. Elsewhere the Ministry of Education bears the responsibility. The building and equipment are provided by these bodies. Here, too, parents make some financial contribution to the cost of maintenance. The family income is divided by the total

number of members of the family and the maximum fee, rarely required, is equal to forty per cent of the average sum for one person. At most it is 10 to 11 per cent of the cost per child to the kindergarten. Families with more than four children, unmarried mothers, and those in receipt of disablement pensions or war invalids are all exempt from any payment.

The teachers and the Head are appointed by the local education authority. While health plays an important part here too, the kindergartens are definitely places of education. At this stage, preparation for living is more important than formal instruction.

With a natural wisdom which understands that the best provision must be made in the early formative years, the accommodation here too is generous. A typically good kindergarten will have a play-class-room for each group, open-air verandas for the mid-day sleep, one or two dining-rooms, a hall and any special room the Head may plan, in addition to domestic offices, cloak-rooms, etc. For the junior groups there is equipment for training of the motor senses, and educational apparatus of a great variety. Decoration, to which local talent often contributes, is attractive. In a well designed nursery infant school there will be beautiful rugs on the floor for the children, gaily painted furniture, and soft pastel shades on the walls and ceiling. A love of nature is inculcated early, and an aquarium and herbarium and often a hedgehog or guinea pig as well, make up the nature corner of the room. In recent years gardens have been introduced as part of the playground facilities. Normally, all the staff in a kindergarten is qualified. During the war and for some time after, teachers with short term training were accepted. Owing to the war too, many kindergartens were for a time cramped for space.

The staff, in addition to the Head, includes one teacher for every twenty-five children—that is the staff ratio minimum in a class for infants—a doctor and a nurse, and, where conditions permit, a special teacher for music and eurhythmics. There is also the usual domestic staff of bursar, cook and maids.

Both in nurseries and kindergartens the daily régime and the diet are planned in consultation with the doctor, whose decision is final. Doctors for children are specially trained in institutes or departments of pediatrics (child medicine), in a course which includes child psychology. The Central Institute of Pediatrics has a department for Education and Child Development. It is from here that most of the guidance in the organisation of nurseries and kindergartens emanates. It is a successful method of co-operation between health and education. The daily pattern of kindergarten life consists of alternating periods of work, rest and free play. The length of time for organised group activity conducted by the group teacher, for out-of-door activity and for sleep is, as stated before, fixed by the doctor.

The arts, music and dancing particularly, play an important part. Much attention is paid to speech development and enrichment of vocabulary. Here children's authors and poets help by visiting the kindergartens and telling their stories or reciting their poems. Russian authors and poets appear to have considerable gifts of declamation. Some part of the out-of-door activity is deliberately planned by the teacher for the acquisition of new impressions and experience. On return the teacher will arrange for small groups of four or five children to describe and discuss the impressions received.

The large rooms and adequate equipment allow for the grouping of children into very small units so that it is possible to give them almost individual attention. While one group is thus engaged with the teacher others will be engaged in free play in different parts of the room. Formal education, that is direct teaching of the three R's, now begins at seven years. The play material, however, offers scope for the first efforts in reading, writing and numbers.

In the kindergarten as in the nursery, there is discussion between the teaching and the domestic staff on the training of children to ensure a common approach. Character and habit training receive continuous attention in the kindergarten in the Soviet Union as elsewhere. Independ-

ence is encouraged by all methods which make a child able to do things for himself and desirous of doing so. Responsibility, in harmony with their stage of development, is given early. One may see three- and four-year-olds gravely discharging such momentous duties as waiting at table, acting as monitors for cloakrooms and for nature corners, and so on.

By the aid of well planned activities and special toys, children are trained to live co-operatively as well as individually. Soviet educationists consider it essential that an atmosphere of affection shall pervade both crèche and kindergarten. For many hours of the day the teacher has to replace the mother. She must give the child the same feeling of individuality as he would have in his home with his mother. Many behaviour problems arise in the kindergarten, particularly in the first year of attendance. Only by a patient, affectionate, individual approach will the teacher find a solution to the problem. The knowledge of home conditions and often of child-parent relationships which the kindergarten teacher is expected to have, aids considerably in dealing with these youngsters.

In 1943 the Department of Pre-School Education of the then Commissariat of Education issued what in England would be called suggestions to kindergarten teachers—the literal translation is "Methods Letter." "It is desirable," it says, "to arrange for the admission of new children to be gradual—over a period of three to five days. In this way it will be possible for the teacher to give each child individual attention. . . . The new child should meet with an affectionate warm reception, should feel at once that he was being expected, and that the kindergarten is a happy, interesting place." Further it says, "It is essential that the child shall feel the joy of play, activity and outdoor games in common." Separating children off into little islands, each with his toys, in order to avoid trouble is not to teach children to be neighbourly. "The small child who is used to being addressed individually when at home does not always understand when he is addressed collectively in a group. Therefore it is necessary now and then to address a child

individually, after the group has been given a collective order. . . . Individual child play and an individual relation of teacher and child must play a leading role in the life of the youngest children."

At regular education staff meetings, problems of the kindergarten in general and of individual children are discussed. In some of the kindergartens research is carried out on methods of dealing with difficult children. Results are immediately available to the whole body of kindergarten teachers.

The kindergartens too, are centres of parental education, which is a further help in dealing with behaviour problems. Like the crèches they are open for the convenience of mothers, so that the length of the day varies with the mothers' hours of work. Where the need arises, weekly residential groups are arranged. The teachers work six-hour shifts.

By the end of 1943 there were thirty thousand kindergartens accommodating over one million three hundred and forty thousand children. The Germans destroyed a great many. They have all been rebuilt and many new ones added. It will interest readers to know that in the early years after the Revolution, great initiative for the setting up of kindergartens came from the people themselves, chiefly from the women. In village after village there were instances of a woman taking the initiative, obtaining the help of the collective farm, and starting a kindergarten often in her own cottage, often herself being the first teacher. Some of the best originated in this way. In factories again the initiative was taken by the women workers. Here ready help was found from the trade unions who then enlisted the help of the management. Much equipment was made by the factory workers and peasants.

In addition to permanent kindergartens there are the summer open-air kindergartens which serve over two million children, found particularly on farms.

City kindergartens, like city nurseries for the toddlers, move into the country for the three hottest months of the summer—June, July and August—where most of the time

is spent in the open air and the opportunity is taken to introduce these city children to nature. In 1954 in the RSFSR alone there were 25,000 kindergartens with roughly one million children.

THE KINDERGARTEN TEACHER

There are special training schools for the kindergarten teacher. In 1945 a revised curriculum and new syllabuses were issued for the schools training teachers for pre-school institutions. The curriculum for the three-year course includes pedagogics (education), the history of education, psychology, hygiene, children's literature, methods of speech development (with practice in reading and story telling), methods for nature study, art, modelling and other work with materials, music, singing and rhythemics (with methods), games (physical), physical exercises, school practice.

Pedagogy begins in the second half of the first year and is continued to the end of the course. In that period students are expected "to acquire a detailed knowledge of the content and methods of pre-school education¹ and to learn how to apply their knowledge in practice."

"From the very beginning pedagogy must be linked up with practice in the nursery-infant school. In studying general methods and practice of pre-school education the students must learn how to apply them in individual cases according to conditions as they exist in practice."²

The course for pedagogy is divided into sixteen themes, each with its allotted number of hours, totalling one hundred and seventy-two.

A comparison of the time allotted to the different themes brings out the importance of play—twenty-eight hours, and the importance of bringing the family and the kindergarten together—twelve hours. The history of edu-

¹ Here used in the sense of upbringing and instruction.

² Programi Doshkolnikh Pedagogichiskikh Ouchdisch — Ouchpedgiz, 1946.

cation begins with upbringing and instruction in slave society and in the Middle Ages and as it develops it takes in all the world's educationists, including Comenius, John Locke, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Fourier, Robert Owen, and finally covers present-day Soviet theory and practice in kindergarten and school. Montessori has four hours given up to her out of a very concentrated course of ninety-nine hours.

Psychology is given fifty-four hours and has as its tasks "to give students a knowledge of the basic facts of general psychology, to create the necessary psychological background for the study of general pedagogy, the theory of pre-school education and methods; to provide the future kindergarten teacher with a knowledge and comprehension of the most important facts in the field of psychology of the pre-school age and of educational psychology.

"It is essential to avoid abstract theorising and dry exposition of material and generalisations behind which the student finds no definite content. Psychology must give the future teacher an understanding of human life, and with it the valuable practical knowledge relating to the psychology of the pre-school child."

Art and handwork is taken throughout the three years and has two hundred and eighty-two hours allocated to it of which fifty hours are given to theory and the rest to practice. Theory includes study of Russian and foreign artists. Practice include drawing, modelling, appliqué work, making toys and educational aids from the varied materials locally available, also shadow theatre and puppetry, sewing and embroidery, painting and sculpture.

Music, taken over the whole course, has an allocation of two hundred and seventy-nine hours. It includes choral work, rhythemics, a knowledge of the work of composers, music reading, methods of music training in the kindergarten and playing a musical instrument (piano or national instrument). Every student receives at least one twenty-minute music lesson a week, and must practice at least thirty minutes daily. To supplement the teaching of music, instrumental, vocal and dance circles are organised which

provide lecture-concerts, musical evenings, and evenings for students' amateur performances. An essential part of the training is the class visit to the opera and concerts, and class listening to musical programmes on the radio.

Space does not permit a detailed description of all the subjects taken in the course. Only those considered of particular interest have been touched on.

The tasks of school practice are "to deepen and strengthen the theoretical knowledge, to train the student in observation and analysis of the work with children; to prepare the student for her work, to strengthen the student's love for children and respect for the teaching profession."³

School practice takes place in the second half of the first year and is continued throughout the course. It consists of observation—throughout the course—trial lessons, one day's practice, and three weeks' uninterrupted teaching practice.

THE SYLLABUS FOR THE PEDAGOGY COURSE

What Pedagogy Teaches	2	hours.
Purpose and Tasks of Communist Education	4	"
The USSR System of Education	2	"
Pre-School Education, its development and significance	3	"
Education in the Creche	3	"
Tasks, Content and Principles of Pre-school Education	10	"
The Kindergarten Teacher	4	"
Physical Training	6	"
Play	28	"
Occupations in the Kindergarten	6	"
Training for Friendliness in the Kindergarten	3	"
Training a Sense of Order	6	"
Character Training	4	"
Training Habits of Work	4	"
Nature and Surroundings Study	6	"
Native Language	4	"
Development of Primary Mathematical Concepts	10	"
Aesthetic Training	4	"
Festivals and Entertainments	5	"

³ Ibid.

Planning and Records	12	"
The Kindergarten and the Family	12	"
The Organisation and Administration of the Kindergarten	12	"
Basic Principles and Content of Work in the Primary School	8	"
The Kindergarten and the School	4	"
Pre-examination Revision	6	"

The introduction of the universal Ten-Year School will affect the course. Like the Teacher Schools for training primary school teachers these training schools will become two-year training colleges for nursery kindergarten. Since the secondary education level will henceforth be reached in school, the colleges will concentrate on the professional training. Thus the pedagogy course is not likely to be changed much.

CHAPTER FIVE

General Education

BUILDINGS

THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS are exceedingly varied. They range from the large one-room village school of pre-Revolution days to the very fine three-storeyed modern buildings with a look of great dignity and purpose. Because the problem of accommodation has been urgent ever since the Revolution, building could never keep pace with demand, and time and labour were economised on finish and details. A country school of the smallest type—one class-room—is generally spacious, fresh, clean and attractive, if not yet always well equipped. The school may even be a tent as is the case with the still existing nomads who move with their flocks in the spring, but it will be hygienic and as attractive as conditions permit.

In the period when a great drive was made to have universal junior secondary education and a sufficient supply of Senior Secondary Schools in all cities, rural centres, and industrial settlements, schools were built without assembly halls, a condition which was tolerated but not welcomed by the staffs. Normally schools will have, in addition to classrooms, cloak-rooms and offices and in the case of the secondary schools, an assembly hall and a dining-room for each educational stage. In the secondary schools there is always a spacious well-filled library which may number several thousands of volumes. In the poorest primary school the library may consist only of a number of shelves. On each floor of the Seven- and Ten-Year School it is custo-

mary to have wide corridors which are used in inclement weather for recreation during breaks. They are also used as exhibition space by history, geography or other teachers. There is a room for the Head and one for the staff, and often an additional room with education material either made by the staff, or newly acquired by the school. Here, discussions in methods are held by the staff. Quite often there is a specially equipped room for films. Excellently equipped laboratories for the sciences are found in all modern—and in many old—buildings. Gymnasiums have been increasing in number. Subject rooms are appearing in some schools but there are no special art rooms or music rooms in the general school. All schools are equipped for wireless. A Pioneers' room, that is, a large club room that serves as the **head-quarters** of the school Pioneer organisation, is to be found in every secondary school.

Repairs and redecorations are carried out yearly before the new autumn term begins. During and soon after the war, owing to the acute shortage of labour, this was in a larger measure carried out by parents. Russians consider it shocking to allow children to return to a dirty school. Peeling paint would certainly arouse the wrath of someone concerned with the school. They are very fond of putting up curtains to the class-room windows and when flowers are out of season there are always plants. The curtains are quite often made and embroidered or stencilled by the mothers. More and more schools are once again having workshops for woodwork, metalwork, cobbling and similar manual activities. With the re-introduction of polytechnisation work-rooms and workshops will be an essential part of all schools. School playgrounds are being enlarged and, wherever possible, plots of ground are provided for nature work. Rural schools must by decree have a considerable plot of land for practical work.

The small school, which may have only thirty children, or even less, is a serious problem in the Soviet Union. One solution adopted is the boarding school, but this is not liked for children under ten. Another solution is the fusion of two small schools with the provision of transport where

necessary. Thus in 1952-53, 2,092 small schools were fused. Speaking on the financial allocation to education in this year's budget (1955), at the 2nd Session of the Supreme Soviet, Zverev, the Minister of Finance, stated that he was against the compulsory fusion of small schools. "Experience shows that the majority of small schools must not be shut. There must be an individual approach to each case. In Daghestan, for example, a southern Autonomous Republic the schools are one and a half to two miles apart, yet they must not be joined up, because they are separated by mountains and ravines. To join these schools is to keep the children illiterate. There are similar conditions in parts of Siberia and elsewhere." It appears quite a simple matter in the Soviet Union. If it is necessary to have a school to ensure education, then a school must be provided whatever it costs and whatever the difficulties.

THE STAFF

There are rural schools—comparatively few today—still so small that one teacher takes all the four classes of the primary stage. This applies to all those schools where the numbers are under thirty. The teacher works six hours a day instead of the normal four hours, and is paid accordingly. The instructions dealing with staffing state: "the best teachers must be selected for such schools." There are more rural schools which are staffed by two teachers, one of whom has responsibility for the school. In these schools one teacher takes Classes I and III and the other II and IV, going up with them, so that the following year the order is reversed. Next in size are the rural schools with four teachers, but with numbers not sufficient to warrant a Head. In such cases one of the staff is given a Head's responsibility for which too there is additional pay. The full-complement primary school has a Head and four teachers. In the Junior and Senior Secondary Schools in addition to the Head and subject teachers, there is an instruction supervisor who teaches part of the time. The really important

work of this member of the staff is concerned with raising the standard of teaching and of work by the children. Often the instruction supervisor will carry on experiments within the school in the teaching of some subject. During the shortage of specialised teachers some of these supervisors may be attached to two or more schools for their particular subject. The secondary schools have, in addition to the teaching staff, a secretary, book-keeper, cook and other kitchen staff, and a business manager concerned with the economics of school administration. There are at present forty pupils in a class and this obtains throughout the whole of the secondary school, with the exception of Class X where thirty-five is the maximum number. In this class there may be twenty-five in the smaller secondary schools. It is agreed that forty is not an ideal number but it is considered preferable to have forty than to deny children secondary education. The first education decrees after the Soviets came to power laid down twenty-five as the maximum number for any class. That could only have been put into practice at the cost of considerable delay in achieving universal compulsory education up to fifteen years, and was therefore waived for the time being. There is every expectation that in future it may be reached.

There is a School Staff Committee (School Pedagogic Council) which covers all the staff and meets regularly. This is the body whose approval must be obtained before a recommendation for temporary exclusion from school can be put before the local education authority. It likewise makes recommendations for awards to pupils and awards and state recognition for good services to members of its staff. In addition to the School Pedagogic Council covering everybody there are subject committees consisting of teachers of the same or related subjects.

REGIME

The school has a six-day week and the number of hours worked per day by pupils increases with the educational

stages, the primary having the lowest, the senior the highest (see below). The Head always does some teaching for which payment is made on the appropriate scale.

During the war particularly, teachers had and some times still continue to have many responsibilities outside the class-room. These are voluntary, but may be paid. Marking books in the three senior forms receives extra payment. Many extraneous duties have been taken over by the parents' council, freeing the staff for its proper task. Some of these are described in the chapter "Home and School."

It is true to say that in school time teachers have no non-academic duties to perform. After school it is a matter of choice.

School feeding became universal during the war. This is normally a hot lunch—comparable to English school dinners—taken about noon or earlier. It is customary for Soviet children to have dinner at home after school, any time from three to five p.m. During the war, and today with mothers absent, many schools are providing dinner as well as lunch. For other children many cities have organised special children's restaurants. School meals are paid for by the parents, except in needy cases or where there are very large families. During the war the children of serving men or women received free meals, and since the war children of men fallen in the war or disabled continue to do so. Most city schools have a buffet where buns, milk, sweets or fruit may be bought in the mid-morning break.

All schools have circles for leisure activities which are closely linked up with class work. These may or may not be taken by the teachers; their services are sometimes recognised by payment, but there is no general ruling.

School begins at eight-thirty or nine a.m., according to district arrangements, and finishes at twelve-thirty or one p.m. for primary pupils, and at two or two-thirty p.m. for the rest. In 1944 physical exercises for fifteen minutes before school became compulsory for Junior and Senior Secondary Schools, except in particularly cold or stormy weather. Physical training leaders (pupils) who take the

exercises under the supervision of the physical training instructor and with the class teacher present, were asked to keep a register of attendance, and they and the class teachers made every effort to see that all children are present at least twenty minutes before school begins to allow for these exercises.

Morning assembly is not yet regularly practised in Soviet schools, though I have met it in some places, nor is there a general assembly before school is dismissed. Holidays follow the general continental European pattern for the pupils. In addition to the summer vacation there are two short holiday periods of two weeks each, in the spring and winter, which includes the New Year period. The summer holidays are three months—June, July and August—for kindergartens and Primary and Junior Secondary Schools, and for all except the Tenth Class in the Senior Secondary School for whom the matriculation diploma examination covers a period from May 20th to June 25th. Classes IV to IX now have exams beginning on June 1st.

The school, of whatever stage, is generally linked by a system of adoption with some organisation outside. Every school has a patron which in industrial areas is generally a factory or trade union, in rural areas a collective farm, state farm or machine and tractor station. It may also be a theatre, a scientific association or army unit. In its turn the school becomes a patron of a factory, a ship, a children's home and so on. As a patron, the school may arrange for the lunch-hour entertainments, provide talks, give readings and help the factory with publicity for industrial campaigns. It may look after children of the factory workers who need help. During the war the school child played a great part in whiling away the tedium in hospitals.

THE PRIMARY SCHOOL (SEVEN TO ELEVEN YEARS)

Because pre-school education is not compulsory it happens that very many seven-year-olds arrive at school ignorant of the three R's. This applies in the main to remote and sparsely populated places. Elsewhere, even if

the child is at home, efforts are made by the parents to provide the rudiments of at least reading and writing.

It is the general custom to celebrate the day before school begins as a school festival during which children receive gifts. On the first day the new pupils are treated as guests. They are conducted round the school, introduced to the classes, are shown experiments in the laboratories and altogether are made to feel that school has exciting possibilities.

In the primary school a teacher takes all the subjects and goes up with the class. The curriculum includes Russian language (which covers reading and writing as well as elementary grammar), arithmetic, physical education, art, music for Classes I to III. In Class IV, history, geography and nature study are added. In Classes I to III there are four lessons a day of 45 minutes each, which allowing for breaks make a 24 hour week. Class IV has 26 lessons a week. There is a five to ten minutes break between lessons and a 20 minutes break in the middle of the morning. Class V onwards has 32 lessons a week.

Soviet children do not escape homework. It begins with Class I where children are expected to give one to one and a half hours a day. The time increases as the pupil goes up in the school until in Class X, as in an Upper Sixth in England, it may take three hours or more. Just before the war, in response to complaints that too much was demanded from boys and girls, the practice of homework was being discussed and there were indications that the time would be reduced. This has in fact been done already in a number of schools. The time-tables were reorganised in the 1944-45 school year. As stated previously nature study, history and geography are no longer taken as subjects in the first three classes, they are covered by reading which comes under Russian or other native language. This subject is by far the most important in the primary stage for it is held that the ability to express oneself both on paper and orally is an essential for serious work in the future in any field—economic, industrial, political, scientific or artistic.

The 1954-55 reorganisation is dealt with later.

Next in importance to language at this stage comes arithmetic. In 1946 a foreign language was introduced for Class III and was expected to become universal in all schools. Except as an experiment in a selected number of schools until that date foreign languages began only in Class V. They still do so in the majority of schools.

In Russian or other native language, great importance is attached to enlarging the vocabulary. This is linked with spelling and reading, and the elementary grammar arising out of the use of phrases. The following is an example of the syllabus in Class I (seven-year-olds) in this subject. By the end of the year (at eight years) pupils are expected to have learnt to write, to know when to use full stops and capitals, to be able to divide words into syllables, to know the use of three particularly difficult vowels and of the soft sign at the end or in the middle of a word (all difficult matters in the Russian language), and to be conversant with other difficult word combinations. Finally, they must be able to complete a sentence, to form sentences and write or say short connected passages as answers to questions. They must spell correctly within the limits of their acquired knowledge. Throughout the whole four-year course grammar in accordance with an established syllabus is taught but not as a separate subject—it arises logically and naturally out of the learning of the language.

The time given to physical training, art and music appears very little for the primary stage age group. One should however bear in mind the very considerable additional time spent on these subjects in out-of-school establishments and school clubs during term and particularly during the holidays.

At the end of the fourth year comes the transfer examination for the next stage, the first serious examination to be taken.

THE MIDDLE STAGE—JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL

This stage consists of three classes—V, VI and VII—all with specialist teachers. Russian or native language, in-

cluding literature, still plays the predominant role in the time-table, and a European foreign language receives more attention. Additional subjects in the curriculum are algebra, geometry and trigonometry. Constitution of the USSR (taken in one year only), physics, chemistry and draughtsmanship (design) which later replaces art in Class VI. After the 1946 decree which abolished military training, physical training had less time and a foreign language or Russian had more.

It should be noted that all children take all the subjects in the curriculum and they are all expected to complete the same syllabus. Grading is according to age. The teacher is expected to find ways and means of helping the backward to reach the pass standard. Individual help is given where necessary both by the teacher and by bright pupils. There is provision for taking the transfer examination again in August in case of failure. Where the failure is serious the pupil remains a second year, while provision is made for the very bright pupils to go on further. In exceptional cases such as that of a boy or girl showing brilliant mathematical or other gifts, a professor of the subject may be called in and special provision made.

The conclusion of Class VII will by 1960 be another transfer stage for all the pupils. In the meantime many will temporarily finish general education at fourteen plus. Selection for future careers will continue to take place at this stage until 1960. Every profession, every trade requires a period of training in some educational establishment or other. The transfer or passing out examination is taken by all pupils in Class VII. Unless they can successfully take the examination again in August, those who fail must stay another year. For those who pass, the stream along which they go depends on the pupil's wishes, on his interests and special aptitudes, on the local environment, to a certain measure on the immediate needs of the country and on many other less tangible factors.

There is discussion with the class teacher about the choice of a career. Old pupils return to the school and describe their work and answer the questions put to them

by the pupils. Representatives from different educational establishments are invited to talk to the pupils.

In July and August walls are placarded with advertisements such as "The Clothing Technicum will be accepting students on ..." In buses and trains and in the press the pupils read advertisements from the different establishments. These they will discuss with parents and teachers. Universities and particularly single-faculty institutes of the different ministries advertise in the same way. A practice followed by many institutes is to have an Open Day for leavers when possible students make acquaintance with the different kinds of institutes and meet some of the staff.

Whatever work a boy or girl finally takes up, he or she may pursue further education, and later, while at work, may specialise through the evening courses, or through them train for entirely different work or for a new profession.

THE SENIOR STAGE—SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL (FOURTEEN TO SEVENTEEN OR EIGHTEEN YEARS)

Until there are enough Ten-Year Schools for everybody (1960) the pupils in this stage will be the more intellectually gifted and those most interested in academic pursuits who wish later to specialise in some branch of learning. There is no specialisation in the school itself. All pupils attending the same class take the same subjects irrespective of their future speciality. They all do geography in Classes VIII and IX, all do physics and chemistry, all do a foreign language. For these pupils specialisation begins in the university or institute.

The teachers who are not graduates (internal or external) of Institutes of Education are expected to work to achieve this qualification.

The curriculum differs somewhat from the previous stage. Russian (language and literature), is added to history of literature, which now includes world literature. Arithmetic and art were already dropped in Class VI of the middle stage. General science and geography are dropped in Class X. The remaining subjects for the last year for all

pupils are mathematics, history, physics, chemistry, a foreign language, literature, physical training, draughtsmanship and astronomy. In girls' schools, housecraft and elementary child psychology are taken. Logic was introduced in 1948.

A decree of March 15, 1947, introduced shorthand in fifty schools of the RSFSR to begin with Class VIII. Another decree in August of the same year introduced Latin first in a selected number of Senior Secondary Schools, starting in September 1948. They are four schools in Moscow, two in Leningrad, three in Saratov, Sverdlovsk and Kazan. The curriculum like everything else is subject to change and as may be seen is generally introduced gradually. The length of the school day does not increase therefore there are time-table adjustments.

The annual apportionment of time in the senior stage allows for new developments.

In a number of girls' schools in cities a new class, Class XI, was organised in 1947 for the training of teachers for kindergartens and primary schools. This, a temporary measure, was one of the many ways used for solving the problem of the shortage of teachers.

In rural Junior and Senior Secondary Schools, in addition to the ordinary time-table, by the decree of 1942, two hours a week must be devoted to agricultural education (not to be confused with training for agriculture). The purpose of the course as stated in the decree is (a) "to provide the pupils with the elements of agricultural knowledge and the skills essential for intelligent and satisfactory work on a farm; (b) to strengthen and extend the knowledge of the elements of science given in school; (c) to inculcate an interest in and love for agricultural life and work." The syllabus covers plant cultivation, the care of farm animals, and the practical use of agricultural machinery. This course is in fact an extension and practical application of the chemistry, natural science, physics and mathematics which have their place within the ordinary time-table and it serves as the preparation for the training for a farm life.

The pupils do practical work on the school plot which

varies in size from half an acre to five acres. These plots often play the additional role of experimental stations for improvement of strains and the introduction of new cultures on the surrounding collective farms. These mutually beneficial activities help to bind the school and the rural community closely together. Regional study in rural areas is the basis for geography, history and much else, and acts as a stimulus to learning in all subjects.

There are rural schools like the Atmis Junior Secondary School in the Penza Region, where regional study has resulted in the creation of a regional museum with sections for minerals, plants, insects, soil and local folk-lore and historical documents. It became so famous that it has now been declared a State Regional Museum to be maintained by the government. In addition to the museum, the Atmis School set up a meteorology station which grew out of their studies of the weather. This has now become part of the meteorological service of the USSR Academy of Science. Not all rural schools are as fortunate as the Atmis in their Head, but the drive to make rural education vigorous, alive to local needs, and an inspiration to local life continues with increasing momentum.

At the end of Class X all those who have received not less than three out of five marks for all subjects in the year's work and five for conduct have the right to sit for the matriculation diploma. The compulsory subjects for this examination are Russian grammar, Russian literature, mathematics, physics, chemistry, history—which includes history of the USSR and modern (world) history—and a foreign language. In Russian grammar, literature and mathematics, the examination is both oral and written. In the remaining subjects the examination is oral only. (This explains why the examination requires so much time.)

The introduction of new subjects is likely to crowd the time-table and make too heavy demands on boys and girls. Indeed there have been complaints from teachers and some parents that the syllabuses which schools have to cover are overloaded and that older boys and girls have to work far too many hours a day and have no time for leisure pursuits.

In response to the agitation, measures are being taken. Already syllabuses have been simplified and cut. Now it is planned, as soon as conditions permit it, to extend the school period to eighteen, that is to add another class to the Senior Secondary School. Georgia has already put the plan into operation. The extra year will allow the secondary course to be completed at a more leisurely pace, and give ample time for recreation and avoid cramming.

It seems appropriate here to deal with the changes introduced into Soviet education by the decree of July 1954. I can do no better than give the decrees on curricula and syllabus for primary, Seven-Year and Ten-Year Schools as published in *Uchitelskaya Gazeta* of July 17, 1954, slightly edited.

"In accordance with the directives of the 19th Communist Party Congress on the change-over to full ten-year education and on polytechnisation, the RSFSR Ministry of Education together with the RSFSR Academy of Pedagogical Science, completed the work for the compilation of the new education plan and the new syllabuses for the various grade schools. They took into consideration the necessity of lessening the heavy burden of work to which pupils were subject. The new plan and new syllabuses are to begin in the new school year 1954-55."

THE SCHOOL EDUCATION PLAN FOR 1954-55

I. *The new plan is to be introduced in classes I to IV in 1954-55.*

It is characterised by the following features.

- 1) The total number of hours per week for each class remains as set out in the decree of Sovnarkom and of the C.C. of the Communist Party in 1936 which provided 24 hours for Classes I, II, and III, 26 hours for Class IV and 32 hours for Classes V onward.
- 2) Arising from the decrease in the content of the new syllabus for Russian language, the new plan provides a total of 48 hours per week for the primary

school. For Classes I, II and III it is 13 hours a week and for Class IV, 9 hours a week. Out of the 13 hours for the first three classes one hour a week is given to writing. Class V retains the previous number of hours for Russian, that is 6 per week, while for reading an hour has been cut and it is now 3 a week.

- 3) Experience shows that the seven hours a week allotted to arithmetic in Classes I to V was not worth while since the benefit from two arithmetic lessons in one day is negligible. It has now been reduced to 6 hours a week which is sufficient for the new syllabus.
- 4) Because of the considerable decrease in the syllabuses for USSR history, geography, and nature study in Class IV, two hours per week have been allotted to these subjects. Class V has three hours per week for history as the course in ancient history will be taken in one year instead of one and a half years as previously.
- 5) To achieve preparation for labour the new plan envisages the introduction of handwork for Classes I to IV and practical work on the school experimental plot and in school workshops for Class V; time allotted for this in Classes I to IV is one hour and in Class V, two hours.

Local education authorities and Heads of schools must take all steps to provide their schools in 1954-55 with everything necessary for preparation for work. In those schools where it does not appear possible to provide for any particular aspect of handwork, the consequent free time available can be used as follows:— Class I and II, reading children's literature, nature observation, excursions, etc., Class III and IV on Russian language. For Class V in schools where there is a school plot but not yet any workshop, the free time is to be spent on the plot and in the reverse case the time is to

be spent in the workshop. Only in those cases where there is yet neither school plot nor workshop may Class V spend the time, as one hour on Russian and one hour on arithmetic.

- 6) The time for physical education for Classes I and II is increased from one to two hours a week.

II. *Classes VI to X will work on the existing plan with the following changes.*

- 1) Class VII has a new chemistry syllabus with two hours a week instead of two and a half, the free half hour is given to geography so that this subject now has three hours a week for this class.
- 2) Following the considerable cuts in the syllabuses for psychology and logic and in view of the need for an increase in time for laboratory and practical work in physics and chemistry, Class IX has been allocated three hours a week for physics and one hour for psychology, while Class X has five hours a week for chemistry, four hours for physics and one hour for logic.

THE NEW CURRICULUM FOR 1954-55

This includes all subjects as before for Classes I to IV and for the rest is as follows:—

Russian Language	Class V to VII
Literature Reading	" V
Literature	" VIII to X
Arithmetic	" V
Ancient History	" V to VI
The Middle Ages	" VI to VII
Soviet Constitution	" VII
Physics	" VII to X
Chemistry	" VIII
Astronomy	" X
Psychology	" IX
Logic	" X
Physical Education	" V to X
Art	" V to VI
Drawing	" VII to VIII

In addition to these changes there has been general improvement in the curriculum for modern and Soviet history (Classes VIII to X), economic geography of the USSR and other countries (Classes VII to IX), botany (Classes V to VI), fundamentals of Darwinism (Class IX) and foreign languages (Classes V to X). There are new syllabuses for handwork and practical work of the school experimental plot (Class V).

The introduction of the new syllabuses and the further improvement of existing ones will help towards the improvement of attainment in all classes in all subjects.

The new syllabuses for physics, chemistry, biology, geography and technical drawing are more fundamentally concerned than was previously the case with teaching the application of the scientific laws of the subject to industry and agriculture. Likewise they will help to equip the pupil with practical skills and habits of a polytechnical character.

The introduction this year of handwork in Classes I to IV and practical work on the school plot means that the general school must systematically attack the problem facing them today, the pupils' preparation for work.

The new physical education syllabus makes possible a great improvement in this subject throughout the school. This also applies to art and music which help the pupil's aesthetic education.

New text-books were already available for September 1954 for some classes. Others have had to continue using the old ones. By the end of 1955 the primary school will have new text-books for reading and for grammar for the first three classes, and an arithmetic problems book for Class II. Classes V to X will have new text-books and syllabuses in all the subjects for the different classes.

One result of the new syllabuses will be a lessening of the burden of work with which pupils have had to cope. For example, Russian language in Classes I to IV envisages a considerable decrease in demands in grammar, writing and punctuation. There is a similar decrease in the amount to be taught in Class IV in history, geography and nature study.

Russian in Classes V to VII has been relieved of unnecessary grammar theory. The new syllabuses and text-books contain only that which is necessary for an intelligent learning of spelling. Less reading matter to be mastered has been given in literary readers for Classes V to VII and literature for Classes VII to X. The syllabuses for ancient history and for the Middle Ages have been cut by 20 to 25 per cent. Subject after subject has received its cuts. Many grammar rules have been removed from the primary school syllabus and percentages have been dropped from arithmetic.

A simpler, shorter, elementary information course replaces the former teaching in Soviet history, geography, and nature study for Class IV (ten-year-olds). Reading class lessons, excursions, etc., are the means to be used. For Class I play is to have a greater part in physical education. The art syllabus is to be related to the age of the pupil and singing is to be made easier. Singing from notes is to begin in Class II (8 years) instead of Class I.

Manual work in Class I to IV is to include work with paper, cardboard, cloth, wood, wire, metal, etc., as well as the care of indoor flowers, vegetables, decorative bushes and animals.

CLASSES V TO X

The new syllabuses for Classes V to VII (11 to 14 years) for Russian language are distinguished by greater precision and at the same time by a decrease in content for separate themes. To ensure exactness of knowledge a certain amount of theory has been retained for grammar, punctuation and writing in the text-books for these classes with far more exercises. Class VI will take morphology in part one of the text-book and Class VII will finish the syntax in part two. From the syllabus for Darwinism all disputed, unsettled questions have been removed. The necessity for employing regional study in geography is underlined.

For the 11- to 12-year-olds more physical geography at the expense of economic geography is being given; while

the political and economic structure of countries abroad are to be replaced by the study of the political map of the world.

Soviet constitution has had such themes as "The General Conception of State and Law" cut as too difficult for 14-year-olds. For astronomy in Class X (17-year-olds) spherical astronomy has been removed.

The vocabulary required for English, French and German by the end of the secondary school has been reduced from 3,500 words to 2,500. More thoroughness is demanded now.

In physical education for Classes V to X greater attention is to be paid to sport, while gymnastics and light athletics are to be separate sections. The standard fixed by GTO (ready for labour and defence), is to be the test for successful attainment and is introduced for the first time for gymnastics.

The new syllabus for drawing for Classes VII and VIII cuts out life drawing and technical designing and gives the time to the study of surfaces and space. Compulsory practical work has been somewhat reduced.

In the non-Russian schools teaching in 1954-55 will be carried on according to the accepted plan, used in the previous year, for each Autonomous Republic and Autonomous Region. At the discretion of their Ministers of Education one hour a week is to be given to handwork in Classes I to IV.

The implementation of the decree in the first year showed the need for further discussion and adaptation so that further slight changes will be introduced. They are all designed for one end, to improve the all-round education and to ensure that what is taught in the school is thoroughly learnt, to give better preparation for entry into life, whether it be in a factory or on a farm. More time is allowed for the children, especially the older ones, for leisure activities.

The issue, however, is not simply one of cutting the amount to be learnt. The end will only be achieved by improved teaching, particularly by an activation of teaching methods. In the greater free time allowed reading allied to the subjects is to be encouraged. To this end the Ministry of Education has the task of preparing a small library for

pupils' out-of-school reading on the most attractive and interesting as well as on the most difficult fields of science, technology and art. It is equally necessary to provide the teacher with the books that will help to enlarge knowledge and aid him or her in the explanation of new material in a text-book.

It is proposed that the full transition to the new education plan shall be completed in three years.

The improvement of upbringing and discipline is the second major task facing educationists. It is repeated that as secondary school leavers will now go not only to the university and technicum, but also directly into production, the school must inculcate a love of work, and a respect for work, and train the ability to work.

That there should still exist in some places an under-estimation of the importance of upbringing and character training is regarded as intolerable. There are some places where not enough attention is paid to the creation of a healthy, close-knit school and class community; to the improvement of the Pioneer organisation and to a proper organisation of the school régime. Similarly there is a neglect in some places of the home and school relationship. Physical and aesthetic education needs to be improved in some places.

It is insisted that there should be much better use made of the Komsomol and Pioneer Youth organisations in a children's community. Every Head and teacher, every inspector and chief of an LEA must absorb the idea that a Soviet school cannot successfully solve the problem of communist upbringing without creating a strong, healthy, and efficient community of pupils which has its support in the Komsomol and Pioneer school organisation.

The school is faced with the task of re-educating the psychology of the pupils to be ready and fit to play their part successfully in the development of their country on new levels, spiritual and material.



In the secondary school of the Ukrainian village Dikanka.



A writing lesson in an Uzbek elementary school.

Young Naturalists Stations are immensely popular with children. The experimental vegetable plot in the Gomel - Byelorussia - Young Naturalists Station provides activity for three fourteen-year olds from School No. 7



CHAPTER SIX

Special Type Schools

SCHOOLS FOR THE ARTISTICALLY GIFTED

IN THE CAPITAL and other large cities of the Soviet Union, there are special schools for children who show at an early age that they are highly gifted in music, in art and in dancing. These schools have boarding sections for children from distant places. They are Senior Secondary Schools, which give the ordinary course of general secondary education, plus special training for the particular talents.

The schools are situated as closely as possible to the adult institution of the particular art, the music schools near a conservatoire of music, the art schools near an Institute of Art, and so on. This facilitates the employment of the highly qualified specialists from the adult institute in the training of these youngsters, as well as the use of music-rooms and other special provisions.

It often happens that as a result of encouragement and practice in the kindergarten and in children's clubs, or as a result of parents' interest, a child shows evidence of talent at an early age—six or seven. In the music schools there have been exceptional cases of four-year-olds being accepted. The parent who believes his child to have special talent will arrange for a test in a conservatoire of music or in one of the Pioneer Palaces. Should the test, in the opinion of the musician or artist or ballet mistress, show promise of real talent, a recommendation will be made for the child's acceptance to one of these special schools. In the case of children living on collective farms, a test may entail a journey of several days. In such cases, the expenses are

borne by the collective farm. Should it turn out at the completion of the middle stage—fourteen years—that the early promise is not being fulfilled and that though talent is there it is not exceptional, until the completion of the re-organisation of education—1960—the pupil passes into a music or art technicum to train for general work in the profession. The education, and the board when necessary, are free in these schools. There is little uniformity about these special schools. They are expected, however, to cover the common syllabus for ordinary subjects. In all other respects they are very individual.

The Moscow Art School may be cited as one type that takes children from the primary school—at eleven years—and keeps them until they are eighteen. It has two departments, painting and sculpture, the latter opened in 1945. The school day here lasts from six to eight hours. Throughout the course general education receives the major apportionment of time, which, however, becomes progressively less, as the pupils go up the school. It begins in Class IV with twenty-eight hours a week for general education and eight for the special subjects, and changes until the proportion is twenty-four hours for general and eighteen for special subjects in Class VII. The school holds weekly exhibitions, on Saturdays, of the best work done at home during the week. In this school, a Saturday concert has become a tradition. The best executants in music and drama, as well as authors and poets, accept the school's invitation and perform at these concerts.

It is a firm principle of Soviet education that the highly gifted should also be good all-round citizens, interested in other fields of activity besides their own. Hence the insistence on the normal standard for general education. The children are encouraged to join the ordinary clubs in the Pioneer Palaces so as not to become a segregated class.

SCHOOLS FOR DEFECTIVES

Great progress has been made in the post-revolution years in education for defectives. Basic to all this work is

research into causes particularly into those of mental defects. Second comes research into methods, stressing the right approach, and content of this particular education.

The Institutes of the Brain both in Leningrad and Moscow have departments for research into mental retardation of children. In the Institute of Pediatrics, the institute where children's doctors and specialists are trained, the Department of Child Development also carries on research. It is further carried on for the early years—birth to three—in the appropriate sections of the Scientific Research Institute of Mother and Child Welfare. In addition, the Academy of Educational Science in Moscow has an Institute of Defectology and the Herzen Pedagogical Institute also has a department for this.

The aims of the education of defectives everywhere, are to make the pupils as nearly normal as possible, to give them a feeling of being part of the general community, to equip them to be self-supporting as far as possible, and certainly in the case of physical defectives to encourage any inclination to further education by providing every possible facility.

There are special schools for the deaf and dumb and for the blind. I have no personal acquaintance with the latter, but some of the deaf and dumb schools I knew very well. In 1954 there were 35 such schools.

For the deaf and dumb children under seven, there are kindergartens. The numbers in a group are small, about twelve to fifteen. Special attention is paid to apparatus, didactic material and the appearance of the class-room. Lip-reading is employed, as is any method that will encourage even the most rudimentary speech and hearing. To help with latter, there is varied treatment under the doctor's supervision, as well as the use of continually improving electrical apparatus, designed not to replace hearing but rather to stimulate the aural nerves. The child's environment is made as visually rich as possible.

General education for defectives was compulsory up to sixteen years and now will be till 17 to 18. In the schools for the deaf and dumb every effort is made to cover the

subjects and syllabus of the ordinary school and is successful for a large proportion of the pupils. Practical work plays an important part, and the Junior and Senior Secondary Schools have well-equipped workshops for woodwork and electrical work, a smithy, and, for the girls, needlework rooms. More time is spent on practical work in these schools than in the normal school.

Most of these schools are of the boarding type, and guided leisure activities (music, dramatics, dancing, hand-work and sport), make their contribution to the fullness of life for these handicapped youngsters.

In this stage, as in the kindergarten, everything possible is done to give some power of speech and hearing, and there is a high percentage of success. The finger alphabet is not encouraged, lip-reading being considered preferable. Here there is a variety of mechanical apparatus for individual and group use.

All teachers in schools for defectives are required to take a four-years' training course in the special institutes or departments. Their salary is twenty-five per cent higher than that of teachers in normal schools. The classes are smaller, and, in theory at least, their day is shorter. In many of the Senior Secondary Schools, specially qualified members of the staff carry on experiments and investigation, making a valuable contribution to the general store of knowledge and experience.

Schools for mental defectives are set up wherever necessary.

A clear distinction is made between retarded children and defectives. The former, it turns out, are almost invariably due to faulty environment or some remediable physical cause. The wrong upbringing in the home, indifference of parents, tension in the home, can all lead to a refusal of the child to understand and to learn and so become retarded. Inefficient teaching, a teacher's ignorance of the child's home and general environment, conflict between pupil and teacher, any or all of these can have the same effect. Finally illness, or any physical or nervous disability may lead to retardation.

When a child is backward and the teacher suspects a mental defect, a lengthy observation will be made by the teacher, the doctor, the neurologist as well as the child's parents. It will be examined by any specialists deemed necessary. Commonsense tests are given based on the reactions of the normal child for that age. As in education generally, no standardised tests are used. As a result of the different medical examinations, treatment will be recommended. This medical treatment may lead to obvious improvement in the functioning of the brain in which case the child will remain in the normal school.

When examinations by the neurologist and the combined observation show that there is a mental defect, the child will be sent to a special school. This is never an irrevocable decision. Should continued treatment and special teaching lead to an improvement which makes the child able to follow the normal school course, he or she will be returned to the school.

As may be expected, in many cases boarding schools are the only means of providing adequate education for such children. The schools are attached to the neuropathology department of a hospital, and all children will have periodic examinations and regular treatment where at all useful.

The groups are very small and much individual work is done. The teacher and the Head, therefore, are expected to be fully cognisant of the pupils' development, or lack of it.

All teaching is active. Everything is learnt through doing. Special films are made, and projection of every type is employed. Of the arts, music and dancing particularly are used to make life brighter. Here, again, the aim is to turn out these children able to support themselves and to deal with the daily needs of life.

The teachers, wherever conditions make it feasible, are in close touch with the homes. Training parents in a right attitude and approach to their retarded or defective children is regarded as an important duty for the teacher. Education in all these schools is free.

The result of the Soviet approach to retardation and backwardness has been very encouraging. Statistics state

that 90 per cent of those attending the special schools have gone on to a technical school or entered industry as normal people.

For children with other kinds of physical incapacity, tuberculosis, rheumatism and rheumatic hearts, there are again special schools, called Schools for Physical Rehabilitation. Of these, the most general are Forest Schools, run by departments of education and quite often by trade and professional unions, for the children of their members. Those run by the latter bodies generally provide treatment free. In the others, the parents pay for maintenance if they can afford it. In these schools a special régime, in which fresh air, diet, sleep and rest periods are the most important factors, is planned by the doctor. The diet includes additional fats, milk and proteins. These schools have their own market gardens and orchards and are sure of a plentiful supply of fruit and vegetables.¹ Very often there is a small farm, and cows, poultry and bees are an accepted part of the domestic economy.

The curriculum is similar to that of the ordinary school, but the syllabus is considerably curtailed. Lessons are all of short duration (the maximum is thirty minutes) and wherever possible they are given in the open air. Here, as everywhere, creative self-expression through the arts is considered important. As these schools are in the country, nature study, particularly the study of birds, has a special place in the curriculum.

For tubercular children, there are special open air schools, varying from schools for incipient T.B. to bad cases. The stay here ranges from six months to as long as eight or ten years, that is, as long as is necessary to effect a cure, or, alternatively, till the end of the school period—eighteen years.

Education in these schools of necessity varies with the gravity of the disease. For walking cases, there are classes; for bed cases there is, where necessary, individual teaching such as that given to orthopaedic bed cases in the L.C.C.'s

¹ This held good also of the war years.

Queen Mary's Hospital for Children in Carshalton, England.

In the Soviet Union, as elsewhere, teachers who have special aptitude for this work can enable handicapped children to go through the normal school course and to achieve an academic standard equal to that of any healthy child.

On leaving these T.B. schools, the children continue under medical supervision, in their home surroundings. Those who leave to go into industry are directed to the special workshops, where the conditions of work are such as not merely to prevent a recurrence of an attack, but to help towards complete recovery, where that has not yet been achieved.

LABOUR RESERVE SCHOOLS

The 1940 decree (described earlier), designed to ensure a reserve of trained labour, stated that one million boys aged fourteen to fifteen were to be recruited for a course of training for the major industries, mining, building, engineering and transport.

The methods employed to popularise this measure were so successful that in the first year there were twice as many applicants as there were places in the trade schools. After the first year these courses were opened to girls on the same conditions as boys. The upheaval caused by the war reduced the numbers entering, and in 1945 it was under five hundred thousand.

These trade schools are boarding establishments; the actual training itself is carried on in special factory shops and laboratories within the works. The responsibility for the boarding house and the training facilities rests ultimately with the industry for which the youths are being trained, and immediately, with the particular works. The cost of training, board, and pupils' clothing, is borne by the state.

The course lasts two years; the pupils work a seven-hour day, and general education includes Russian language and literature, history, geography and Soviet constitution.

The special education is both theoretical and practical. The chemistry, physics and mathematics related to the industrial operations that are being learnt, and the materials that are being used are studied in laboratories and classrooms. In addition, the trainees are given an understanding of the part their industry plays in the economy and development of the country. In order to develop adaptability the pupils are taught a number of operations involving the use of different lathes. While on production they are paid at normal trade union rates, and they retain their full pay, which is banked for them, and which they withdraw when they leave.

The boarding house has to provide facilities for recreation, intellectual, physical and artistic. The music and dramatic circles are generally the most popular; chess has a high place, as well as sport; and literature, art and crafts, all play their part. The quality and quantity of this provision for leisure naturally varies with the enthusiasm of the home staff and the interest taken by the factory.

On completing the course, the trainees (now qualified) are directed to work for three years in an industry run by one of the ministries. Their military call-up is deferred. At the end of the three years they are free to qualify for a new profession, to specialise, or to take a job anywhere else if they so desire it.

This method of ensuring trained workers has proved highly successful. This youthful labour force rendered a fine account of itself during the war. In addition to the normal day's work these young people gave many hours overtime to make equipment for trade schools in newly liberated cities. By 1950 it was planned to have six thousand of these trade schools.

There is a six months' course for training for industry known as Factory Apprentice Schools. Anybody round about sixteen irrespective of time spent on previous education, who wants to go into industry without necessarily acquiring a high standard of skill, is accepted for this course. The training is given in the factory or works, and is mostly practical, but includes Russian language, a sub-

ject that is never absent from any course. These courses are run by the factories and, like much other training, are of a temporary nature, though the contingency which has given rise to them may last some years.

The Trade School No. 22 in Moscow for the training of metal workers may serve as an example of the serious approach of the best schools to this type of training for industry. The school has a number of shops which include a cold process shop, a turning machine department with over eighty units, a fitter's shop with two hundred young workers, a fitting and moulding section with seventy-five young workers, and a cutting machine department for twenty workers. The cold process shop has over two hundred educational aids of all kinds. The equipment, instruments, appliances and apparatus give it the appearance of an experimental engineering laboratory. It contains everything necessary for the teaching of the special technology of turning, cutting, drilling and planning lathes. The machines make it possible for instructors not only to demonstrate the design of the whole and of details, but also to explain the theory of machine tool working. In addition, there are appliances for testing durability, pliability and the tensile strength of metals. There are two special study rooms in the turners' and moulding departments; there are rooms for the study of materials, two drawing offices, a physics room, two Russian language rooms, and two mathematics rooms. The class-room lesson is the basic form of teaching in the trade schools. In this school good students earn as much as three hundred roubles per month in their production practice. Below is the régime followed in Trade School No. 22:

Rising	6-30 a.m.
Making beds, physical exercises, etc.	6-30 — 7-30 a.m.
Breakfast and free time	7-30 — 8-30 a.m.
Lessons (first four) including twenty minutes' rest	8-30 a.m.—12-20p.m.
Lunch and free time	12-20—2 p.m.
Lessons (fifth and sixth)	2—3-50 p.m.
General or group roll call and free time	3-50—4-30 p.m.
Cultural activities	4-30—6 p.m.

Homework	6—7-30 p.m.
Supper and free time	7-30—8-30 p.m.
Evening toilet, personal needs	8-30—10 p.m.
Bed	10 p.m.

Another type of special school was the Special Vocational School. Following on the liberation of large areas by the Red Army, education authorities were faced with the problem of boys and girls aged twelve to thirteen years, whose experience under occupation made ordinary school, in their view, pointless and profitless. They had been playing the part of adults, often very successfully, and now they were expected to sit behind desks with immature children. They simply ignored exhortations to attend school. The authorities solved the problem by setting up in 1943 in the Leningrad Region, twenty-three Special Vocational Schools. Their number has been increased considerably, and they may be found in other than liberated districts.

They might be termed Junior Trade Schools. The entrance age was twelve. The curriculum included essential academic subjects, Russian (language and literature), history, geography, and practical subjects such as engineering, building, or whatever may have been desired. The workshops were run like those in adult industry, with the necessary adjustment to youthful physique. The conditions of work for discipline and pay approached as nearly as possible those in adult factories; the pupils remained in these schools until they were sixteen when they entered industry. It was found that these schools satisfied the need for a serious practical purpose in life, which these youngsters with their war experience demanded. At the same time a good all-round general education was given.

Another type of special school, which was also created in 1943, is the Suvorov School. This, like the Nakhimov School, which is for the navy, was designed to solve two problems: to provide a home and care for war orphans, and to train future officers in the two services. Suvorov, like Nakhimov, Schools are for boys only. Priority is given to sons of men, privates or officers who fell at the front, and some of those who fell fighting as guerillas. Then come boys

whose fathers distinguished themselves either at the front or as guerillas, and lastly, boys whose parents desire them to become officers. These schools, nine of which were set up in 1943, and a dozen more in 1944, vary in size from one hundred and fifty to five hundred pupils and serve both as home and school. Dormitories, halls, class-rooms, science laboratories and accommodation for leisure, together with workshops for manual work and crafts, form a self-contained whole. The directors of these schools are generally high-ranking officers. The staff includes men and women teachers, and additional men of officer rank. These latter are responsible for the general character training and tone, and each has twenty-five boys in his charge.

Pupils are accepted at the age of eight and are given a nine-year course. During the war and immediately after an exception was made and admission was granted to a few boys of twelve and thirteen and even fourteen, who had taken an active part in the warfare. The curriculum covers the subjects of the ordinary school, with a slightly different bias. More time is given to mathematics, while foreign language lessons begin at eight years instead of nine years, as introduced in 1947.

Singing, which is dropped from the three upper classes in the ordinary Senior Secondary School, is taken throughout the course in the Suvorov School. As soon as it is judged suitable, history and geography are approached from a world point of view, and not a national one. History includes ancient history which discusses such themes as "the tribal structure of Greek society in the time of Homer." Pupils have to explain "what they learn from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*." The Suvorov boys are expected to complete the ordinary ten-year course in nine years.

As is to be expected in these schools, a study is made of the theory and practice of military training, and the course becomes more concentrated as the boys move up the school. Additional compulsory subjects are folk and ballroom dancing, while physical training includes riding, fencing and field sports.

The discipline is stricter than in the ordinary school

but it has to be obtained without the use of any special measures. Corporal punishment is prohibited here as elsewhere. The general school régime (there is a fixed duty roster in and out of the class-room), the regard in which these schools are held by the community, and above all, the quality of the teachers and others in charge are expected, in combination, to produce the necessary discipline. Special courses are also arranged to help the educators in these schools. The daily free time gives scope for intellectual and emotional as well as physical relaxation for the boys.

Not by any means do all the boys finally enter military or naval academies to qualify as army or naval officers. At the age of sixteen the choice of career is reviewed and it has been found that a number of boys change their minds and decide to enter medicine, journalism, the law, or other civilian professions. These go on to the appropriate technical school to complete their training for a civilian profession.

TECHNICUMS

These are schools which train what in the Soviet Union is called a middle grade specialist. They train for industry, administration and arts, for education, the law and nursing; in fact, for any branch of the country's life for which medium qualified personnel is required. They are, as already explained, the responsibility of the ministry, industrial trust, or any other administrative body which requires such trained people. For example, a mining trust which needs junior personnel, will set up a mining technicum; if the Ministry of Home Affairs needs junior legal assistants it will open a law technicum. A few years ago the State Bank discovered a shortage of engravers so it opened a school for engravers. Actresses, artists and musicians of average ability are trained in theatre, art or music technicums. A technicum trains all its pupils in one and the same speciality. The educational direction is controlled by the Ministry of Education.

Boys and girls are accepted in technicums on successful

completion of the Junior Secondary Schools. The course in the technicum varies in length from three to four years, and occasionally reaches five years.

Five per cent of the students of a technicum may, on successfully completing the course, apply immediately for admission to a university. They are accepted on the same conditions as pupils from the Senior Secondary School; that is, if they obtain the matriculation diploma and win a gold medal, entrance examination is waived, otherwise they have to sit for examination. The rest of the pupils will only be accepted in a university or institute after they have done four years' work in the profession for which they were trained, and after satisfying the requirements for entrance. The period of work is insisted upon to ensure the flow of skilled people into the country's organisations.

The course in the technicum has to cover the same curriculum and syllabus in general education as that in the three upper forms of the Senior Secondary School, so that, in addition to being qualified in a particular speciality, their pupils' general education is expected to reach a standard comparable to the English Higher School Certificate. The theoretical training for the speciality will be covered largely by the subjects already being taken. For example, in a nursing technicum, the necessary physiology, anatomy, etc., will come within the course under general science, while the mathematics, physics, etc., required for engineering, will likewise come within the curriculum. It is in the actual syllabus that changes occur, more time being given to the subjects that are directly concerned with the speciality.

Production practice as distinct from practical work in the laboratory or technicum workshop on the school premises generally begins in the third year, and is allotted considerable time. It is carried on in the actual place of work, in the hospital, engineering works, textile works or other appropriate organisation.

The staff is all specialised and is expected to have university qualifications. The organisation, discipline, methods and life generally are not unlike those in the upper classes

of the Senior Secondary School. A little more responsibility is expected from the pupils, who, except for the five per cent, will be going out into the world, and not into a university as is the case at school. At seventeen to eighteen or nineteen years they will have responsible jobs and will play a practical part in the improvement of the standard of living for their country.

The new type of mass technical school demanded by universal secondary education, which will eventually replace the trade school, is already functioning in some numbers. In the school year 1954-55, two hundred and fifty of these were opened, thirteen of them are in Moscow and Moscow region, eleven in Sverdlovsk, ten in Leningrad and region, nine in Kuybishev region, seven in Gorki, seven in Rostov and the rest spread over the country. By the end of the year another two hundred such schools will have been built.

The course varies from one to two years, study plans and syllabuses are being tested, while text-books are being prepared. The schools are to serve the rural as well as the industrial population. They are set up at an industrial base, at a long term construction site, at a machine-tractor station and at a state farm. Fifty-one of the present number of schools will be training village youth as skilled workers for steam and diesel engines, as electro-mechanics for rural electrification and for radio and laboratory assistants for agricultural laboratories.

Students will be accepted on completion of the secondary school after passing an entrance examination. Pupils who matriculate with the gold or silver medal are excused the examination.

These technical schools will train 76 different types of specialists. They will include all kinds of engineers for lathes, machines and engines, laboratory workers for metal and coke-chemical works, for the coal and oil industry and machine workers of all kinds. The training is to provide the middle grade specialist for heavy engineering for the chemical, construction and woodworking industries, for paper and power production, for rail and river transport.

They will also train junior technical personnel such as charge-hands, controllers, checkers, shop planners and draughtsmen, and instruct in the general technology of metals, technical drawing, etc. It sounds a very full course and it may be necessary to make adjustments either in time or curriculum or both. The teachers required are highly trained specialists from enterprises who may need some training in pedagogy.

The necessary excursions to the factory are not limited to a study of the subject or the machines. The students are to get to know the factory as a whole. The patron factory is to be drawn into something closer and more active than the mere provision of equipment. The factory should help to inculcate a communist attitude to labour. It should be realised that modern work at modern machines is intellectual work as well as manual work.

These schools are entirely free. Hostel accommodation with free board is being provided for those who live at a distance. All receive free clothing. Scholarships are to be given to all who do good work, the same amount as for the third year in technicums. Special care is to be paid to children from orphan homes and to children of war disabled.

These technical schools are a new departure and considered of very great importance. It is necessary to explain their importance to youth, to assure young people that after entry to industry on completion of these schools, they will not be denied opportunities for higher education. They will be able to graduate through evening or correspondence courses. At the same time they will be making important contributions to the country's economic development.

Technical School No. 6, in Krassnaya Presnya started well from the first day. Here leisure activities are going to be very important. On September 24th (1954) a general meeting of all arts circles was held. On the 27th the folk-instrument orchestra, the ballet circle and drama circle met. The next day the choir met while the 30th was a literary evening devoted to Ostrovsky. Many sports circles have now been set up. This is an indication that the technical

schools will not produce one-sided individuals, for good example spreads quickly in the Soviet Union.

What a large factory may do in the way of educational provision is illustrated by the Karl Marx Factory in Moscow. It has six technical schools, a trade school, a secondary school for working youth, an engineering technicum, a correspondence department and an industrial institute.

Such educational Kombinats (as they are called), can be found run by many of the large enterprises.

It does look as though the Soviet Union is on the way to solving the problem of having skilled workers for modern production who are at the same time well educated all-round citizens.

CONTINUED EDUCATION

Soviet continued education has little, if anything, in common with so-called continued education in England. The purpose of Soviet continued education is to provide a secondary education for all the young people, whether working in industry or in agriculture who for any reason whatever were deprived of such education, without their giving up work. This should be of interest to India.

The reorganisation of education already referred to will affect the organisation of training for industry or the professions. But, as this will not finally be achieved till 1960, we shall see the old and the new side by side. Since the methods adopted when conditions were still more or less difficult should be of great interest where compulsory education is not universal, or where it ends at the age of 15, I have retained the chapters in this new edition.

Schools for continued education were created as a solution to a war problem. After the Soviet Union was attacked, thousands of boys and girls left school at any age after twelve, in order to go into factories to help with the production which the country needed so desperately. It was not many months after June 22, 1941, that these youngsters began to receive news of the loss of a father or a brother, and of the incredible brutalities and torture, of

rape and wanton destruction by Nazi soldiers. This meant that thousands of boys and girls who would normally have completed the Senior Secondary School, not only did not achieve this, but did not even finish the Junior Secondary School.

In 1943 official steps were taken to deal with this situation. A decree published early that year ordered all works and enterprises, where any reasonable number of young adolescents were employed, to provide facilities in the works for the education of those young workers who had not completed a ten-year course so that all might reach the full secondary school standard. Class-rooms, fully equipped laboratories, and teaching staffs were to be provided by the factory or works.

These schools for "Working Youth" and "Peasant Youth" (as they are known) have now been in existence for several years, and it is very likely that they will continue for a number of years longer, until such time as it is possible to give everybody a full secondary education in the day school.

Attendance is supposed to be obligatory, but as so often happens, a Russian, young or old, who cannot see the value or purpose of a regulation ignores it, and there was considerable concern about 1944-45 at the absenteeism in these courses. The task of persuading the youngsters of the desirability of attendance is laid upon the works management or the farm management and unfortunately this duty has not always been discharged as it should be.

Professor S. M. Rievess writing on these schools² as they functioned in Moscow, expressed the view of those who were not so concerned over this absenteeism. Certainly everything that can reasonably be done must be done to attract the youth into these schools, but he was against any measures that would weaken the feeling of responsibility on the part of the boy or girl, and he was against tutelage or severe interrogation. "Let those for whom study in these

² *Sovietskaya Pedagogika*, No. 4, Akademia Ped, Naouk, 1945.

schools of Working Youth is beyond them, leave, but let the school train a conscious, right attitude to learning among those who not only in words, but in deed, wish to learn. A teacher said somewhere, 'Here learn those who wish to learn.' In this lies the strength of these schools for Working Youth."

The course lasts the same number of years as would have been spent in the Secondary School. Girls and boys attending the school are not allowed to work overtime or to be given any duties that may interfere with their regular attendance. They are freed from work in the factory, or farm (receiving their pay) during the examination periods, at the end of Class VII and Class X.

The syllabus is exactly the same as that covered in the ordinary schools and here arise the difficulties which have stimulated the teachers to observation and experiment. While the study year lasts eleven months (which is longer than that of the ordinary school), the school in the factory functions for each pupil only for four hours daily on five days a week. The time is fixed to fit in with the working hours of the various sets of girls and boys. In spite of the shorter time for study and the fact that these young people are working six hours a day, the same syllabus is expected to be covered.

Since it is obviously impossible to take all the subjects concurrently, the year was first divided into three terms, with a cycle of subjects to be taken each term. It required considerable thought and intelligence to avoid planning a cycle in which all book work, such as literature, foreign language and history was done in one term, while realising the importance of the correlation of subjects in the same period. In addition to the class lesson, there is group and individual consultation—the tutorial method, frequent oral testing, and a good deal of homework. Many educationists were dissatisfied with this three-term arrangement, and with the number of hours per week. The suggestion that the year should be divided into two terms, and that the actual teaching time which does not include consultations might be lengthened was later adopted.

This is an educational field where very much is left to the initiative, experience and ability of the teacher.

This education had its particular problems. Unlike the general school, these Worker and Peasant Youth Schools are educating young people who "are already actively participating in the building of socialism, for whom their chief activity is productive labour." New factors appear here, such as these young peoples' experience of life and work, their interests and their requirements, as well as the real demands made by society on the school arising from production. Long ago N. K. Krupskaya said: "The school for adults must not be simply a copy of the general school." This means that the teachers in these schools must have some special training. While their approach and methods will be somewhat different, they must require the same standard of attainment as in school and not let sympathy for the difficulties of managing work and study affect their demands. Syllabus and text-books must correspond to the special character of these schools, "they must be closer to life, and closer to the demands of the vast construction work going on in the country." They cannot be the same as that used in the ordinary secondary school whose children are much less mature and experienced.

But the greatest demands are those made on the teachers. Their lessons must be planned with infinite care. The amount of new material that must be learnt and understood to enable independent work at home to be fruitful, the presentation of the lesson—more like a consultation than straight class lesson, the full, careful and well planned use of the time, all these have to be taken into consideration.

In the collective or state farms, study is organised in relation to seasonal work. It is done in the winter when there is much more free time available.

The mathematics teacher of a Moscow Worker Youth School writes: "In planning the teaching we must always remember that nothing is so destructive of the pupil's interest as difficulties he cannot overcome. Conversely nothing arouses so much enthusiasm as the awareness that they have learned to do that which they needed and wanted to

do." Here is what a pupil of a Leningrad Worker Youth School says: "After a day's work in the factory, I go to the school. The bell rings. A new life begins. Tiredness disappears as though wiped off. The first lesson—literature. I have read books since I was a child. But to appreciate them, to understand them critically, that I have only learnt now. This year, I have deeply and seriously understood the meaning of Mayakovsky's poetry. With what excitement I now read his wonderful and so powerfully expressive poems. . . . I am enthralled by geometry."

Over 70,000 young workers in Leningrad factories are attending a secondary education course in the Young Worker Schools. At the Skorokhod Boot and Shoe Factory 400 are studying, while at the big Kirov Engineering Works over a thousand applied for entry at School No. 162 in September 1954. The sixteen new specialised secondary schools in Riga which are providing full-time technical training are, in the evening, attended by young workers from industry desirous of completing their secondary education.

In the school year 1953-54 there were over 1,300,000 students attending courses in the schools for working youth. In the RSFSR alone over 60,000 completed their full secondary education. Over 3 per cent of them matriculated with gold and silver medals. The Glukhov Textile Works School, in the Moscow region, is held up as an example to those that are still unsatisfactory. The factory has provided a special building well furnished and well equipped with subject rooms and laboratories. Theoretical studies are very closely linked to production practice. Nearly all the students exceed their norms in the factory.

Whatever methods of organisation are adopted, one thing is certain; a full secondary education, including a foreign language, will be made available to more and more young workers.

As an example of the popularity of these schools, in Moscow in the school year 1944-45, seven thousand boys and girls taking this continued course passed the Junior Secondary and Senior Secondary leaving examinations with good marks.

Another type of school is run by the co-operative movement for the training of young salesmen and saleswomen and for junior clerical and administrative staffs. This type also provides some general education in addition to the specialised training.

CHILDREN'S HOMES

Children's Homes do not properly come within the classification—special type of school, but they too are educational establishments, under the authority of the Ministry of Education which has its research department in this field, and should therefore be described here.

As will be expected, the number of these Homes greatly increased as a result of the war, for the Nazis rendered orphan more children in the USSR than in any other country.

Although the Homes are primarily for orphans, they also take children of unmarried mothers for whom under the difficulties and stringencies of the immediate post-war period it was not easy to provide the desirable conditions for upbringing. Children may also be sent from homes when family conditions are such as to be definitely harmful to the child. Not all the Homes are set up by the state or its departments. As some slight repayment of the debt that the people owe to the Red Army, and also because of the feeling of collective responsibility for children as children, which is such a strong feature of the Russian character, literally hundreds of Homes were built, furnished and equipped locally either by the people themselves or by collective farms, trade and professional unions, scientific associations, theatre companies and so on.

These Homes are considered to be educational institutions within the general education system. Their tasks are (a) care of the health and normal physical development of the child, (b) to ensure progress at school, (c) moral training, training in habits of work (labour), and (d) aesthetic training, development of initiative, creative abilities, and amateur activity. Character or moral training includes

training in love of country and it is emphasised that children must be made aware "of the unbreakable link between Soviet patriotism and internationalism—the community of interest of the Soviet Union and all freedom loving peoples."

Children are accepted in these Homes at four years and remain there up to fourteen and fifteen years. They attend the kindergarten or school in the village or town near the Home. They have the same educational facilities as children in families, to secondary school, or to schools or university. It is considered that the children should be kept together as much as possible and should not be distributed among a number of schools, where there happen to be vacant places. The group arrangement of the children in a Home should correspond to their class or school. The upbringer or "house mother" as she would be called in England, must visit the school regularly to discuss their common charges with the class teacher.

Each Home has its own farm of considerable size, producing its own vegetables, fruit, poultry, dairy and meat products, and often its own grain.

The Home is staffed by a director and assistants known in Russian as *Vospitateli*, that is, "upbringers." In addition to providing that individual relationship and affection so essential to the happiness and serenity of a child, they are responsible for the character training, in short, for the development of the creative personality, for the education of the child as the "complete man." There is, in addition, a domestic staff, including an accountant and cashier.

The educational staff has not only to be qualified, but it has to continue improving its qualifications through specially organised courses. Owing to the serious shortage of qualified people in the beginning, short term three-month courses were organised for new entrants. A brief description of this course, and of the course for improving qualifications will give the reader a good idea of the Soviets' conception of what a Children's Home should be.

The short course for untrained people who desire to be accepted on the staff comprises:

1. Education	50	hours.
2. Psychology	36	"
3. Content and method of educational work in Children's Homes	40	"
4. Hygiene and child care	20	"
5. Physical training and games (practical)	50	"
6. Manual work or the arts (practical according to choice)	100	"
7. Agriculture and the activities of young naturalists	40	"
8. Russian language including method of teaching	80	"
9. Arithmetic and methods	70	"
10. Education practice in a Home	100	"
Total	586	"

In addition there are lectures: eighteen hours.

An examination is compulsory on completion of the course in educational psychology and methods of upbringing in a Children's Home.

On being appointed to the staff of a Children's Home, these educators, including the director and assistants, are expected, in their free time, to take up a further course; they are on duty for eight hours a day. This further course lasts fifteen days for those who have had previous training in education, and thirty days for others. It covers the following:

1. A study of Stalin's <i>The Great Patriotic War in the Soviet Union</i>	15	hours.
2. Practical questions in content and method of education and training in a Children's Home	35	"
3. Manual work in the Home workshops	15	"
4. The auxiliary farm and agricultural training of the children	15	"
5. The organisation of a Children's Home	10	"
6. The economics of a Home—accounts, etc.	10	"
7. Visiting Children's Homes	12	"
Total	112	"

For directors who may not have had any educational training, the course has to include education, psychology, work on the farm, leisure activities, physical training (including health and hygiene), and teaching practice. Assistants who have completed a course at a training college or some other educational institution may specialise in lite-

rature and the arts for example, or in nature-study work. Subjects one and two in the director's course are compulsory for every course, as are content and methods of the particular subject and teaching practice. Untrained assistants take subjects one, two, three, four, seven and ten in the course for untrained people, with the addition of leisure activities (including a practice course).

The courses of study with detailed syllabuses for each subject and instructions were issued by the then Commissariat, now Ministry of Education, in 1944. The ministry also publishes a series of recommended syllabuses for every subject, or more correctly, for every out-of-school activity, manual work, the arts, farm work, etc. In order to maintain a good standard of progress in their school work, suggestions on helping with each school subject and on supervising homework are issued periodically by the Ministry of Education's Special Department of Methods for Children's Homes. The teaching staff of a Home, while not actually giving lessons, has to supervise the school work and aid in the general intellectual and emotional growth of their charges—hence the need for training.

The leisure activities of a Children's Home are expected to include, as a regular feature and in addition to the children's sports and other occupations, visits to theatres, cinemas, concerts, museums, etc., excursions to places of interest and treks into the country as well as a study of their own district. Much is made of manual work to inculcate habits and discipline of work and love of work.

Training in responsibility begins with the youngest. There are children's group committees and a children's council for the Home. They elect their own prefects and monitors.

The staff, too, has its council and its committees and there is close co-operation between the educational staff and the domestic staff. A Children's Home even more than a school depends for its happiness on its staff, educational and domestic, but particularly the former. Badly-run Homes do exist, but the interest of the local community sooner or later brings to light the shortcomings. Full publicity is

given to such cases and appropriate measures are always taken regardless of the susceptibilities of a local council or any individual.

A Children's Home is felt to be the business of everybody in the neighbourhood. It will be discussed at a committee of the farm management or in a factory. On national celebrations gifts will be brought by all kinds of bodies. The children do really feel they are surrounded by care and love.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Higher Education

HIGHER EDUCATION COMPRISES universities — both multi-faculty institutions and single faculty institutions. Soon after the revolution when the restoration and development of war-scarred Russia demanded a whole variety of new skills and techniques, a great many single faculty institutes sprang up as part of the system of higher education.

The fulfilment of the First Five-Year Plan in 1932 brought the country to a new economic stage. This made new and to a certain extent different demands on higher education. The whole of the education system was reorganised that year including higher education.

Today there are universities in every capital of the sixteen republics, and in addition, in many important cities such as Kharkov, Kazan (which has an old university), Omsk, Tomsk and others. These are known as State Universities of such or such city.

A university comprises faculties and departments. An institute has departments with their chairs. The usual number of departments for industrial institutes is six, for agricultural two or three, and for medical institutes two (curative and prophylactic).

The Ministry for Higher Education was created in 1945 and is responsible for education in universities, while ministries, and industrial or agricultural trusts, are responsible for the institutes which train the specialists needed in their particular spheres.

The Ministry for Higher Education—this for some years was a Union Ministry, but this year, 1955, was abolished as

such, and Republican (for each republic) Ministries of Higher Education have been set up in its place.

The conclusion to be drawn from this is that the level of higher education, of science and learning must have risen considerably, particularly in the Asian republics. The industrial as well as agricultural development of these countries is today making increasing demands for skilled qualified people whom they themselves can best train.

There are separate Ministries of Culture which are concerned with the spread of knowledge and culture, both native and world culture among adults.

It is claimed that this centralised control makes it possible to regulate the training of specialists according to the country's need, so that a situation when there are too many oil engineers and not enough construction engineers, or too many industrial designers and not enough architects, is avoided. In actual fact, there have never yet been too many specialists in any field of activity. The problem has been to ensure to every field its share.

Every university and institute has a number of post-graduate students (from twenty to one hundred) known as "Aspirants," who are working for the degree of candidate with the object of obtaining either a teaching post in a higher education institution, or a responsible research post. Many of the Aspirants have completed two or more years' work in their particular speciality before being accepted for a course. They are required to pass an entrance examination to the course in their speciality, and in a foreign language, and they must submit a thesis on some topic concerned with their speciality.

The post-graduate student is attached to a professor who supervises the course. For two of the three years of the course the student works under a professor. The third year, he spends working up his degree thesis. Post-graduates, of whom there are many thousands, pay no fees: in fact, they receive a grant of at least seven hundred roubles¹ a month.

¹ See Appendix II on value of rouble.

The Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and of the constituent republics a few years ago set up Doctorate institutes or "Doctorantura," establishments where candidates may work for a Doctorate. Candidates working for a Doctorate in an institute receive a grant of one thousand five hundred roubles a month.

The Head of a university is the Rector, with two assistants, one for academic work and the other, the bursar, for administration. His staff includes deans of faculties, professors and assistant professors of departments, readers and assistants (in Russian "dotsenty") and lecturers.

The dean's responsibility for his faculty includes staffing, organisation and discipline. The bursar, or administrator, is responsible for a whole university or institute. Professors are required to engage in research work; it may be noted that they spend far less time in administration than is the practice in England.

Every university or institute has its Senate, literally "Learned Council," on which sit the Rector, his two assistants, the deans of the faculties, readers and representatives of the student organisations. This is a consultative body in regard to academic work and any questions that arise in connection with it, and it judges the theses for degrees. Decisions taken on matters relating to syllabuses or examinations must be approved by the Ministry for Higher Education. There are also faculty committees for matters chiefly academic which affect the faculty only.

Salaries have increased considerably since 1940 and professors may reach a salary of ten thousand roubles per month. In addition there is an increasing number of scholarships, founded in the names of great leaders, such as the Joseph Stalin Scholarships, or the Academician Bakh Scholarships founded in honour of the great eighty-nine-year-old bio-chemist on his death, or a later one still founded in honour of the great surgeon, Burdenko. These are awarded to members of the faculty and to students and vary in value and duration.

Scientists, which is the Russian term for all engaged in the learned professions, whether chemistry or literature—

"active scholars" is perhaps a better description in English—are held in the greatest esteem, not merely by the government, but by the whole people. I remember how I went up in the esteem of the floor supervisor of my hotel in Lenin-grad, when she learnt that I knew Academician Keller, the botanist, and that he had actually been to my home in London. During the grim war years, special provision was made for the intellectual workers in order to enable them to carry on their creative work.

The members of the faculty everywhere are closely linked with the life outside the university, and have strong social and political interests. Many of them are deputies to the Supreme Soviet, many more to the Soviet of their particular republic, and many serve on their city councils. Organised workers turn readily to professors or lesser lights in the learned profession for advice and information.

Research plays a very important part in every university and institute, and faculties for it are increasing everywhere. In many institutes, research forms the major activity. The institutes, like the departments in a university, have access for their field work to certain animal breeding stations or to whatever they may need. While most of the research arises directly out of the needs of industry, agriculture, or education, there is much of what in Britain is known as "pure" research, with the difference that in the Soviet Union the term "pure" as relating to research is regarded as unreal.

During the war there was a considerable increase in applied research everywhere, but it was not only in science that research continued. It went on uninterruptedly in the humanities too. No Arts Faculties were closed, though the number of students diminished at first. In fact, in 1943 the Moscow State University actually opened three new Arts Faculties, while the Kazan University in September 1944 opened a new department of Tartar language and literature.

The number of departments in a university is continually increasing as the demand for highly qualified specialists in any subject increases. For example, in the academic year 1943-44, a department for international relations was

opened at the Moscow State University to train personnel for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade. In 1944-45 a Department for Eastern Studies (with many subdivisions) was opened. A considerable number of new chairs was created, covering such subjects as seismology, the history of physics, the physics and chemistry of catalysis. By September 1946 Moscow State University had twelve departments with one hundred and fifty chairs. It also had eleven research institutes with over one hundred laboratories. The academic staff of Moscow University consisted in 1944 of nine hundred and eighty-four professors and assistant professors. The students numbered seven thousand, of which one thousand seven hundred and twenty were freshmen.

That was in 1944. Today, 1955, Moscow has a palatial new university built in the Lenin Hills for 8,000 students, 6,000 of whom are residential. Visitors have frequently described its numberless laboratories, its vast and varied research facilities, the reading rooms, the library, the many lecture theatres, the students' individual rooms and services astoundingly complete, and the flats for the staff, etc., etc. The old university is continuing for specialised training.

THE STUDENTS

A higher education course in the Soviet Union implies a training for a definite profession. The student has selected his future career before entry. Naturally such a decision is not irrevocable, but aided by the discussion on careers that has proceeded in the last school year, the future student is expected to have given sufficient thought to the matter and to have made the right choice. He will therefore have decided on his final speciality before beginning his course. Thus a boy or girl very interested in chemistry will decide beforehand whether it is to be oil chemistry or bio-chemistry. Similarly, one who has selected literature will have decided before university entry whether the speciality is to be classical or modern, Russian or European. Those interested in medicine will decide beforehand whe-

ther they will be general practitioners for adults or children, or whether they will specialise.

Entrance to university or institute is contingent upon qualifying through the school matriculation diploma or through an entrance examination. The age limits for acceptance of students are from seventeen to thirty-five years.

Those over thirty-five who decide to take a course of higher education may do so at any of the extra-mural institutions, at evening courses, or by correspondence.

In addition to those who come direct from the Senior Secondary Schools, there are students who come direct from industry, agriculture or other work, through evening preparatory courses for higher education. Until universal secondary education is achieved, there may still be some students who come from technicums, the best 5 per cent—as was the practice before.

Thus the student body in any university or institute is well mixed in age and experience. A number may be already married and some have small children. To help women students with such responsibilities there are nurseries and kindergartens free, as part of the student service. It is fairly common for students to marry during their training; when they do, the necessary adjustment in living quarters is made. Should a baby be expected, the expectant mother is given three months leave which is spent in the special homes provided for this purpose. On her return, the baby will be placed in the university nursery.

It is the practice for students to join the trade or professional union which covers the industry or profession in which they have elected to work. And a great proportion of them, if they have not already done so, will become members of the Komsomol.²

At the age of eighteen they all receive the vote; that is, they are citizens with full political rights. At twenty-three they may be elected as parliamentary deputies even while students.

² Leninist Young Communist League.

They are, as students, aware of and interested in the various problems which face their country. They are, however, by no means the solemn body of youth that this might imply. All of them, in school clubs in Pioneer Palaces, in workers' clubs, or collective-farm clubs, will have taken part in some creative leisure activity. This is continued in the university and institute. Amateur music, drama and sports have their place. Dancing is very popular and the annual university ball has come back to its place of honour even if shorn of a little of its former glory. Alpine clubs and touring clubs are popular, all students have the right to reduced fares. In the winter vacation, ski-ing parties are arranged. There is however a total absence of drinking parties. There are no fees in any of the clubs for any activity. Tickets to the theatres at reduced prices or wholly free are among the privileges of students.

There is no discrimination of any kind against women, who are accepted, either as students or as members of the faculty, on exactly the same terms as men throughout the whole of higher education, including medicine and law. Indeed in medicine women students have long outnumbered the men. And in 1954, women formed forty per cent of the whole student body of the USSR.

The students' council for the university and student committees for departments both assume considerable responsibility for discipline which in the main is concerned with work, attendance at lectures and seminars, and only secondarily with behaviour. Escapades such as those that are from time to time reported of students at the old British Universities, "binges" and "rags" would seem to the Soviet student a very childish form of amusement. As citizens who have reached maturity they are held to be responsible for their non-academic lives, and there is an absence of any restrictive regulations. On the other hand there is continued agitation for what the Russians call "cultured" conduct or what we should call civilised conduct, both as regards personal appearance and consideration for others. It is for example, considered to be ill-mannered to come late at a class or to arrive wearing goloshes.

For those interested in further independent study there are many subject clubs, which are conducted by professors. Papers read to these circles are often good enough to be published. These are science and humanities societies whose popularity increases and where original work is often stimulated.

In spite of the thoroughness and seriousness of Soviet educational organisation, let no one imagine that the Soviet students are a solemn priggish body. On the contrary, as anyone who knows them well can tell, they have a great capacity for enjoyment and gaiety and a lively interest in life outside the university.

THE CURRICULUM

In addition to the subjects selected for specialisation, there are certain subjects which are compulsory throughout the whole of higher education, whether the speciality is arts or science. Socio-politics embracing (a) the Foundation of Marxism-Leninism, is taken for two years, (b) Political Economy, and (c) Dialectical and Historical Materialism, each taken for one year only. All students, whether in an Institute of Dramatic Art, an Institute of Foreign Language, a Department of Botany or of Economics have to take these subjects. A foreign (European) language, which so far is English, German or French, and is taken for four out of the five years, is also compulsory. Physical and military training completes the list of compulsory subjects.

Military training for men before being called up is to make them familiar with small arms, anti-tank weapons, elementary tactics and strategy, and able to play their part either in a company or as an individual. Today physical training predominates, the actual military exercises having greatly diminished. This subject is taken for two years.

For the first three years the course is a general one, arising out of the speciality, and treats the particular subject selected from its historical and scientific aspects. The more serious specialisation, limited to the selected aspects of the broad subject, begins with the fourth year, when a

decrease in the number of additional subjects makes more serious study of the speciality possible.

In the first three years students are required to spend six hours a day in supervised work at lectures, seminars, consultations or in the laboratory. Lectures account for forty per cent to fifty per cent of all study time, about four hours a day, while the individual and practical and seminar work takes up from fifty per cent to sixty per cent of the total study time. Attendance is checked, and absenteeism for no good reason will call forth a reprimand and, if persisted in, will lead to being sent down either for a period or permanently. The time spent weekly on obligatory study diminishes with each year after the second, till in the final year there are whole days for individual work, either reading or in the laboratory or both.

The teaching methods have nothing unusual about them. First is the two hours' professorial lecture with a ten-minute break. The professor indicates themes and recommends books. Seminars, which follow lectures, are very important, for here much discussion takes place on the work presented by the students. There are consultations with the tutor either individually or in twos or threes. Students have to present a paper each year on a piece of work that must be completed within that year.

Practical work in all the specialities is carried on in subject rooms, laboratories and workshops within the precincts of the university or institute. For an arts' course, this practical work may take the form of work in museums and archives: it may be the preparation of reports illustrated by charts and diagrams, or it may be language practice. Whatever it is, the object is always the same, to link up theory with practice and to work out the theory in practice.

The practice—production practice as it is called in Russian—for the subject is carried out at the actual place of work. For example for geology, archaeology and history, students' expeditions are arranged for practical work. Students in an institute of drama will work in a theatre, while students in science or technical institutes, or departments of

universities will do their practice in the appropriate factory or enterprise. The length of production practice varies with the course. In institutes training specialists for industry practice averages nineteen weeks over the whole course. Agricultural institutes with a five-year course require fifty-three weeks' practice, those with a four-year course demand forty weeks. Special medical institutes require sixteen weeks, while in universities eight weeks is the average practice period.

A half-yearly examination and a sessional examination in the different groups of subjects taken each year are compulsory for all students. These examinations, which may more aptly be described as tests, decide the amount of a student's grant. Those who fail in these examinations after a second opportunity are sent down.

In the last half year of the course the student is free to concentrate on his diploma thesis for the state examination, which completes the course. He is not examined in all the subjects he has studied, nor do all the examinations he takes involve written papers. The yearly examinations are considered an adequate test for the more general aspects of the speciality. Oral examinations are compulsory at every stage for all examinable subjects.

The diploma received by the successful student states that he is fit to take up a post as a specialist but it does not confer a degree. A first-class diploma gives the holder preference for a post. Degrees, of which there are two, Candidate and Doctor, are given on the successful defence of a thesis, presented at the conclusion of post-graduate research.

The thesis is read in public and at any time announcements may be seen in the educational press to this effect. I have even seen advertisements in buses, stating that so and so was going to defend a thesis on such and such a theme, at such and such a place for a Candidate or Doctorate. There is an official "Opponent," i.e., questioner, but anyone may attend. Generally, those members of the faculty concerned with the subject arrive in full force.

When the Aspirant or Candidate for a degree has con-

cluded the reading of his thesis, not only the jury, the examiners, the official "Opponent," but anyone in the audience may put questions, may challenge the validity of statements or conclusions, and of the authorities and sources cited. Only when all these have been dealt with satisfactorily in the opinion of the jury, will the degree be awarded. There is a famous case, which occurred once, of a fourteen-year-old schoolboy, brilliant at history, causing failure of an Aspirant. The boy, by his questions, was able to prove many inaccuracies and wholly wrong assumptions.

Degrees are conferred by the Learned Council of a university or academy institute, and approved by the Ministry for Higher Education. There is a very critical attitude to universities and institutes. The country demands a great deal from its higher education institutions. It considers that those who have had the privilege of this education should be the leaders of the country in every sense, and should set a high standard in scholarship and citizenship.

In 1951, there were 140,000 full-time students in higher education with an additional 516,000 evening and correspondence course students. Exact figures for 1955 are not yet available but it is very near the million mark for full-time students. The intake has grown every year and new institutes continue to be opened in what formerly were backward republics.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Teaching Profession

IT IS PROBABLY true that in no country in the world is the teacher esteemed so highly by the whole people as in the Soviet Union. This arises partly from the Russian's natural respect for learning; in large measure it is due to the propaganda carried on by the government on behalf of the teachers, and in equally large measure it is due today to the teachers themselves. Ever since they came to power the Soviet leaders have, through the press, through official pronouncements and through the wireless on every possible occasion, stressed the importance of the teacher. Without teachers there can be no education, without education there can be no rise in the standard of living such as the Soviets desire. Only with the aid of education can the Soviet political and economic system be fruitful.

Lenin, the revered of all the peoples of the Soviet Union, is quoted again and again on the importance and the responsibility of the teacher. And on the whole the teachers have responded to the nation's expectations, so that the community has come to believe what it has been told about the profession.

Many teachers have been elected as deputies to the Supreme Soviet, the All-Union Parliament, and more have been elected to the Republic Soviets. They serve on municipal and rural councils, through which they gain a continuous awareness of the problems of the people whose children are in their charge. Generally, they live in the district where they teach.

It is in the village, however, in the Kishlaks and Auls of the Asian lands, that the teacher stands out as the leading

citizen, as guide, philosopher and friend. The teacher's house is the centre of progressive ideas, the unofficial advice bureau on every conceivable subject from crop rotation to naming the new baby. Where such a relationship has been established, neither the teacher's cottage nor the school will be short of their winter fuel. Neither the school nor the teacher will lack that attention and help from the community which makes all the difference to the life of the school and the teacher.

State honours and awards are given to teachers for long and meritorious service. In 1945 nearly five thousand teachers received such recognition, being awarded various orders and titles.

A rural or city branch of the teachers' unions, a trade union, a collective farm, a city or village council, will make a presentation to honour a teacher who has served well both the school and the community. And the national as well as the local press gives regular recognition to the good teacher.

Finally, and the importance of this will be generally recognised, there has been and will continue to be an inexhaustible demand for skilled work in every sphere of life. As far as monetary reward alone is concerned, more can be earned by Stakhanovite workers in the factory or mine, or the many other professions as is the case in other countries. The choice of the teaching profession is therefore completely voluntary, so that it is more and more tending to become a vocation, and in time it is to be presumed there will be no square pegs in round holes in the profession.

Salaries have increased with the increasing general wealth of the country. They are graded according to the stage in the school, primary 7 to 11 years, middle 11 to 14 years, secondary 14 to 17 plus years. Qualification, training, years of service, all affect the salary, as does size of school. Teachers in the first grade start at 575 roubles a month, with 15 per cent increase at the end of the first five years and a 10 per cent increase for every following five years. Percentage rises are the same for every grade. The starting

salary for the second grade is 650 roubles a month, and for the third grade 700 roubles a month. After twenty-five years' teaching every teacher is entitled to a pension of 40 per cent of his or her earnings, irrespective of whether they retire or not. As the age of teachers at that time is generally no more than 50 at most, as would be expected they continue teaching, often well on into the seventies. Sick pay, non-contributory, is paid by the teachers' union. A teacher in a school who may take lessons for a sick colleague, is paid for this extra teaching. Old age pensions are also non-contributory. These salaries given are the basic salaries. There are all kinds of additional payments. The pay is based on four hours' teaching a day for those taking Classes I to IV and three hours' teaching for Classes V to X and for teaching schools. Any additional teaching receives additional pay according to the scale for the grade. Any member of the staff who has been awarded the title of "Honoured Teacher" or who has a degree receives an additional one hundred roubles a month.

Heads of Junior and Senior Secondary Schools and of teaching schools, and Instruction Supervisors, are paid additionally for the teaching they do in accordance with the scale for teachers of those subjects.

The form teacher in Classes V to X is paid for that additional responsibility seventy-five roubles a month in the capitals and in Kharkov, and fifty roubles in rural areas. Teachers of Russian and foreign languages, literature and mathematics in Classes V to X and in teaching schools receive sixty roubles a month extra for marking written work.

The scale for specialist teachers, Heads and Instruction Supervisors with twenty-five years' work in their subjects is ten per cent higher than for those with ten years.

In spite of all efforts there were during the war increasing numbers of teachers who had not completed the Senior Secondary School. The salary of such teachers in Classes I to IV is ten per cent below the scale for Grade II of their category. They are given every encouragement to qualify.

There is a similar reduction for the specialist teacher

who has not graduated and the art teacher who did not complete a secondary education.

In those primary schools where, owing to paucity of numbers, Heads have to do four hours' teaching a day, there is no extra remuneration.

Teachers in special schools for the physically and mentally defective receive as already stated a twenty-five per cent increase on the ordinary salary. Likewise in the schools in some remote districts in the Irkutsk province, in the Yakut Autonomous Republic and in some other northern national areas, the staff are compensated by a twenty per cent increase on the usual scale. There is a fifty to a hundred per cent increase in salary for those working in schools beyond the Arctic Circle.

A few calculations would show that it is possible for the Head of a secondary school to be receiving well over a thousand roubles per month, plus the payment for teaching.

Certain things have to be taken into account when considering the salaries for rural schools. In a village school the teacher receives free accommodation and fuel. Generally, a plot of land goes with the cottage. Almost invariably there will be a cow and some poultry.

THE TRAINING

The supply of teachers has never been able to keep pace with the demand in the Soviet Union, so rapid has been the expansion of education. For schools alone the number of pupils rose from less than eight million in 1914 to thirty-eight million in 1940. Whatever happened, a start had to be made to deal with that vast inheritance of illiteracy and to equip the young with at least the three R's as the essential foundation for future education. The policy has always been to get more and more children in school for an ever lengthening school life, until in 1940 compulsory universal education for all up to fifteen was achieved.

By 1936 supply was catching up with demand, and a decree was promulgated to the effect that all unqualified teachers who wished to remain in the service must pass the

qualifying examination by 1938. This was never achieved, for the war loomed nearer and nearer on the Soviet horizon, and it would have been foolish to lose those teachers who might be needed desperately.

The destruction and devastation, and the losses in manpower suffered by the Soviet Union during the war, made the problem of the supply of teachers more acute than it had been for many years. The measures adopted were varied. Education authorities were encouraged to adopt any reasonable methods that could temporarily solve this problem.

A national measure, widely used, was the special one-year course¹ at which students were accepted at almost any age, provided they had completed the Senior Secondary general education. So great was the need that for a period students with only a Junior School education (seven to fifteen) were being accepted. In this case the students had to continue their general education so as to reach the Senior Secondary standard. The course was devoted in the main to education, methods, psychology and school practice. On completion the students entered either primary schools or the primary grade of secondary schools. They had to continue their studies in order to acquire both the academic and the professional standard of the teacher who had followed the normal course.

In many girls' schools, an additional class (XI) was organised for girls who in Class X were interested in the profession. They went through a similar course to that cited above, doing their school practice in the school itself.

In a school in Kuibyshev Region, on the initiative of the Instruction Supervisor, the pupils in Class X were switched over from their ordinary curriculum to a course that would prepare them to take the younger children in the village schools.

A plan was drawn up for one hundred and twelve hours'

¹ This is not really comparable to the British Emergency Teachers' Training Scheme which allowed for an unusual degree of experimentation.

study and training. The special lessons, given twice a week by the more experienced teachers in the schools, included basic methods and education, history, nature study, geography and arithmetic, and the methods of lesson presentation to a class. Pupils visited other schools, and after some observation of lessons, themselves gave lessons.

All such measures were warmly welcomed by the teaching profession. In a great many cases the teachers themselves organised courses for the training of new teachers.

In Byelorussia, one of the republics that suffered most from the enemy, five thousand teachers offered to work two shifts a day, that is, to do an eight hours' teaching day.

Teacher-training by correspondence was first started in 1920, and has continued ever since. The conditions of study are similar to those which obtain for any correspondence course.

These courses are run by the Institute of Education, by the teaching institutes and the teaching schools, and, as might be expected, are more commonly patronised by the previously backward nationalities.

In the Kazakh Republic in Southern Asia, with its vast sandy wastes which Soviet science has set out to make fruitful, correspondence courses have been organised at all Institutes of Education and teaching schools. In this republic, with its pre-1914 illiteracy of nearly ninety per cent, thousands of teachers have been trained by correspondence. The Kazakh Ministry of Education in 1944 set up a special department for Teacher Training Correspondence Courses and opened a special scientific bureau for research into this form of training. So much for emergency training.

NORMAL TRAINING

There are three types of institutions which train teachers in normal times. The first two, Teacher Training Schools and Teaching Institutes, are in fact also temporary, since ultimately the third type, the Education Institute, with the four-year course, will be universal. The war, how-

ever, has made this achievement more remote than it appeared to be in 1938.

Full-time training has been carried on in three types of institutions, a three-year course—extended in 1947 to four years in Teacher Training Schools, a two-year course in Teachers' Institutes, and a four-year course in Pedagogic Institutes and university Departments of Education.

The Teacher Training Schools prepare teachers for the primary schools or grade, ages 7 to 11. Kindergarten teachers are trained in separate Teacher Training Schools, since the child from 3 to 7 is considered to require a different régime and approach from the school child.

It is an accepted principle in the Soviet Union that professional training must be based on full secondary education—the Ten-Year School. When, as in technicums and Teacher Training Schools students entered with only a seven-year education, the first two years were chiefly given over to completing the necessary general education.

As the number of secondary schools increased, there were many would-be entrants to Teacher Training Schools with a ten-year general education, and some authorities reorganised the Teacher Training Schools into two-year courses. Soon, all entrants will have received the full general education in school so that the two-year Teacher Training School will everywhere become a two-year college.

It is not yet clear how long the three types of training institutions will remain, but ultimately the four-year course will become universal.

Since without doubt, India will have a teaching problem for many years, the Teacher Training Schools should be of particular interest and I give below the regulations for these, as approved by the Council of People's Commissars (now Ministers) on March 11, 1944. It was the result of much criticism of the training that had been given and of much discussion.

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SECTION I

"The Teacher Training School is a state pedagogical institute of secondary grade academic standard, financed by the state, and controlled by the Commissars (now Ministers of Education) of the RSFSR.²

"The purpose of the Teacher Training School is to train able skilful teachers for the primary school and primary grade of the secondary school.

"The course lasts three years.³ All citizens between the ages of fourteen and twenty-five who have received a Junior Secondary education are eligible.

"Study and training must be in the native language.

"To every Teacher Training School there is attached a primary school for practice.

"A Teacher Training School is to have hostel accommodation.

"A Teacher Training School is to have its auxiliary farm, and dining-rooms closed to outsiders."

The Teacher Training School is directly under the Province or Region Department of Education or of the Commissariat (Ministry) of Education of its Autonomous Republic, and in the towns of the republics it is under the City Department of Education.

SECTION II

"The following subjects shall be in the curriculum of the Teacher Training Schools: Russian language and method, method for arithmetic teaching, geography, nature study, history, drawing, writing, singing, physical training and the method for each: Literature and mathematics, the constitution of the USSR, physics, education, psychology, manual work in workshops and on the land. In the non-

² Other republics are free to organise their training in their own way but because the RSFSR was for years the leading republic, in actual practice there is close approximation in the way the institutions are organised.

³ Extended to 4 years.

Russian Teacher Training Schools, native language, literature and method shall be added.

"The syllabuses and time-tables of each must fit into the scheme of work as arranged for the Teacher Training Schools (by the central authority).

"School practice is compulsory. It shall consist of observation of lessons and leisure activities, a test lesson, one day's teaching, and a two weeks' teaching period in a primary school or the primary grade of the secondary school.

"Students shall be taught to play on an instrument (piano, violin, etc.). The tuition shall be individual, after class, and have ten hours a week assigned to it. Tone-deaf students shall be excused."

The basic method employed in the Teacher Training School is the class lesson by the teacher (lecturer), strictly following the time-table. The methods used must be such as to help the students to master the subject with accuracy, make them active, develop habits of independent work and intellectual curiosity, and make them skilled in teaching practice.

The Teacher Training School must have subject rooms for the subjects listed above, a gymnasium, a plot of land for practical study and workshops for making teaching aids. There must also be a library and reading-room.

The school year begins on September 1st and ends on June 20th. There is, in addition, two weeks' holiday in the winter, and one week in the spring.

There are six lessons of forty-five minutes each per day, seven in non-Russian Teacher Training Schools.

Examinations and marking follow the practice for the Senior Secondary School. The staff consists of the Principal, who must be a graduate with not less than ten years' teaching experience. The Principal makes the staff appointments with the exception of the Vice-Principal, who is appointed by an Education Ministry, with the approval of the appropriate education authority. The Principal also nominates members of the staff for awards.

Much else comes within his or her authority. In rural

districts the Principal is entitled to free accommodation with fuel, light and any other communal service.

A Principal must periodically be released from duties in order to take a course connected with the work.

In the new type training colleges of which there are already 215 in the school year 1954-55, the training is to be wholly professional. New text-books and syllabuses are required as well as a change in methods and approach. Whereas the methods used in the Four-Year School were class-room methods, differing little from the secondary school, the new maturer student demands something more as was shown by the experience of 1954. The teachers found they had to become lecturers and replace the lesson by the lecture.

In the Chkalov Teacher Training School some preliminary work was done with the students before the change-over of methods. They were taught how to take notes, how to work independently with books and how to use books. Before the lecture there was a few minutes talk on homework and each lecture was prefaced by a plan. This was found to be very valuable with such subjects as history, pedagogy and methods. The class lesson system was still used for Russian and arithmetic, but the content of the lesson was different. It was first a revision of the knowledge acquired in school and then a deepening and enlarging of this knowledge on a scientific basis.

The first year's experience in Chkalov showed that the staff did not automatically change their methods and approach. There were still many who taught as though their students had come from the Seven-Year School instead of the Ten-Year School, still many who seemed to be unaware of the role of machinery in the country's economy and did not realise that the teacher in the school has to bring up and teach children who are to run the machines and production. Training colleges must be provided both by the Ministry of Education and local education authorities with workshops for manual work and plans for the instructors. Colleges must give the future teachers practical work in the growing of vegetables, fruit and grain.

Not every college has as yet its demonstration and practice school or its kindergarten. This is essential for successful training.

Teachers' Institutes train teachers for the middle grade of the secondary school (Classes V to VII inclusive) to specialise in two or three related subjects.

Students who have completed the Senior Secondary School course are accepted on passing the entrance examination unless they have gained exemption by reaching a high standard in the final school-leaving examination.

Those who have successfully completed the course in a Teacher Training School are accepted, after they have worked the usual three years in their profession, without examination.

Teaching Institutes may organise a preparatory course for the would-be candidates who have only completed nine of the required ten years' general education school.

The course lasts two years and there are three departments: (1) Historico-Philological; (2) Physico-Mathematical; (3) General Science-Geographical.

A student who has successfully completed the historico-philological course should be able to teach Russian and history, while the general science-geographical course should enable a student to teach biology, chemistry or another science subject as well as geography.

All students are entitled to a grant and to hostel accommodation if they desire it. The student organisation and its responsibilities, rights and leisure are similar to those of student bodies elsewhere. The teaching staff comprises professors, readers (dotsenty) and lecturers. The academic work is organised on similar lines to that in universities with the differences that will arise from a two-year instead of a four-year course.

A Junior Secondary School for practice, observation and demonstration is attached to each institute.

Certain subjects are compulsory for all courses. They are the foundations of Marxism-Leninism, psychology, pedagogy, school hygiene and physical training. In addition, there are a number of subsidiary subjects for each

faculty, of which the student must select one, and in which he has to pass a test.

In Russian language and literature, the student may choose his subsidiary subject from general literature, general modern history and nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the history of the USSR, physical training or foreign languages. In the History Faculty the choice includes historiography and Russian literature, physical training, a foreign language; in the General Science-Geography Faculty the subsidiary subject selected may be the history of geographical discovery and illustrative drawing, or physical training or a foreign language, while in the Physico-Mathematical Faculty the selection is from the history of mathematics, the history of physics, physical training and a foreign language. School practice takes place in the second half of the second year and lasts for five weeks.

The special subjects taken in the Russian language and literature course: Introduction to language, Russian, methods of teaching Russian, introduction to literature, methods of teaching the reading of literature, and Soviet literature.

The history course includes ancient history, history of the Middle Ages, modern history, history of the USSR, methods and constitution.

The special subjects in the course for general-science and geography are: general chemistry, botany, zoology with elements of Darwinism, geology and mineralogy, general physical geography, the geography of other countries, geography of the USSR, cartography with elements of topography, and methods for the subjects.

The special subjects for the physico-mathematics course are: elementary mathematics, analytical geometry, mathematical analysis, general physics, the methods of teaching these and the technique of experiments in school.

At the end of the course there is a state examination, written and oral in three subjects. One of these, the foundations of Marxism-Leninism is compulsory for every course.

In Russian language and literature examination papers are set in both subjects. In history, the subjects in which papers are set are ancient history and the history of the

Middle Ages. In general science-geography, the subjects for examination are vertebrate zoology and geography of the USSR, while in physico-mathematics they are elementary mathematics and general physics. There are internal examinations and tests in the other subjects.

Pedagogic or Education Institutes train teachers for Classes VIII to X inclusive, to specialise in one main subject. It is only in recent years that a subsidiary subject has been required. Many Education Institutes have pre-school departments for the training of Heads and Inspectors for kindergartens. The Herzen Institute in Leningrad has a Department of Defectology for training specialists for schools for defectives.

The institutes vary in their set-up, many having only three faculties: history, language and literature, and physics-mathematics. The Lenin Education Institute in Moscow has faculties for history, language and literature, physics-mathematics (with separate courses in each of these last two subjects), general science, geography and pedagogy, while the Municipal Education Institute in Moscow has in addition a faculty for graphic arts, and one for foreign languages (English, French, German). The Omsk Educational Institute has in addition to the usual faculties, two other departments, one for geography and another for the Peoples of the North, which includes the study of the languages of these peoples.

The curriculum for these institutes may be divided into three sections (1) covering the socio-philosophical subjects, (2) the professional subjects, that is, those concerned with teaching, and (3) the subjects covering the selected specialisation. The first two are compulsory for all students, irrespective of specialisation, as is also a foreign language which is taken throughout the course until the final examination term. Physical training is also compulsory in the first two years.

The first section (compulsory) includes the foundations of Marxism-Leninism and political economy. The course in Russian language and literature includes historical and dialectical materialism.

The professional section includes: psychology, education, history of education, school hygiene and methods.

Latin is compulsory for one year for a language course which must also include the Russian language. Every specialised course has a broad foundation. For example, both Russian and geography require general history and the history of the USSR, while the history course requires general literature and Russian literature, and in itself history covers ancient history and the history of international relations and diplomacy. The fundamental specialisation, for a limited period, takes place in a post-graduate course, that is, after the training has been completed.

The geography course includes the following subjects: astronomy, general physical geography, cartography and the elements of topography, illustrative drawing, geology, plant geography with the elements of botany, mineralogy and petrology, soil geography with the elements of soil science, animal geography with the elements of geology, physical geography of USSR, economic geography of USSR, world physical geography, economic and physical geography of foreign countries.

The general science course cycle includes: physics (selected subjects), general and inorganic chemistry, analytical chemistry, organic and bio-chemistry, the elements of physical and colloidal chemistry, human and animal physiology, Darwinism and geology.

None of these subjects is taken throughout the whole four years of the course. Some are taken for one year only, others for two years. Only a foreign language is taken throughout. Nearly all subjects have an examination, written and oral, at the end of the year. In addition, there are half-yearly oral tests.

These academic courses would be equivalent to a degree course in an English university, while the professional course is a much more thorough training than is provided by the one-year post-graduate course in education for teachers in England.

Among the themes included in the subject education are: education, its content and problems; the common core

and the variety of basic conceptions of education; the philosophical foundations of education; education and instruction; comparative education; didactics and its principles; methods; moral training; problems of school and class organisation; out-of-school activities; the home and so on.

School practice is taken in the third and fourth years and includes observation, and learning the way about a school, helping with out-of-school activities in the third year, and a month's continuous teaching in the fourth year.

Students are encouraged to join circles concerned with problems of education. Except for the foreign language course, in which there are only three subjects, the final state examination at the end of the course requires four subjects, of which two, the foundations of Marxism-Leninism and education (full cycles), are the same for all faculties.

For history, the examination requires history of the USSR and a selected course in general history.

The institute has to organise a post-graduate course for the training of research workers. The candidates for this are graduates with a high attainment in their diploma work. In the three-year post-graduate course they work on a thesis on which they hope to receive their first degree—Candidate for Education. Here (as elsewhere in higher education) degrees are awarded only on a piece of post-graduate research.

Pedagogic Institutes have been subject to criticism like everything else. The re-introduction of polytechnisation demands new consideration of the training given here. The modern secondary school teacher must have practical knowledge as well as a good theoretical knowledge.

Physics and mathematics have been organised into separate courses. The physics course is to have new subjects "the fundamentals of machinery" and "heat technique," and an optional practicum in auto-tractors and agricultural machinery. Mathematics students are to have a mathematics practicum for surveying, calculating and model making, with a number of optional courses linking theory and practice. There are also changes in the course for Russian language and literature. The previous 575

hours, mostly spent on lectures is to be increased to 708, hours of which a considerable part is to be devoted to Modern Russian. It is now to begin in the first year and cover two and a half years. The overloading of students with compulsory lectures and seminars, sometimes for 8 hours a day, is to cease and considerable time will be allowed for private study. For example of the 63 hours allotted to machinery only 38 are to be spent on lectures, all of which must be accompanied by demonstration and models. School practice is to be increased from 12 to 14 weeks, and students who will teach in rural schools, must do their practice in such schools and not as before in city schools.

Independent work is to receive careful attention and planning and time-tables are to be arranged so that lectures are given in the morning and practical work is done in the afternoon.

There has been criticism of school practice which has not always been well organised. Those who are going to teach in villages, and they are the majority, must henceforth do their school practice in a rural school. School practice must be related to the teacher's future work.

At a conference of the leading personnel of the Pedagogic Institutes of the USSR the following recommendations were adopted. Students must study the school syllabus and text-books more thoroughly. More attention is to be paid to the successful teaching in schools and their experience used. School practice is to be supervised by suitably qualified people who know the school.

There should be a central supply for equipping the institutes with laboratories and workshops for polytechnisation. Pedagogic Institutes should be attached to industrial undertakings, machine-tractor stations or farms, according to circumstances. A foreign language should be an optional in all faculties. Lecture time on theory should be cut to allow more time for independent work. There should be a better distribution of seminars and practical work. Biology students must have field practice in two sessions, in the spring and the autumn. The chemistry course should include soil analysis in agricultural che-

mistry. Lectures on these subjects should be given in natural conditions.

In the Ferghana Pedagogic Institute the Chair of Geography reported on the methods it had adopted particularly as relating to school practice.

They tried to create normal conditions in the school for the practice student. They have already increased the practice period from 12 to 14 weeks. During practice, the time at the institute has been cut by 2 to 4 hours a day. School practice is preceded by a conference in August where the students take an active part in planning the school work for the 1st and 4th terms. On September 1st the students visit the schools in groups of 15. In each school 5 classes are selected, parallel Classes V, VII, VIII, with a qualified teacher in charge. Each class has 3 students who take it in turns to teach for 4 to 5 weeks. All three take part in out-of-class activities but only the one who is teaching is responsible. The student, whether teaching or observing spends the whole day in school, visits lessons in parallel classes, takes duty, is present in the class during lessons given either by the teacher or another student. The two students not teaching must attend the lessons of the third, and take part in the analysis of the lesson. They attend class meetings, school council meetings, and meet the parents. Fitting in with the number of geography lessons and the school time-table the students are in the school three days a week. The mixture of teaching and practical work does not overburden them.

The supervisor has to visit and analyse not less than half the lessons given, and must see all plans and notes of lessons. The aim is for the student teacher to work in conditions approximating as nearly as possible to those that would be normal for him or her when teaching. He or she will give a sequence of connected lessons on one or two themes and deal with them completely.

In this way a student will get to know the class in a month, and "my class" will be a reality. The students feel very easy and at home by the second or third teaching turn. They learn to estimate the progress of the pupils. Further,

because the director of the school and the teachers really get to know the students, they often treat them as full members of the staff. It will happen at the end of the practice period that the director will ask the student to lecture to the geography circles. Three years of experience has convinced the Ferghana Institute of the value of their methods.

The USSR still suffers from a shortage of secondary school teachers, particularly in mathematics and physics. In 1954, 60,000 graduates left Pedagogic Institutes and entered schools, but the needs were not satisfied everywhere. Byelorussia has 1,382 secondary schools but only received 400 graduate geography teachers. There is a demand for a better distribution of teachers among schools and for subjects.

At the request of the Azerbaijan Ministry of Education the RSFSR sent 400 graduates to teach Russian in their Azerbaijan schools. The republic's Institute for Improving Teachers' Qualifications organised courses for these new teachers in the geography of Azerbaijan and in comparative grammar for the two languages. There were also courses in the teaching of Russian to non-Russian children including theory and method.

In addition to full-time courses for teacher training there are correspondence courses in great variety. They are taken either by people who are already working and would like to become teachers, or by those wishing to get higher qualifications. In Moscow there is a Correspondence Institute. A questionnaire to graduates of a course in 1954 showed that correspondence training can be as valuable as full-time training provided certain conditions operate. The studies must be very well organised and planned and real active help must be given to students. There must be ample provision of text-books and note books. There must be provision for work in the laboratory, workshop, subject room and excursions to the fields. The period of practice should be increased in the last year. The key, however, is the work of the student at home. There should not be too much reliance on the teacher.

The replies showed that the students had reached the

requisite standard in subjects taken, in physics, mathematics, pedagogy, psychology and method. The course had "widened and deepened" their knowledge. A criticism was the insufficient acquaintance with progress and development in agriculture for biology teachers.

There are periodic visits by tutors to district centres to which students come for personal help and discussions. There is provision for paid time off in the last three months of the last year of the course if necessary.

The reorganisation of education has raised many problems of teacher training which will take some time to solve. These are discussed in some detail in *Sovietskaya Pedagogika* (Soviet Education) of January 1955: "The new study plans for teacher training institutes envisage a considerable improvement in the students' independent work, the transfer of some compulsory subjects to optional, an increase in the balance of practical and laboratory work. School practice is to be more embracing."

The recently approved decree on the "improved training, distribution and use" of graduate specialists has an important bearing on the future development of teacher training.

A problem is presented by the small Seven-Year School (7 to 14 plus) with no parallel classes, of which there are a great many in the country. The pedagogic institute-trained teacher, specialist in one subject, does not have enough work to occupy his or her time fully. Obviously these schools require a specialist in two sciences, as for example, nature study and geography, or physics and mathematics. In solving this problem consideration should be given to such related sciences as can be well covered in a four-year course and which will ensure the best use of the young specialist.

Turning to the teacher for the primary school the author of the article states that two years is not enough to equip the student with all that is necessary for primary teaching. This question requires further serious study.

Another matter that needs attention is the distribution of teacher training institutions. Many more must be

opened in Siberia and the Far East to stop "the cartage" of young teachers from the centre to these areas as was the case hitherto.

The size of the Teacher Training Schools also requires attention. A school for sixty students is very wasteful. There must be better planning of specialists to avoid a shortage in some subjects as for example in mathematics, physics and foreign languages, and an excess in others.

The problem of training teachers for manual work has not yet been solved. There is criticism too of the training of teachers in the Defectology faculties of Pedagogic Institutes. The teaching of reading, writing and arithmetic to children with defective speech, hearing and sight is not wholly satisfactory. Improvement is also required in the training provided by physical education and by Art Teacher Training Schools.

Much emphasis here too is laid on the ability to work independently. "It is very important to train the future teacher to use books, to find in a book the answer to questions that arise, to train the ability for independent analysis of facts and to make conclusions, and to inject a desire for the continued improvement of his or her knowledge".

An investigation of the qualification of the graduates of the different teacher training courses showed that they lacked the practical skills necessary for their subjects as well as for pedagogy and methods. The new plans for study will not by themselves improve the situation. It is not merely a question of the time allotted to practical work. The equipment and accommodation of the laboratories and workshops and the methods and approach must be such as to interest and encourage, as well as stimulate the students to initiative.

FURTHER TRAINING

So much for the pre-teaching training. It is realised that no course, however well organised, can produce an experienced widely-qualified teacher. The greater number of teachers continue their training after they have taken

up work. In Moscow and in other leading cities there are institutes for the improvement of teachers' qualifications.

These institutes generally offer a two-year evening course, dealing with both subject and method, the purpose being to raise the general educational level as well as the professional standard. They are closely linked with schools where students study successful methods and approaches and gain experience. The information gathered by students in such schools is later made available by the institute to the education authorities and to all teaching associations within their area.

For example in 1952, at the suggestion of the RSFSR Ministry of Education the Central Institute for Improving Teachers' Qualifications arranged two courses for Heads of secondary schools. The first course held in February-March was attended by ninety-three Heads of secondary schools from all parts of the republic. Lectures were given in philosophy, pedagogy, psychology as well as on such questions as 'planning the work of a school,' 'organising control within the school,' 'forming a close-knit community,' and subject method. The course included visits to Moscow schools and seminar-conferences on the most important work in the schools, to which very much time and attention was given. A plan drawn up beforehand was given to each Head as a guide in the study of a Moscow school. There were three headings: (1) planning the work of the school Head; (2) forms and methods for guiding the teaching staff; (3) forms and methods used by the teaching staff to prevent failures in class.

Among the means adopted by these institutes for the raising of teachers' qualifications are courses of varying length and concentration to suit particular needs, seminars, conferences, discussion groups, exhibitions, actually helping the teachers in class, visits and publications. They are an integral part of the education system and are directly under the region or District Education Authority.

In Moscow, in addition to these institutes, there is a Central Institute for raising the qualification of leading education personnel. The tasks of this institute are to

study, analyse and make widely known the best educational practice, and to study the questions of inspection and administration of education. The institute helps the education ministers of autonomous republics and the different education authorities as well as inspectors, for all of whom it arranges conferences, discussions, and exhibitions. Further it publishes instructions and bulletins. The usual form of study in this institute is the two-monthly or the monthly course for regional and district inspectors.

Large administrative units of the USSR are divided into districts, and a region may have anything from forty to seventy such districts. In each district centre—the town or large village—there is an Education Bureau attached to the District Education Authority with a full-time period director and two or three paid assistants, who organise an active group of helpers from among the teachers in the neighbourhood. The chief role of a bureau is to render daily help to the Head and teacher in the school. The bureaus are centres for discussion and exchange of experience. There is an exhibition, often quite small, with changing exhibits (the work of the teachers instructing in methodology), visual aids, children's work of interest—anything in fact that will widen the teachers' horizon and give useful hints on improving their work. Handwork groups, subject groups and any activity that is demanded locally may be arranged by the bureau.

The staff visit school and give open demonstration lessons to which are invited teachers from other schools. Such lessons are always followed by discussion. In rural areas these bureaus are very modest buildings indeed—often only log constructions—but they are very much alive and always enlarging their activities.

Another way of improving teaching is through a Methods Association, formed by a number of village schools. This method is of particular value in vast sparsely populated areas. The members meet on Saturday evenings or on Sundays for the exchange of teaching experience and for discussions. At these meetings they draw up the schools' plan of work for the next month, discuss the syllabuses

for the period, and give demonstration lessons. The staff of the District Education Bureau and the inspectors take part in the work of these associations, which are voluntary bodies of teachers filled with a desire to improve education.

Within the school itself the School Methods Association and the Subject Commission make valuable contributions toward the improvement of teaching and education. At their meetings they discuss the syllabus, the planning and preparation of the lesson, education publications, and they exchange experiences. Sometimes the members will arrange for a course in their subject or in educational psychology and kindred subjects.

It is part of the duty of the Head of the school to see that the staff is continuing its training and education, and particularly to see that the unqualified complete the necessary course with the help of the various correspondence courses.

All this activity makes it obvious that Soviet authorities consider there is much to be done to raise the teaching and the academic level of teachers to the standard desired—and this is high.

None of this continued training is compulsory; the desire to do one's job well and the force of public opinion are the operative factors, here as in other countries. In every district, no doubt, will be found teachers who lack interest and do little once they have finished their training. These do not generally stay in the profession for many years. Both Heads and teachers can be, and are, dismissed for incompetence. Complaints about the school or the class may be made by the inspector, by another member of the staff, or by parents, though long before such complaints are made it becomes obvious from the behaviour of the pupils outside the school as well as in, from the examinations and tests, that something is wrong. Before any serious steps are taken every possible help will be given to the Head or teacher to improve. When this fails the case is brought before the district or regional or central education authority. A careful enquiry follows, and when hopeless incom-

petence is proved against either the Head or the teacher, he or she is dismissed.

Should dismissed persons feel they have been unjustly treated they have the right to appeal to a court of justice, either as an individual or through their union.

THE TEACHERS' UNIONS

Three unions cover the whole field of education. They are the Union of Pre-School Educationists, the Union of Primary and Secondary School Educationists, and the Union of Higher Educationists. All those who work in one of these educational fields, whether directly concerned like the teacher, or indirectly, like the school doctor, the cook and the cleaners, belong to one union. All the unions are affiliated to the Central Council of Trade Unions.

The teachers' unions like other unions are voluntary organisations open to all. All the members working in any educational institution form a local branch, which is the basic unit. Each branch elects a committee by secret ballot. Delegate conferences of local branches elect district, regional and higher committees. The teachers' union committees play an active role in the school. Accommodation, living conditions, cultural amenities, improvement of teaching, all are the concern of the committee. They pay particular attention to the young teacher.

Within each teachers' union there are a great many professional associations, as those for history teachers, geography teachers and many others.

The purpose of the unions is to look after the welfare of their members, including that of their children, and to raise the standard of education. The largest union, of primary and secondary schools, has a bi-weekly paper which is a great force both in improving the welfare of teachers and in improving education.

Membership costs two per cent of the basic salary. As the unions do not have to spend energy and money in bringing pressure to bear on the government for improvements, they can engage in more immediately fruitful acti-

vities. All insurance and allowances are non-contributory.

In every city and in many rural centres there is a teachers' club. The best are magnificent places with provision for every kind of leisure activity, artistic, scientific professional—provision for concerts and theatre shows and sports. The unions from their funds pay the professional instructors for these activities.

These clubs have very well stocked libraries and reference rooms. To serve teachers in rural areas and remote places the union runs a network of travelling libraries.

The leisure arts activities in the clubs in which teachers take part have produced many first-class musicians, artists, actors, all of whom are amateurs, who entertain their colleagues in the profession. The interest in sport has grown to such an extent that the Union of Primary and Secondary School Teachers alone has over 300,000 members in the sports societies.

They have their tourist centres in different parts of the country and organise a variety of holiday tours. Both by the sea and in the country they have holiday homes and sanatoria for their members at reduced rates, or free as an award for good teaching. The unions run holiday homes and holiday camps for the long summer vacation for the members' children, and since the war, they have made themselves responsible for many orphan homes. It is the unions, through funds put at their disposal, who pay the woman teacher her allowance for the three months' pregnancy leave, and who make contributions from their own funds for the extra expenses connected with pregnancy. Many education courses and conferences are run by the unions, the great majority of whose officials are volunteers. The right to self-criticism, so widely exercised in the Soviet Union, and the right to recall or dismiss officials keep these officials up to the mark, and prevent those at the top from losing touch with the rank and file.

CHAPTER NINE

Polytechnisation

“EDUCATION MEANS TO US these things: (1) intellectual development, (2) physical development, (3) polytechnical education, which will give knowledge relative to the general scientific principles of all production processes, and will at the same time give children and young people practice in the use of elementary tools of all branches of production”
—Marx.

Let us be quite clear, polytechnisation is not technical training for a trade or profession. This training as the reader will learn from this book, is given in special schools after completion of the general school which by 1960 will be 17 years.

Polytechnisation is both a system of education and a method. As a system it acts as the correlating agent between school and life. As a method it prepares the children to be skilful and intelligent workers in the community. The decree making secondary education universally compulsory by 1960 is a step towards fulfilling the aim that the Soviet worker shall be a many-sided fully-developed individual, interested in matters intellectual and artistic. He is the new Soviet intelligentsia. This necessitates on the part of the worker much more than just craft or skill. Deft hands must be guided by a rich and quick mind. This demands a scientific understanding of the materials used and a knowledge of the role of the product in the economic scheme of the country. Marxists hold that economic forces are the major factor in the shaping of life and that methods of production vitally affect the conditions under which

humanity exists. Therefore the individual must not be only a good producer for the new society, he must understand the scientific basis of production. He must understand the relation between man and nature and their interaction. He must know the effect of new productive processes on the organisation of the factory and on the organisation of the workers. Theory and practice must be linked together so that the worker regards his work intelligently, so that he knows its meaning and importance in the scheme of society. All this is meant by polytechnisation. This connection of education with labour does not result in circumscribing education within narrow limits. The more production is mechanised the wider is the field of knowledge with which the intelligent worker must be conversant. For example the introduction of electric processes into industry in the 1930's and today the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, has greatly extended the scientific field with which the worker must be acquainted. The mechanisation of agriculture has immensely widened the horizon of the peasant boy and girl.

Polytechnisation was adopted by Russian Marxists from abroad. The French Utopian Fourier first gave expression to the belief that education in a workers' state must be intimately bound up with labour, and that all should have some experience of manual work. The idea commended itself to Robert Owen who tried to put it into practice in England. It was from Owen that Karl Marx took over the principle. Both Marx and Engels seized on the idea and made it a corner-stone of socialist education. Engels in his *Anti-Dühring* underlined the fact that polytechnisation was ultimately bound up with the construction of socialism. He considered that the contrast between town and country would only be eliminated when a generation should have grown up with an all-round development, with a polytechnised training. As early as the 'nineties the Russian revolutionaries seriously considered polytechnisation as a socialist method of education, because at that time the industrial development of the country was creating the conditions for a workers' movement. Lenin stated categorically that

Marxists stood for a polytechnised education, for a close connection between education and productive labour.

The question remained a theoretical one until the outbreak of the 1914 war. Very soon after, Lenin once more began to write on the need for discussion of polytechnisation. After the October Revolution the question became practical politics. The Communist Party programme adopted at the Eighth Party Conference, said that the school must be polytechnised. At the end of the Civil War in 1920-21, when the problem of economic reconstruction was receiving attention, it was realised how much was required in the sphere of technical training to prepare the people for industry. At once polytechnisation became a burning question. At the Party Conference in 1920 Lenin insisted that the fundamental problem for discussion was polytechnisation. He insisted on the necessity for the realisation that polytechnisation was not merely an educational question, it was a general political question. It was a question of the reconstruction of the whole tenor of life, a question of the eradication of the old division of labour, intellectual and manual. That was why he considered it of the utmost importance to start polytechnisation immediately in spite of the disintegration of the economic and industrial system. He added further that the basic elements of agriculture must be included in polytechnisation.

The difficulties facing the protagonists of polytechnisation in those early post-revolution years were enormous. There were hardly any teachers or educationists who knew anything about the subject. Quite often a workroom in a school was taken to mean polytechnisation. Sometimes the practice in a school was both futile and fatuous. However with the improvement of economic conditions and the appearance of Soviet trained teachers it became possible to introduce polytechnisation into the school. In 1930 there was held a conference on "The Reconstruction of the National Economy and Polytechnised Education," opened by Lenin's widow, Krupskaya. She stated that the problem facing them was to turn the mass school into a polytechnised school in practice and not only in theory. Life and



*Students at the Stalinabad Teachers' Training Institute
in the Observatory (Tajik SSR).*

*Students of the physico-mathematical department of the
Women's Pedagogical Institute in Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan
at work in the electrotechnics laboratory*





During the war, as a solution to the problem of the shortage of teachers, an additional class, class 11, was added to the Ten Year School for one year teacher training course. A lesson in methods of teaching natural science in school 29, Moscow.

production demanded this. Addressing the conference on the second day, Krupskaya said, "The aim of polytechnisation was the all-round education of a highly developed worker, who could at the same time be worker and master of industry." The narrow specialist was of no use to them. "What was wanted was to equip the great masses with elementary industrial culture and arm them with a broad polytechnised outlook and the ability to apply their knowledge and skill to the most varied conditions. Hitherto the qualified worker was a man who through years of practice became a skilled craftsman with very narrow limitations. Frequently he had no other knowledge apart from his craft. He could not do the simplest sum. Take the old-type builder for example. Often he cannot do the simplest calculations. He has not the most elementary knowledge of geometry so necessary to his work. We need a totally different training—one that can link up productive labour with scientific knowledge."

It is interesting that it was due to the agitation of the Young Communist League that in 1931 a final reorganisation was made in the schools with regard to polytechnisation. A decree was issued that every school must be attached to a productive unit of some sort, industrial or agricultural. This link between school and productive unit has persisted, though sometimes in a weak form, right up to the present and will continue to do so.

There was much experiment and research into polytechnisation, the best type of training for the teacher, the equipment for workroom and workshop, the syllabus content and so on. In 1931, the Institute of Polytechnisation was set up in Moscow. It carried on research into the suitability of different materials for different purposes and age groups, into tools and equipment. Much of the equipment first supplied to schools by the patron factory was quite unsuitable for the physique of children. The institute was highly successful in this task. By 1936 school workshops were equipped with excellent tools, instruments, benches and lathes. Science apparatus was particularly good.

Some of the schools had three or even more first class workshops. Every school was well equipped for polytechnisation.

Then in 1937, polytechnisation appeared to be dismissed from the school. Many schools dismantled the workshops. No longer was polytechnisation to be found on the time-table. What had happened? Visiting the Soviet Union the following year, I tried to find out.

The industrial development of the country had proceeded at a rapid rate and always on a higher level. Scientific advance was very great. New scientific techniques were continually replacing old methods. But polytechnisation in the school barely took account of these changes. The approach was the same old one. Indeed often polytechnisation was merely handwork. Pupils were turning out rakes, or hoes or stools, which are very valuable as a skill for juniors but had no relation to modern production. There was at the same time dissatisfaction with the standard of science in the school. Thus giving up polytechnisation would provide more time for the sciences and stop the waste of time on activity that was of not much value.

These were the arguments, but not all educationists agreed. Efforts were made to encourage more children to attend technical and handwork circles. During the war many school workshops were revived and much practical work, very useful to the country, was done by the school. After the war polytechnisation again became a question for discussion. There were schools in different parts of the country that had been practising polytechnisation with highly beneficial results. They gave their experience. More and more educationists took up the question. It was becoming obvious that polytechnisation was necessary. In 1954 a decree re-introduced polytechnisation into all the schools. But this is not the polytechnisation of the 1931 decree, because the USSR today is not the USSR of 1931. Modern Soviet industry and agriculture being on a much higher technical and scientific level demand a polytechnisation on a similarly higher level.

The new plan for polytechnisation envisages handwork

for Classes I to IV, work in workshops and in the school plot for Classes V to VII and practicums for agriculture, engineering and electro-technics for Classes VIII to X. The practical work by Classes VIII to X is to be done in workshops and subject rooms, on the school plot as well as in local factories, machine-tractor stations, collective farms and state farms according to availability. There are also to be excursions to study the fauna and flora, the economy and the culture of the locality. For senior classes there are to be factory visits.

Both physics and chemistry are to have a more fundamental teaching in the application of their laws to industry and agriculture. This and the new text-books which give more space to problems and experiment in laboratories, introduction of practical work from Class I to VII, of practicums for the seniors are all expected to solve the problem of introduction of polytechnisation into the general school and thus help in the preparation of the pupil for his future work. Attention too is being paid to the instructors that will be needed.

Agriculture has its own specific characteristics in that it deals with living things. Yet, there are many general scientific principles which if the pupils know them, will enable them to manage most plants and animals. In spite of the vast variety of production and agriculture there are certain general principles applicable to all. If the pupil is able to read blue-prints, to use measuring instruments, tables, a slide rule, dismantle and reassemble a lathe, if he knows the useful coefficient of the working of an engine, he will be ready to take his place successfully at the training lathe in the factory or behind an agricultural machine and he will sooner become a really skilled technician.

In the same way the application of the science that he has been given in the school laboratory to agriculture, both on the school plot and on the farm, will ensure his becoming a skilled agricultural worker. When to this training there is added the study of the social character of production and its role in the life of society, polytechnisation is achieved.

In Moscow School No. 545, which is an experimental

school for the Academy of Pedagogical Science, polytechnisation is to be the subject for research. Pupils are to study in detail the internal combustion engine and the electric engine with 3-phase current. Three-quarters of the work is to be done in the workshop and in the school yard. There will be twenty members from different institutes of the Academy doing the research in School No. 545, which is one of the three such laboratory schools carrying on research. The task in all these schools is to check in practice the new syllabuses for polytechnisation as well as to observe the standard of upbringing and teaching.

School No. 545 has new subjects for the seniors, engineering and electrotechnics. Physics and chemistry are both to be given more time here. The new plan for biology requires the re-equipment of the experimental plot by teachers and pupils together. Some lessons will be taken in the animal and plant pavilions at the Agricultural Exhibition.

A new subject for all classes here as elsewhere is manual work. Four workshops have been equipped. One of them is for Classes I to IV. Here the children will work with paper and card-board, do cut-outs, model in clay, use plasticine, sew, embroider, bind books and make ornaments for New Year trees. Class IV is to receive elementary instruction in carpentry and the use of tools. Metal and woodwork workshops, and an engineering workshop for Class X are now being used.

Students in training colleges and institutes are also to take polytechnisation, its theory and practice, and to do practical work.

A great variety of initiative has already been shown in the implementation of the polytechnisation decree. In the Ukraine many schools began in the new school year with special syllabuses for senior classes. Three Kiev schools are already training turners, milling machine operators, etc., in Classes VIII to X. In addition to the matriculation examination these pupils will take an exam qualifying for entrance into a factory or machine-tractor station.

In another Kiev school the two senior classes take industrial lessons in the trade school.

In a village school in Moldavia the chairman of the largest collective farm proposed the introduction in the schools, beginning with Class V, of a new subject, the fundamentals of agricultural production.

The experience in polytechnisation of the schools of the towns and villages along the Lvov railway should give a good picture of the shape of polytechnisation as it will develop in Soviet schools. The report is published in No. 2 of *Sovietskaya Pedagogika*, 1955. I give it here somewhat abridged.

"For the last two school years (1952-53, 53-54) the question of polytechnisation has been repeatedly discussed at extended meetings of the railway local education authority, methods associations, and school education councils, and at meetings of the methods section. As a result of these discussions we have produced both general plans for the region and individual plans for each school. We set ourselves the following basic tasks:

- a) To bring the content of our lessons close to modern demands, to get our children used to practical work relevant to the subject during the lesson.
- b) Laboratory experiments, demonstrations, practice and experiments during lessons and in out-of-school activities.
- c) Re-equipment of existing and equipment of new subject rooms and workshops and the allocation of school experimental plots.
- d) Organising work on the experimental study plots in live (nature) corners and in workshops.
- e) Linking schools with undertakings and collective farms, practicums with senior pupils of secondary schools at a factory, state farm, collective farm, collective farm cottage-laboratory on experimental fields, at cattle farms, at bee farms and at fisheries.
- f) Organising technical and agricultural circles for pupils, 'skilled hands' circles and others.
- g) Arranging meetings for pupils with leading figures in

industry, transport and agriculture and with those in science and technology.

- h) **Excursions on special themes and general observation** made to industrial and agricultural units, to their own village, town, region and territory.

"In putting our plan into practice we have already begun to realise many elements of polytechnisation.

"The teachers have undertaken: in the transition stage of polytechnisation to collect all possible additional material which will help the study of the fundamentals of polytechnisation; to help the school strengthen a polytechnical base by the preparation of many varied visual aids for physics, mathematics, biology, chemistry, etc., to interest all pupils in practical work consonant with their age and to get them to know production personally.

"The mathematics teacher of Secondary School No. 12 in the town of Stanislav, habitually enriches each section of the mathematics syllabus with problems based on railway transport, on industry and agriculture as well as on government statistical reports. He uses plan fulfilment and overfulfilment by Stakhanovite workers in the engine and carriage works of the factory in Stanislav when taking percentages, having beforehand prepared comparative tables and graphs. On the basis of this material he, together with the pupils, produce problems which contribute to the better understanding of the practical significance of what they are being taught.

"For geometry with the help of the parents and pupils, he has made the necessary survey measuring instruments and equipment for measuring the areas of different geometrical forms on the spot. As a result the pupils individually and in groups were delighted to calculate the area of the collective farm fields under wheat, rye, sugar beet, maize as well as of the orchards. When this was done, the pupils with the help of the teacher, the agronomist, the Kolkhoz chairman and Kolkhoz team leaders defined the average yield, compared yields, made the necessary conclusions

about the effect on yield of the quality of seed, manure, care, etc.

"The physics teacher of School No. 8 in the town of Stryi, like many others aiming at introducing polytechnisation, during these two years re-equipped the physics room so that the necessary experiments and demonstrations could be carried out there. With the co-operation of social organisations he improved the physics room with tractor engines and automatic engines, electric motors, dynamos, accumulators, electric measuring instruments and a varied assortment of technical parts. In addition to many other acquisitions his local friendly contacts enabled him to get two 16 mm projectors and to arrange a viewing of scientific and technical films. The cinema is much used in this school for all the lessons not only for physics. At first the school was very short of film operators, but the pupils took a special course and now the school has over 30 film operators. Twice a week now there are lessons with films.

"The best teachers in our schools, when teaching, pay much attention to both approximate and precise calculations, thus expressing a polytechnical approach to the phenomena of reality. They teach their pupils the correct use and application of logarithmic tables, of the arithmometer and measuring instruments.

"Our teachers avoid formalism. They try not to enclose themselves in the text-books nor to fence themselves off from life. We managed to retrain a young teacher who persistently put the blame for poor work on the pupils when in reality she was to blame, by helping her to see her own mistakes. In polytechnisation it is particularly important to show to the pupils the living links between phenomena and facts of reality.

"Without visual aids it is difficult for pupils to grasp easily the abstract thinking of the teacher and his final formula can merely produce a bad lesson.

"In the two years under consideration all the secondary schools of the Lvov railway have been wired for radio and the majority are equipped for films.

"In class work the majority of our teachers of mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, geography, etc., insist first of all on correct and accurate designs and drawings. The teachers try very hard to link up the lesson with drawing and designing. Because it is very important to understand a drawing or a design our teachers try to get the pupils, in addition to drawing or designing various geometric shapes and technical details in different projections and sections, to understand what work in industry and agriculture requires drawings and designs and what is the importance of this production. Many of our teachers teach their pupils to design and draw machine parts and details. They are however not content with this, not even with knowing the names of all the parts. They have taught the pupils to dismantle and re-assemble the engine, machine and bench and to set them going.

"Our chemistry teachers have taught their pupils the use of different chemical substances in industry and agriculture. There was the case of one school where chemistry was isolated from life and the pupils could not understand when and why they should know chemistry practically, to what end they were producing on the blackboard different chemical formulae. The situation changed as soon as the teacher began to explain each chemical reaction by its practical application, as soon as they learnt about the place of chemical products in the national economy.

"Practical work on the school plot, all the year round participation in collective farm production helps the pupils to understand the Michurin teaching on the transformation of living nature for the benefit of man. Our pupils study the advanced experience of the collective farmers in their region. They plant different varieties of industrial crops, carry out experiments with plants, insects, birds and the smaller animals, help to raise young animals on the farms. In many schools the school plot has become a model experimental laboratory. Such is the school plot at School No. 21 which two years ago was a desert. They now have an orchard with a variety of apple, plum, and apricot trees raised by the pupils in the fruit nursery. In the autumn of

1953-54 a vineyard of selected fruit was planted. Each variety is in charge of one class which studies it in detail.

"The necessary flower pots for their experiments are made by the pupils. They discovered that round pots when planted out waste much space. They therefore altered the lathes to produce six-sided pots. As a result they can put out 25 per cent to 30 per cent more.

"Soviet children's love of work that has a worth-while purpose is encouraged and developed through participation in socially useful activity. The pupils of School No. 22 regularly help with the work on their collective farm. School No. 20 has a permanently working polytechnical exhibition where the work of the different circles is shown. The pupils of School No. 38 actively help with the different circles in the city's Pioneer Palace. They have made much visual apparatus, painted pictures, produced beautiful embroidery, etc. Well planned and well organised work in technical, agricultural and other circles is of very great importance.

"In the 150 transport, technical and agricultural circles in the schools of the Lvov railway there are over 2,500 pupils taking part. Three children's railways do very important work in training and educating the children. They have organised in different areas 80 technical circles attended by 1,500 boys and girls.

"Different individual measures for polytechnisation receive very careful attention. Successful work in a school technical circle demands very well equipped workshops. This was very difficult at first, so many of our schools began by organising a technical or science corner. Then with the help of parents and social organisations these were turned into fully equipped workshops. This was not achieved quickly and in some cases required much effort and initiative on the part of the teachers.

"In the process of working, imagination, skill, perseverance and persistence in attaining the intended object, are gradually developed. There is developed too a high consciousness about fulfilment of duties, a personal responsibility to the circle collective as a whole and to separate

sections. All this had a beneficial effect on attainment, discipline and behaviour. With the object of raising the quality of the technical circles, of analysing and spreading the best experience, we hold an annual rally of young technicians. The spring rally of 1954 showed a considerable growth in technical thinking and inventiveness of circles and pupils. There were over 1,500 complicated exhibits of a great variety.

"Study excursions on a selected theme play a great part in our schools. Carefully planned and skilfully carried out, based on the syllabus, these excursions leave a deep impression on the consciousness and mind of the pupil. They strengthen the attraction for knowledge and for study, help the understanding of the basic technological processes in production, and of the role of electrification in the national economy. At the same time they help the pupils to make the best choice of future work.

"Excursions now differ from previous ones which were largely a general view of a factory.

"Side by side with 'open lessons' when teachers from many schools are present at a very good lesson, we are now organising 'open excursions' when such teachers can be present. The collective discussion that follows on such excursions as on open lessons, has been found very helpful to young and inexperienced teachers. During the excursion the pupils meet with leading workers in industry and agriculture, Stakhanovites, engineers, agronomists, collective farmers, etc., who shew them in practice the process and the results of diligent work, the place of each worker, of each collective farmer in the general scheme of work.

"In many of our schools excursions like the work in the circles are discussed by the pupils at special evening sessions. All kinds of people are invited to these, labour heroes, workers, collective farmers, engineers, agronomists and workers from research institutes. The guests often give lessons, take part in discussions when they inform the pupils of the latest advances in their particular sphere."

These are some of the results of two years' work on polytechnisation in the schools of the Lvov railway.

Discussion and experiment will continue on this subject over the whole Union. What is quite clear is that Soviet educationists are convinced that school must be geared to life, a changing life that makes higher demands on its people, that since work is the basis of life, the pupils by the time they leave school must understand its place and must be so trained in the school that they easily graduate to skilled workers, while at the same time they continue their intellectual and spiritual development.

CHAPTER TEN

Educational Research

EDUCATION, LIKE INDUSTRY, needs research to keep it alive. Denied research, it stagnates and becomes wholly inadequate to deal with social requirements. And research, in order to render full value, to be productive of new ideas and new inspiration, must be co-ordinated by a central body, and to some measure directed, making itself sensitive and responsive to needs as they emerge.

Because educational research deals with so many imponderables, because it is conditioned by the subjective element as well as by the objective desire for knowledge, and because it is so strongly influenced by environmental factors, it requires a vast army of research workers, over a vast and varied testing field, in order to produce truths that are of general fundamental importance and application. This applies particularly to research into psychology, which so far has not proved itself susceptible to the laboratory tests of physical or chemical experiments.

Both the need for research, and the difficulties surrounding it have come to be understood in the Soviet Union. Experiment was encouraged—too much so at one time—from the very inception of the Soviet system of education.

For years there have been Central and Regional Educational Research Laboratories. A special Institute for Schools for the nationalities was set up in Moscow to deal with education for the backward and non-Russian peoples.

The Regional and City Methods Bureaus are centres for research and experiment, on an elementary level it is true, but their work provides material for research and experiment on a higher level. The Education Bureaus

which deal with education in its more general aspect, are similarly centres of research; and in numbers of schools, under the direction of the Instruction Supervisor, research and experiment are carried on. The importance of this activity on the elementary level lies in arousing intellectual curiosity among the rank and file of teachers. It encourages and develops among teachers the enquiring mind without which education becomes a barren and arid work.

The activities of the Bureaus and Centres are co-ordinated and popularised through the education press and such periodicals as *Pre-School Education* (*Doshkolnaya Vospitanie*), *The Primary School* (*Nachalnaya Shkola*), *Soviet Pedagogy* (*Sovietskaya Pedagogika*), and other monthly education journals.

In 1936, to eliminate duplication and overlapping, several research establishments were combined to form the Central Schools Scientific Research Institute of the then Commissariat (now Ministry) of Education. This institute deals with the problems as they concern the school in its task of education, that is with method and content of subjects, presentation, organisation of learning and teaching, and similar important educational procedure.

There were eight subject departments in 1938; Russian language and literature, mathematics, physics, general science, chemistry, history, geography. Others were being planned for draughtsmanship, foreign language and arts. Each department works on the content of the syllabus and of an individual lesson, and recommends the amount of new material that may usefully be given in one lesson. It studies the problem of visual aids, what kind are in fact useful, and what is their role in the lesson. Subject text-books for the pupils and manuals for the teacher also come within the scope of the institute's activities.

At the head of each department is a highly qualified educationist, generally holding a professorship. He is assisted by educationists only slightly lower in the scale than himself. Departments accept as junior assistants teachers who in the process of their work may become excellent research workers.

There is close contact between the institute and the schools and teachers. Research work of the kind followed in the Schools Institute would lose most of its value if it had not continuous practical contact with the school. The Director of the Institute in 1938, Professor Vsesvyatky, had been Head of a school and was teaching botany to fifteen-year-olds; the assistant director was responsible master for Class X (seventeen- to eighteen-year-olds) in another school, where he also taught literature. The institute believes that it can and must learn from the schools. The data on which its staff will work to produce results must be gathered in the schools, so that the study of teaching, as it is practised in the school, plays an important part.

Any one problem may receive attention for a considerable period. Particular attention is paid to the study of successful teaching and to spreading the resulting information among the teaching profession through local and regional conferences. The institute members regularly meet the staffs of a group of schools within a radius of three to five kilometres. At these meetings they present new ideas and describe new methods; they receive and discuss reports of the teachers' own work, and opportunity is provided for discussion of educational theory, which is considered important.

Inexperienced Heads of schools receive help in the organisation and administration of a school—particularly in regard to its academic side. The Regional Education Bureaus are also in close contact with the institute and receive help and guidance from it.

A problem that was and still is receiving much attention is character training in schools. The experience of research workers in this field is published both for the specialist and in a popular form to reach both teachers and parents. As any problem in education or upbringing becomes topical, so the institute brings out literature on the question, which through its contacts reaches every teacher. Guidance for the Instruction Supervisor and for the Inspector are other problems which are tackled.

For some time now, the institute has been giving serious

attention to the non-Russian schools in the RSFSR. In addition to the task of bringing their education up to the level of the best Russian school, there is the question of teaching Russian to these children for whom it is a "foreign" language. It does not appear that this problem, the teaching of Russian in non-Russian schools, has been solved yet.

In 1939 the Schools Institute organised the first scientific education conference for teachers in the RSFSR. Thirty-five papers were read by merited teachers and ten by members of the institute's staff. Many and varied were the subjects. "Fundamental Problems of the Struggle for Good Work in the School," "Teaching Children to Read and Write Intelligently," "Developing the Habit of Independent Work Through the Mathematics Lesson," "Developing the Thought Process in the Mathematics Lesson," "Contact Between Learning and Life," "The School and Family," "Oral Methods in Mathematics" were some of the subjects dealt with, problems with which teachers everywhere are concerned. Some of the papers were of so high a quality that on the recommendation of the then Commissariat of Education their authors received the degrees of Candidate of Education.

It is interesting to note that the approach and methods used to obtain a good academic standard in all schools for all children as described at the conference, supported Soviet educationists in their rejection of the psychological theory of inherited inferior intelligence among certain sections of children, as well as their rejection of intelligence tests as a means of selection. The report of the conference states: "The speakers, teachers and educational scientists, proved that every child, given the right educational approach, the proper planning of the lesson and of out-of-school activities, and close contact between the school and the home, will reach the pass standard. They showed that there are no limits to educational work with the children." We should note the inclusion of out-of-school activities, that is leisure, and of the home.

In 1943, on the decision of the Council of People's Commissars, an Academy of Educational Science was organised.

Its functions include research in the field of general education and in special education, in the history of education, in psychology, school hygiene and in methods. They also include higher degree work to train personnel for the teaching of education and psychology in education institutes, universities and research institutes. Its regular publications are *Sovietskaya Pedagogika* and *Academy Reports*.

The Academy comprised the following sections on its formation: a research institute in the theory and history of education, a research institute in methods, a research institute for psychology, a research institute for the education of defectives, an education museum and an education library. As need arose, further institutes were set up.

The best educationists were assigned to the Academy and in its comparatively short life it has achieved a worthy record. Sessions are held regularly at which papers are read on the work done in one or other institute.

In June 1944, at a general meeting of the Academy, the plan for the academic year 1944-45 was discussed. It was agreed that side by side with major research requiring long periods, there must be work on the practical day-to-day problems of the school.

The plan for research of the Institute of Psychology concentrated on problems of educational psychology and of child psychology in their bearing on the school. Some of the themes for research were "The Psychological Foundations for Moral Training," "The Development of Motives for Activity in Children," "The Development of Mental Processes in School." A psychology laboratory was set up at a secondary school in which subjects studied were "Will and Character in Types of Children," "The Role of the Mental Development in the Formation of Will and Character," "The Significance of Emotion and the Role of Interest in Its Formation." The problems are described here not because they are unique to the USSR but to show what is being considered.

The plan for the Methods Institute was based on the five central problems: the scientific determination of the content; amount of matter and preparation of major sub-

jects; the place of text-books and visual aids; the principles of research training, that is methods and principles for research; and the history of the different subjects as taught in the schools. Research plans for other sections included such subjects as "Theory and Practice of Physical Training," "Children's Organisations in School." These were the plans on which the different institutes of the Academy set to work. At regular sessions, papers are read to each section, followed by considerable discussion.

A session held in September 1945 will give readers an idea of actual problems dealt with. The director of the Department of Education of the Institute of Educational Science belonging to the Ministry of Education in Georgia spoke on the need for a unified course in education for all Union Republics. He considered the existing differing syllabuses and text-books inimical to a common high standard. He suggested that the education course for teacher-training should consist of the following sections: intellectual training, moral training, physical training, instruction in school, and the teacher. In addition there should be a section for didactics. He was very critical about the inadequacy of the attention paid to the subject of moral training. The value of these discussions lies in the widespread stimulation of discussion and the resultant overhauling of education in the school. Further, he emphasised very strongly the importance of experimental education. It was essential to carry on experiments not only in educational psychology, but in problems of didactics and to be more daring in adopting the most varied methods. This indicated that Georgia at any rate is looking ahead to the time when the teacher will be good enough to need less centralised direction.

Another paper read to the Education Section, dealt with "Formalistic Knowledge in Children and How to Avoid It." There were many other papers dealing with the educational and psychological problems that confront teachers everywhere.

The section on methods heard and discussed two main papers. The well-known educationist Obnorski dealt with

"The Russian Language," and Pankratova, the historian, with "Training Political Thinking in the History Lesson." Other papers in this section dealt with such subjects as "Regional Study in School," "Aesthetic Training Through Literature," "Basic Problems in Planning a Physics Course in Secondary Schools," "Literature Theory with Senior Forms," "Immediate Problems in Methods for Mathematics," "Striving for a Scientific Standard in the Teaching of Biology and General Science," "Classifying Methods of Foreign Language Teaching"—all problems common to the teaching profession the world over.

At some of the discussions over a hundred educationists of senior rank took part and a general desire was expressed that a number of the papers should be published in the educational press.

Professor Kornilov, the eminent psychologist and secretary of the Department of Psychology, reported that four main papers in his department were devoted to child and educational psychology. Smirnov, the director of the Institute of Psychology, read a paper on "The Thought Process and Memory" based on a vast amount of experimental data, while a paper by Professor Shevaleyev dealt with "Thought Processes in School Work." Two hundred people discussed a paper on "The Psychology of Learning," so vitally important to every teacher in every school. Another interesting paper dealt with "The Psychology of the Individual Approach to the Pupil." The problem of the individual approach has been assuming an ever increasing importance in the Soviet Union. Many teachers attended the session and some made valuable contributions to the discussion.

The Academy of Educational Science is aware of the importance of research by teachers themselves in the process of their work. To this end a new scheme was planned in 1944 to organise "Pedagogical Forums," that is, sessions at which papers describing some piece of experimental or research work, preferably carried out by the teacher in the school, and the conclusions derived therefrom, would be read and discussed by as wide an audience of educationists as possible, the sessions to begin in 1945 on the anniversary

of the setting up of the Academy on October 6th. All those engaged in education in primary and secondary schools, in teacher-training schools and in institutes for improving teachers' qualifications were invited to take part in "The Scientific Study of Problems in Education, Educational Psychology, and Methods of Subject Teaching."

A set of rules governing these "Pedagogic Forums" or Education Forums has been published and states that:

1. The problems dealt with at these sessions are those actual for schools; pedagogy, psychology and methods.
2. The sessions will be held once a year and last two or three days.
3. Those engaged in education in whatever capacity have the right to present papers.
4. The themes set are those which arise out of the regular work of the Scientific Research Institute of the Academy of Pedagogy.
5. The themes, with instructions, are brought to the notice of all those concerned through regional departments of education and autonomous ministries of education, and through the varied and extensive educational press.
6. Themes for papers may also be suggested by anyone taking part in the scheme.
7. A person having selected a theme informs the Academy and sends his plan for the work undertaken. A group of persons may work collectively on the theme.
8. The Academy's institutes arrange consultations on the themes selected and give regular scientific supervision.
9. An examining board of seven, presided over by the Vice-President of the Academy reads and assesses the papers.

There are three money prizes awarded, two thousand roubles, one thousand roubles and five hundred roubles, first, second and third prize respectively. The money for prizes come from the Academy's research fund. The prize-winners are invited to read their papers at the Sessions of the Academy in Moscow and the expenses of those living

outside Moscow are borne by their education authorities. Papers which make a contribution to educational theory and practice are published in the relevant journals.

The themes suggested for 1945, the first year, are not without interest. They are divided under two heads, Upbringing (*Vospitanie*) and Instruction. Under the first heading, a problem acknowledged of vital importance in the Soviet Union, are included: physical training at school and home; training a love for one's country in different age groups; training a sense of duty and honour in youth; training and instruction value of the school choir; co-operation between the responsible class-teacher and the *Komso-mol* organisation in the school. The significance of these suggestions lies not in the problems themselves, but in the decision by the country's leaders that there had been enough talk, enough of generalising and moralising, and that the problem of upbringing must now be dealt with practically on the widest possible scale.

The heading Instruction includes the following subjects: reading as an extension of the lesson and as an art-form used as a weapon against formalistic knowledge with younger children; the use of fine literature in the development of the children's oral and written language; organising excursions and practical work in the secondary school; pupils' independent work at school and at home; system and methods of revision of past work when taking new sections of the syllabus.

The first Education Session or Forum was held on October 18th, 19th and 20th, 1945. Teachers from forty-seven regions responded to the Academy's invitation to conduct a piece of research, and over one hundred papers were sent in. Some of the problems were those suggested by the Academy, others were proposed by teachers themselves. Of the papers sent in, forty were chosen for publication and for discussion by a special jury of outstanding educationists. Those whose papers were rejected immediately set about working for the next Forum, in 1946. Eight teachers were awarded prizes.

The discussion following the papers brought to light

considerable shortcomings in the work of the Academy's Institute of Teaching Methods.

There was a consensus of opinion at the end of the Forum on the great value of co-operation between the practising teacher and the theoreticians. It was considered to be of particular benefit to the theoretical educationists, while the teacher from remote districts returned from the capital enriched in experience and with a widened horizon, an experience very similar to that resulting from good conferences in any part of the world.

The Education Forums continue today with an increased popularity. Papers sent in deal with similar problems which have, however, been given a new angle or a new urgency by the country's needs today. The number of institutes and the field for research have increased. Additions are a research institute for physical education and hygiene; one for art and one for nationality schools. There are more schools today used as research laboratories by the Academy. In 1954, in Byelorussia, nearly 7,000 teachers took part in Education Forums.

In addition to the research carried on under the aegis of the Academy, research work has been done by institutes of education and education departments in universities which, though diminished, did not stop even in the war. A record for research by these establishments during the war, includes thirty-one papers on general education subjects, thirteen on the history of education, five on pre-school education, four on education of the deaf, twenty-one papers on psychology and thirty papers on miscellaneous subjects.

A very interesting research institute is the Zagorsk Research Institute for Children's Toys. It is closely linked with schools on the one hand and education institutes on the other, particularly those concerned with child psychology. It has its designers, artists and craftsmen. The toys produced have to pass a severe test. Will they develop the child's skills and abilities? Will they give pleasure to the senses? Will they help to train a social sense, a respect for labour? Will they stimulate mental as well as physical

activity? When a toy passes these tests, it is put into mass production.

The great value of the centralised research, with its threads reaching right down through the Education Bureaus and Methods Association to the remotest corners of the Union, is the comparative speed with which its results are made available to the rank and file of the teachers. Valuable work pursued in any school can be continued by teachers coming new to the school, and it is recorded for the benefit of others. In this respect the educational press plays an important role. Not only does it give reports of such work, but it is a forum for the ventilation of new ideas in the solution of old and new problems. Every issue of a periodical carries a serious article on some psychological and some educational problem.

The field for research is vast and the interest is growing, and there is no restriction on funds whenever it can be shown that a piece of research may prove to be valuable.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Adult Education

A MOMENT'S REFLECTION on the educational backwardness of tsarist Russia, with illiteracy ranging from seventy-two to ninety-nine per cent, will make the reader appreciate the magnitude of the task that faced the young Soviet State in its first years. The achievements are amazing, bearing in mind the shortage of everything; teachers, books, pencils and paper, accommodation, the economic difficulties with which the country had to cope in efforts to repair the damage of the 1914 war, of the civil war and intervention, and then to develop the Soviet Union into one of the foremost industrial powers.

The whole population between eight and fifty years is now literate. But the authorities are not content with the bare mastery of reading and writing. Adult education up to the standard of the Junior Secondary School is of primary importance to all, for that is the necessary basis on which to build any further education projects.

The education authorities run primary and secondary schools for adults, the former being mostly in the villages. The aim is to have the curriculum and syllabuses parallel with that of the primary and secondary schools for children, and one may find in rare cases children and grandparents, doing the same homework. The course for adults is an evening one, with attendance four times a week. Those who live too far away to attend in person—and they are many, take the course by correspondence. At regular intervals the correspondence students are visited by a member of the Correspondence School staff, when group consultations are

held. A student who finds the work particularly difficult may ask for individual help.

The importance attached to education by correspondence may be judged from a pamphlet of instructions and directions issued in 1944 by the Department for Adult Education of the then Commissariat of Education. The Deputy Commissar for Education, Gavrilov, while praising the work done in this field by some Correspondence Secondary Schools, was severely critical of the majority of local education authorities, many of whom had closed these schools during the war and others who had paid little attention to them.

Thereupon he instructed the Directors of Provincial and Regional Authorities and Education Commissars of the Autonomous Republics:

1. (a) To open in 1944, the City, Province, Region and Republic Correspondence Secondary Schools closed during the war, and to provide the necessary accommodation and equipment.
- (b) To insist that Directors of city and district education authorities give every help to organising consultations for the students, help with methods of setting tests during the year and with the end of year transfer examinations.
- (c) To supply these students with text-books, notebooks, pens, etc., in the same proportion as supplies were made available to the ordinary secondary schools for children.
2. The Department of Adult Education was:
 - (a) To prepare a curriculum for these Correspondence Secondary Schools bearing in mind war conditions.
 - (b) To hold in March a seminar-conference for Directors of Correspondence Schools on the organisation of such schools in war time.
 - (c) By April 15 to have ready instructions on methods for Correspondence Schools.
3. The Education Publishing House was to print two thousand copies of these instructions.

4. The Statistics Department was to prepare record forms for Correspondence Schools.

To deal with the difficulties created by war conditions, Study-Consultation Centres were organised and are continuing their work today. Such a centre was to be set up in any district with not less than forty students attached to a school. Each centre has a Principal appointed by the local education authority, usually the Head of the secondary school or the most experienced teacher, who selects his or her teacher-consultants. In each area there is a central Study-Consultation Centre, presided over by the Principal or Instruction Supervisor of the Correspondence School, to which it is attached. The purpose of these centres is to provide both group and individual consultation for students.

To ensure the systematic supervision of the centre by the school, close contact is established between the two through conferences arranged for Centre Principals and teachers, through regular inspection, through personal visits to advise and help, and, when necessary, through correspondence. The Correspondence School supplies the centre with the specialist literature required for the work, and it supplies the students with their text-books. Where there is no Study-Consultation Centre in their neighbourhood, students are attached to the nearest one.

In cases where an applicant to a Correspondence Secondary School¹ has either missed some of the earlier stages or has had an interval of several years with no education and the entrance test shows him below the required standard, the necessary individual tuition may be arranged to help him fill the gap.

There is a time-table for the work which is generally adhered to. Eight hours a week is given to group and individual consultation in Classes V to VII and six hours a week in Classes VIII to X with a group of thirty pupils. In addition there is a weekly ten hours for each class for oral reports of work and set written work. In outlying Study-

¹ Secondary school here covers Classes V to X, normally twelve to seventeen years.

Consultation Centres the recommended number for a group is ten to fifteen, with group consultation, which means less time is available for individual consultation.

The Correspondence School popularises its work through advertisements in the press, through the wireless and by means of circulars to factories and works.

To avoid sketchiness, the result of too many subjects taken in the time available, subjects are arranged in cycles, each cycle for half a year. As with all correspondence courses, most of the work has to be done by the student himself. The instructions go into careful detail of methods, of the content of lessons, of revision and testing and marking. Much importance is attached to the way the theme for work at home is formulated. The structure of the Correspondence Secondary School is fairly uniform for the country.

For five hundred or more correspondence students the Principal of the school is allowed an assistant-director to deal with instruction. Any province, region or republic with five or more Study-Consultation Centres, may have a special methods-instructor for their supervision. Consultants are appointed from the more experienced teachers of the normal secondary schools. A Correspondence Secondary School must have in addition to the teaching staff, a librarian-secretary, a typist and a book-keeper: the staffing of each school is confirmed by the States Commission.

Much has to be done to ensure a high standard of success in this work and the school staffs were recommended to carry out research and investigation on such problems as methods, setting homework, content and method of group and individual consultation, methods of assessing set work, testing knowledge, and so on. Those engaged in correspondence departments in institutes and universities and elsewhere have been asked to help with these problems. The Correspondence Secondary Schools are wholly financed from the education budget. Special funds are assigned for text-books, note-books and anything required by the students. The accommodation for consultations is generally provided by the ordinary secondary schools.

Thus a Soviet Correspondence School is an institution

which in a great measure is expected to continue its own professional education in order to achieve success in its work. To repeat, it is under direct control of the education authority, it must submit to inspection and it is open to challenge and criticism. Complaints by students must be dealt with swiftly, and if no satisfaction is received from the Correspondence School, the student can take his complaint to the education authority.

A great task has been assigned to them, that of providing some millions of adults living scattered over the vastness of the Soviet Union, remote from centres of education, with a full secondary education.

The Adult Secondary School (as distinct from a Correspondence School) is equipped with science laboratories and subject rooms. There is generally a good library where the student can borrow text-books which have been specially written for adults. A reading-room open all day till late at night is at the disposal of the students with a teacher on duty who is ready to help with any difficulty. In 1944 there were roughly ten thousand Adult Secondary Schools in the USSR with an attendance of one and a half million; manual workers, office employees, peasants. Moscow had eighty-five such schools.

These secondary school courses have many pupils in their early twenties who become absorbed in their education, who discover that their great interest in life is in reality physics or chemistry, engineering or literature, history or geography. Such pupils can take the matriculation examination, taken in the last year of the normal secondary school. If they reach the required standard they will be accepted in a higher education institute or university. There are in addition special courses for preparation for university entrance. These are evening courses attended by manual workers, clerical workers and peasants, who during the course of their work or through their leisure activities develop an interest in some particular subject such as medicine, history, economics, or law, and would like to specialise in that subject. Students who complete the preparatory course successfully and pass the university entrance exami-

nation are accepted up to thirty-five years of age. The demand for the specialist in every sphere of activity is inexhaustible. "Personnel (cadres) are the linchpin of a country," Stalin said, many years ago in addressing a conference on the training of specialists. The specialist must have theoretical as well as practical training. He cannot understand the full implications and significance of his job if he has only learnt it on the job, so it is argued in the Soviet Union. Hence the vast and increasing facilities for higher education for those already at work.

In all urban centres there are workers' Evening Universities, where courses are followed parallel with those in the day universities. These are organised by the education authority or more often by the particular industrial ministry, trust, economic or administrative body or agricultural ministry that requires these specialists.

In very many cases before the war the buildings for Evening Universities were only used for that purpose. They are equipped with study rooms, laboratories, a library and reading-room with a full-time staff. The course is a five-year course and students are given time off with pay by their employing body for the examination periods—which may be as long as three or four weeks. In the final year they are given three months' leave to complete the course. Very many brilliant technicians and leaders in other fields have come from these Evening Universities.

Industrial and Agricultural Academies are full-time five-year courses run by the government. The students in these institutes are men and women of industrial and agricultural experience, who have shown ability to plan and organise and who have initiative, originality and forethought. They have already risen to important positions in their particular job, but they have had no opportunity for theoretical studies nor the wider studies that impinge on their particular job. They are often Stakhanovites.

Such people are released from work for five years and sent to one of the Industrial or Agricultural Academies, at no cost whatever to themselves. Where there are dependants, a wife or children, or both, and there nearly always

are, a grant is made to the family so that the student can give his or her whole attention to his studies.

Like all adult university courses, these include in addition to the speciality the socio-political subjects, and Russian language and literature. History, both general and as it relates to the special subject, is taken. As these students on completion of the course will become executives, directors of a coal trust, a clothing trust, a food trust or other similar body, economics and administration have an important place in the curriculum.

All courses for higher education for adults, except the last mentioned, have their counterpart in correspondence courses. For many years to come this provision will be of great importance both in the training of specialists and in giving a general cultural education. There is now an institute which is carrying on research into education through correspondence courses. Every university and institute has its department for correspondence courses and they are available for an ever-widening field of activity.

In addition to the education authorities and trusts, higher education courses are organised by the trade and professional unions and by the consumer co-operatives for their own staffs. Indeed one might say that the trade and professional unions in the USSR spend as much of their income, if not more, on education as on any of their activities.

While the number that takes a four- or five-year course is considerable, the greater number of adults take shorter courses and not wholly to improve themselves as workers. Chiefly they take the course just to improve themselves as people, to give the fuller and richer content to life which knowledge and the ability to appreciate the great cultural heritage of mankind make possible.

In this general adult education every one takes a hand, from the village teacher to the Academy of Sciences. While much is provided by central authorities and bodies, much equally is provided by the people themselves. This is particularly true of the rural areas, where the adult education provided by the village Soviets and the collective farm

management covers everything from teaching the alphabet to illiterates, to courses on international problems, not forgetting the research and experiment in cottage laboratories. As an example of this local activity we may take the Senior Secondary School in Khabarovsk. Strictly speaking Khabarovsk is far from rural, but it is remote, much of its population hailing from the country and, in 1942, it still had a problem of illiteracy. Serafima Feodorovna Pervoushina, the Russian language and literature mistress in the school, decided that something must be done about this problem. She organised a band of "soldiers of culture" (*Koultarmeitsi* in Russian) volunteers from the school and gave them the task of conquering illiteracy. Serafima Feodorovna held regular collective discussions with her young assistants on the methods which would ensure greater success in their work, and put herself also at the service of individual "teachers." The youngest of these, fourteen-year-old Tolya Kouryakin came to her one day to find out whether the notes were taken properly and to ask for guidance in marking the work. His pupil, forty-year-old Popova, had begun to read and write, and even to do simple sums, as could be seen from the exercise books Tolya had brought with him.

In that year, 1942, the pupils' education army was teaching sixty-five adults. Within six months many of these had learnt to read and write and calculate. And they are very grateful, these adult pupils, whom life had hitherto denied the key that opens so many doors.

This is by no means an isolated case. Though the army of adult educationists has multiplied, it is still not big enough to reach every corner of the Union, and the young, guided by their own teachers, still teach the older generation.

The centre of education in the village is, literally translated, the "Reading Hut." It is generally built of logs and often thatched. Often it is quite commodious and may have two or even three large rooms. The superintendent (or "Izbahch" in Russian) is the fountain-head of culture, and the success of adult education in a village or district depends on this superintendent. Here again the position is generally

held by a woman, who may or may not have an assistant, but if she is any good she will certainly have a group of very active volunteers. An essential part of the Reading Hut is the library from which books may be borrowed. Both the borrowing and return of a book are occasions for discussion with the superintendent or assistant.

In the evening the Reading Hut is a busy hive. At the information counter people come with a host of questions: how to obtain the family allowance and what is the latest in plant-breeding and what to do for dysentery.

In the large room lectures are delivered either singly or as part of a course, on a variety of topics, related and unrelated to their work. Conferences and discussions are held for the more serious consideration of topics. On the other evenings there is reading aloud of newspapers, journals or books, by the superintendent or assistant, followed by discussion. Afternoon readings are organised for women who cannot leave home in the evenings. The Reading Hut will also serve as the centre for amateur activities, music, dramatics, etc. It has very definitely an educational character. The villagers go to the Reading Hut to learn and to study. In 1939 there was a great drive to ensure a Reading Hut in every village. By 1941 this had been almost achieved when the Germans arrived and set about destroying all educational centres. After the war they became an essential priority in the rebuilding plans.

Next in importance and scope to the Reading Huts come the Houses of Culture, clubs for adult education and amateur activities. So great is their importance that in June 1945, the then Council of People's Commissars (now Ministers) of the RSFSR set up a central committee for cultural-education establishments. This committee has taken over direction not only of Houses of Culture but of clubs generally; of libraries, museums and Parks of Culture and Rest.

Well-run, successful collective farms will boast of their fine Houses of Culture which will have children's departments, so that mother and father may together participate in some activity and the children be busy and active, in the care of a qualified adult.

When Tatyana Zuyeva was appointed chairman of the new central committee she said: "One of our most urgent tasks is to increase the number of clubs and local Houses of Culture. In the next two or three years we intend that every Rural Council shall have a well-built club and every district a House of Culture, well stocked with musical instruments, theatrical properties and literature. More than eight and a half million books have already been sent to the State Book Fund to restock the four thousand five hundred libraries that were destroyed under German occupation."

In the cities there are Houses of Culture—some of them with hostels attached—for collective farmers—who come to town for conferences or visits. These provide for every need. A library has books on many subjects, and a permanent exhibition, with guides qualified in the subjects, deals with agricultural matters. Lectures are given by eminent men and women. Civilised amenities are much in evidence and play an important educative role.

In the cities too are found Palaces of Culture and trade union clubs, many of which could aptly be described as palaces. These are supported by trusts, factories, individually or in combination, and by trade and professional unions. All clubs, whether they belong to the Musicians' Union, Writers' Union, Intellectual Workers or to a factory, carry on both academic and general cultural activities. This applies equally to Red Army Clubs. In addition to the theatre, gymnasium, and amateur activity rooms for such activities as dramatics, music, dancing, embroidery or needlework, there are study rooms for academic subjects, mathematics, language, sciences; there are exceedingly well-stocked libraries and reading-rooms for independent work, where a qualified person is in attendance to give any information required. All these clubs, including the Red Army Clubs, have children's sections.

In addition to these facilities for adult education there is the comparatively recent but very popular institution of "Sunday Universities." In a limited way they existed before the revolution. They provide courses of varying length

of a fairly high academic standard, which adults attend on Sundays. They are becoming more and more popular.

Lecture Bureaus for the organisation of single lectures or courses exist in all cities and rural district centres. These are generally run by the local councils. Universities themselves will organise lectures in their buildings, again either singly or as a course, on subjects in which the people are interested. Most of this provision for adults is entirely free. Where fees are charged, as they may be for courses arranged by the Lecture Bureaus, they are very small.

The Moscow University Lecture Bureau has an annual attendance of one hundred and sixty thousand students who take courses on such subjects as ancient history, medieval or modern history, the atomic nucleus; the history of world culture embracing such themes as ancient Egypt, ancient mythology, and a very popular course is entitled "Greek Literary Giants"—Homer, Sophocles and Aeschylus. A course entitled "The Middle Ages and Renaissance" covers Dante, Boccaccio, Leonardo da Vinci and Michaelangelo.

A great contribution to adult education is made by libraries, which again are even more important in rural districts than in cities where facilities are so much more varied and easily available. A library, particularly in a village, is much more than a centre for distributing books. It is a place where information on any question may be obtained, where studies can be carried on in the reference rooms or reading rooms and where lectures and courses of study are arranged. These services, increasingly available in rural centres, are particularly fruitful where the librarian is enthusiastic and intelligent. A typically well-run rural library is that of the townlet—the district centre, Koubeno—Ozero, in the Vologda Region. The accommodation consists of two large rooms in a spick and span condition. No ancient yellowing notices or posters are allowed to offend the eye, no accumulations of out-of-date unwanted useless material. Books are doctored at the first sign of sickness and a band of book-lovers renders first-aid. The well-stocked library can provide information on any subject, whether on the rights of motherhood, on the civil war or military cam-

paigns, or on any technical subjects. The demand for literature dealing with agriculture grows daily.

The library has a travelling department which takes books to the villages in the region. The librarian, Valentina Martynova Loukina, and her two assistants are aided by volunteers. Youngsters offer their services to collect books that are overdue. Others deliver books to outlying cottages. Loukina herself, with books under her arm, visits the collective farms in whose homes she is a welcome guest. Both she and her assistants visit the small co-operatives to talk about books and affairs. In her library they keep a record of the questions brought by readers, and the subject in which they are interested, and there is the usual suggestions book.

The readers' conferences are very popular; one hundred and fifty took part in a discussion on Ketlinsky's book *Courage* and a larger number discussed Alexei Tolstoy's *Bread*. Conferences on the new varieties of grain, vegetables and fruits which are being acclimatised in the north, are of very great interest to the inhabitants. Such conferences touch on history, geography, biology, botany, soil science, agricultural engineering—sufficient to provide many courses.

Travelling libraries are in very wide use. They are not merely distributing agents. A motor-bus library designed by students of the Moscow State Libraries' Institute carried five thousand books. It has three compartments, one for catalogues, another with shelves for two thousand volumes, with the librarian's table at which books are exchanged and information and advice given, and the third houses a portable library of five hundred books with folding tables and chairs for readers. This can be set down in any field in any village, or set up in any room available. These travelling libraries are eagerly awaited in the country and serve as a link between town and country.

Museums, like libraries, play their part in adult education. The Russians are past masters in the art of arranging museums to be truly educational. It is a common practice

for parties from factories and farms to visit museums in the nearest towns and to be taken round by lecturer-guides, and this applies to every kind of museum, whether it is one dealing with Mother and Child Care, or the ethnography of a district, or art or sculpture. The museums will run circles for those particularly interested in their subjects or on any one aspect. A lecture organisation for the provision of lectures, courses and conferences is part of the museum service. Regional museums do much to interest the population in the history, geography and economics of their region.

The Parks of Culture and Rest are further centres of adult education. Owing to the great heat of the summer months, little educational activity can be carried on indoors, for the people will not stay there. Education is therefore taken to the people out of doors. These Parks of Culture and Rest, in addition to offering a variety of facilities for amusement, offer opportunities for education. Many visitors have seen a group of adults in one of these parks round a map or a blackboard. A lecturer, often eminent in his sphere, is giving an open-air lecture or merely answering questions put by the onlookers. In open-air halls ordinary lectures may be in progress. Open-air art classes are held for those interested, and readers may borrow books from the libraries and read them in the park.

One should not forget to include the cinema and the theatre as channels for adult education. The cinema particularly lends itself to education in history, geography, archaeology—all the sciences in fact—and is thus used.

A very powerful force in adult education is the press and publications. Both the daily press and the periodicals carry articles that may justifiably be described as educational. No anniversary of a great man whether he belonged to Great Russia or one of the many other nationalities, to the countries outside Russia or to the Soviet epoch, whether he be scientist, writer, musician or philosopher, is allowed to pass without a serious article on the man and his work appearing in both the national and the local press, and in very many of the specialised papers and periodicals. Soviet

newspapers carry short stories and poems as a regular feature.

There are periodicals dedicated to every phase of man's activity. They all treat their readers with respect whether it is the monthly *The Peasant Woman* or *The Theatre*, or a scientific journal. There is an increasing number of popular illustrated journals for the education of the adult. A recent one, *Soviet Woman*, is a production of high quality both technically and as regards the contents.

The Woman Worker now in its thirtieth year has kept up its standard and its habit of treating women readers as intelligent beings.

Particular attention is paid to raising the cultural level in rural areas and especially in very remote districts of the small nationalities. The result could be seen at the All-Russian Festival of Rural Amateur Arts held in Moscow late in 1954. The village of Kazym, in the Khanty-Mansy National Area, beyond the Arctic Circle, is surrounded by vast expanses of snow-covered tundra. But it has a cultural club and its director left the village many days in advance to attend the festival. She had to travel by reindeer, aeroplane and fast train to get to Moscow. She described how more than half the villagers now borrow books from the club's library and how about 200 people took part in the preliminary activities, held in the cultural hall, for the All-Russian Festival.

To this Festival came a collective farm choir from Krasnodar Territory, a symphony ensemble from Urulga village in Chitah (Far East) region, a song and dance ensemble of a rural district in Buryat-Mongolia.

Houses of Culture or clubs and libraries are being opened at an accelerated pace in the country-side, their numbers running into hundreds yearly. The standard is worthy of a people that respects itself and respects culture. They are comfortably furnished, equipped with film projectors, radio sets, musical instruments. The handsome two-storey building opened in Borisovo village in the Lenin district of the Moscow Region is a good example. On the

ground floor is a hall equipped with stage. Above are the library, reading room, and rooms for the varied club circles.

Forty years ago the first village library was opened for the people of Bashkiria. Today this autonomous republic has 648 libraries.

The districts of new cultivation are not being neglected. As an example, in the Krasnodar Territory clubs and libraries of some kind or other are being opened for every group of people engaged in field cultivation or stock-breeding. By 1954 there were already over 3,000 cultural centres in the villages of the Kuban steppes. Altogether by that year, over 10,000 state and collective farms had their clubs and Houses of Culture, while tens of thousands of libraries were opened in villages. There were 200,000 dramatic, choral and other amateur circles, with a membership of over two and a half million functioning in the RSFSR alone. Other republics hasten to follow suit. In Khirgizia a number of collective farms opened Houses of Culture in the same year. The collective farms of the Chu valley opened seventeen Houses of Culture, which include lecture halls and study rooms where the peasants can study, carry on experiments and discuss scientific and technical problems of agriculture.

The varied cultural institutions, the clubs, Houses of Culture, libraries, and reading rooms, are becoming more and more popular. Here one may hear the latest news about events at home and abroad. The latest achievements in agriculture, the practical application of up-to-date science and technique, are presented to the members. The latest newspapers and journals are available. Lectures and talks on the most varied subjects and topics are provided, while readers' conferences give the members a chance to have their say. A serious work is the scientific and technical study circle. In 1953 there were 90,000 of these circles with a membership of one and a half million. By now the number will have greatly increased.

It is difficult to keep track of the varied provisions for adult education. For example, there is a Railway Publishing House which produces the specialised literature and technical material required by all concerned with railways.

Late in 1954 a special railwaymen's bookshop was opened in Moscow. The customers increase daily. Engine drivers, maintenance and repairs shed workers, students and teachers of railway schools, engineers and technicians all go there not only for books they need but to find what is new. There is a postal service which sends books to railwaymen anywhere in the USSR.

The publication of books has reached colossal figures. They are produced at a price within the reach of everyone. That is obvious from the speed with which an edition of two or three hundred thousand can disappear.

The Soviet authorities are far from content with the achievements in the field of adult education. There is criticism of failures and there is research into improved methods and facilities, for their aim is a highly educated people, including the whole of the population.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Children's Leisure

IN THE SOVIET UNION they long ago decided that the child's leisure is as much the concern of educationists and education authorities as the child's school.

The Ministries of Education of the different republics each have their departments for out-of-school activities, and the local education authorities follow suit. In the education budgets, both centrally and locally, provision for out-of-school activities has its place. The educational plans, five-year and lesser periods, have their sections for out-of-school activities as thoroughly planned as any other sections.

In the larger cities there are institutions known as a Central House for the Arts Education of Children. Here there is carried on research in a variety of leisure activities, including music, art, drama and handicrafts. Both content and method of presentation are studied. Children's songs, children's plays to be performed by them, dances and games, form the subjects of discussion and study. Groups of children carry on their activities either within the house or in a club attached to it so that scientific observation can be carried on.

In these institutions too, are trained the leaders and instructors of these leisure activities, particularly the leaders of youth organisations.

A Central House for the Arts Education of Children is what its name implies, the centre for arts activities for a large district to whom it gives guidance and direction. Its responsibilities include planning courses and conferences, both centrally and locally, for those engaged in this field of work; publishing song sheets, games, plays, dances; issuing

instruction leaflets. There is an extensive postal activity, much advice and help given by correspondence. Some Institutes for Improving Teachers' Qualifications run special courses for out-of-school activities. While by far the greater part of the out-of-school activities is financed from the education budgets, considerable contributions are made by professional and trade unions, by factories and collective farms.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Every school has clubs, or circles as they are known in the Soviet Union. Their number and quality, as will be expected, depends on the interest of the staff in this work. Since this activity is carried on within the school, for its own pupils, whether the staff takes any personal part in a circle or not, it must have some relation to it. In fact teachers are expected to show interest in the work of the circles and to encourage them. Since the war, owing to the great shortage of personnel, very many teachers have taken on out-of-school duties. There is no doubt, however, that the practice of having a special instructor for the leisure activities within the school will return in full, an arrangement which of course does not preclude a teacher from doing such work in addition if he or she desires it. Music, dancing and drama are very popular circles; literature, science, photography, and construction all have their devotees. The war stimulated the opening of school workshops as a leisure activity. All kinds of work from cobbling to making dolls and toys for the children whose fathers were in the forces, flashes for army uniforms, and rebinding worn text-books was carried on. It has given a great fillip to handwork, which, with the dropping of polytechnisation, disappeared for very many children for a time. These workshops are to remain a permanent feature of leisure provision.

Instruction on how to run a circle, how to plan the work for a subject, with actual syllabuses to be covered in a period, are issued regularly. These plans and syllabuses

are correlated to the work in the class-room, and there is consultation and co-operation between the class teacher and the circle instructor or leader.

The truly creative leisure activity in the circle is planned to extend and deepen the knowledge given in the class-room and when possible to help broaden the subject studied. For example, a physics circle will often make apparatus that is valuable for the physics lesson. And when a piece of apparatus has been found useful it will be made in a number of sets.

The art circle may contribute to the history or geography lessons, while the literature and drama circles can contribute not only to literature but to almost every subject. School circles are attended once or twice a week.

School No. 12 in Tomsk provides a typical example of the way school circles can work and of how far their influence can extend.

The history circle became very interested in local history. Their curiosity led them to archaeological digging, which brought finds from the stone, bronze and iron ages, medals, coins, etc. The problem of their exhibition led to the setting up of a school museum. The circle then proceeded to equip a history room, pupils themselves making all the visual aids in their leisure time.

A competition for young technicians was held in the city. The school history circle sent articles the members had made, an epidiascope, a photo-magnifier, various other projection apparatus, designs, albums, etc., and won first place.

The history circle is now producing young historians who have organised a lecture bureau with plans for series of lectures. The artistically gifted undertook to depict the history of Tomsk in drawing and paintings.

The local education authority gave recognition to the circle's activities. The school museum has now become the Regional Museum for the History of Tomsk and its region, in a special building attached to School No. 12. The museum is now the centre for regional historical study for all schools, and any adults in the city who may be interested.

Outside the school there is vast and varied provision for leisure education. First come the Pioneer Palaces, so named because they were originally intended for members of the youth organisations known as the Young Pioneers. Since about ninety per cent of youngsters are members of this organisation, exclusions would have been few even had this original intention been generally carried out. It was the rule for some time in the Kharkov Pioneer Palace. Today, however, membership of these youth clubs is open to all between the ages of seven and eighteen years. Some have open days to which all the children in the neighbourhood are invited in order to interest them in the clubs.

In addition to the Pioneer Palace, cities like Moscow have district Pioneer Houses. To call the central youth clubs palaces is no mere flamboyancy. Some of them, like the Leningrad Pioneer Palace, were imperial palaces, others newly built in the last twenty years have the generous accommodation, decoration and equipment with which the word palace is associated in the minds of many.

A Pioneer Palace will generally be divided into two sections, the arts and the sciences, both terms used in the widest possible application. A Pioneer Palace being very much a place for cultural education, a place where standards of values are imbibed, much attention is paid to layout and decoration. There is nothing shabby, makeshift, dingy or dreary about a Pioneer Palace. Wall decorations, curtains, carpets, furniture, sculpture in an entrance hall, are all designed to make children feel at home in civilised surroundings. The aim is to make the youngster feel that beautiful surroundings are an essential part of everyday life.

The staff comprises a director and assistant, an educationist, a bursar and other office staff and instructors. The latter very often are highly qualified in their own sphere, as for example well-known chemists, engineering professors, musicians and artists and ballet mistresses. All instructors are entitled to pay, but many a professor or artist gives his time voluntarily. The staff has its council and its meetings to deal with questions as they arise. Pioneer Palaces have

their plans of work and each circle has its own particular programme. Courses of activity and syllabuses of work are issued here too.

On the many occasions when I visited Pioneer Palaces or Pioneer Houses I was never conscious that discipline was a problem. Mostly it is in the hands of the Pioneers' Committee elected by the Pioneers. Members are elected to the position of prefect and an arm-band appears to provide considerable authority. Each circle has its young chairman and secretary who help the circle instructor or leader. Boys and girls who wish to become members of a Pioneer Palace are given a fortnight in which to decide on the circle they wish to join. Once having made the decision it is expected they will remain in that circle for at least a year.

A Pioneer Palace provides for every conceivable kind of creative activity. The one in Leningrad may now be taken as typical for the large cities, for, in the ten years prior to the war, cities like Tashkent, Alma-Ata, Ashkabad, Tbilisi and many others vied with Leningrad in this respect. In the Leningrad Pioneer Palace there is a very beautifully proportioned hall for ball-room dancing and concerts, and a large hall which can serve both as a theatre and cinema. Music rooms for choral and orchestral work, and for individual tuition, a lecture room holding about one hundred and fifty, for courses of lectures or single events on any topic, games rooms, a fine library and a reading room, art rooms for painting and modelling are all part of the arts side.

On the science side the visitor will find a railway room, a naval engineering room, an aircraft construction room, all large and excellently equipped, a chess room, a radio room, photography room, small rooms for an Arctic exploration circle, and so on.

For the younger children a charmingly decorated story room has been provided, as well as rooms for all kinds of handwork, in addition to the other arts activities.

Odessa being a port, the Pioneer Palace there showed distinctly nautical influence in its architecture and activities. In every city a Pioneer Palace expresses its own particular environment and tradition.

A Pioneer House may be very modest, half-a-dozen rooms or even less, to satisfy the most common demands of the children in the district. A Pioneer House will also have a director in charge and specialists will instruct in the various activities.

Technical Stations, that is clubs for boys and girls with a strong inventive or constructional bent, are also popular, and are organised both centrally and locally, the central ones guiding the activities in a considerable area. These are much encouraged to help make Soviet boys and girls mechanically minded. As far as the youngsters are concerned, though, they provide satisfying facilities for the urge to make things and to see "how it will work." Some of the central stations carry on interesting research into the best forms of such activities and the best methods of teaching; all issue instructions to those not very experienced who are carrying on such work in remote places. From time to time conferences are arranged at a central station to which men and women will come from isolated rural areas.

There is every encouragement to the mechanically-minded boys and girls to develop original thinking and an original approach. Every idea submitted is considered; whenever it appears practical a blue-print is made and construction will begin, in the process of which, under expert guidance, much is learnt. Incidentally the activity in these stations is very valuable to the teacher of mathematics and science.

Young Naturalist Stations are another educational provision for leisure, and give immense satisfaction to boys and girls interested in living things. As in other fields, the organisation is both central and local, and the same help and guidance through preparation of courses and syllabuses and the publication of instruction leaflets, is provided. The central Young Naturalist Stations have in addition a vast correspondence with young naturalists over the whole Union, youngsters who may be hundreds of miles from the nearest naturalist station. The work at the stations is very closely linked up with the nature work in the school, and a station may be responsible for providing the specimens for

nature lessons, for botany and for the nature corner in the junior class-rooms.

A central Young Naturalist Station is an estate of considerable size, with a director at its head, permanent plant breeding experts and visiting botanists, chemists and zoologists. There are laboratories for the necessary experiments with plants and soils. A writer of a science text-book, a professor, used his work with the children here as a basis for his book. Out in the fields, under expert guidance, profound and exciting experiments in plant breeding are carried out. Grafting, special feeding, fertilisation, are the means used to produce new varieties. In 1938, in the Moscow Young Naturalist Station, they had produced plants which were growing potatoes underground and tomatoes above ground! Hothouse culture of citrous fruits may be another activity in the more northern latitudes. Experiments in feeding animals, domesticating animals, experiments with egg-laying as well as bird study are carried on, though to a less degree than plant breeding.

Regional surveying may be carried on during a summer holiday. The labelling, classification and arranging of exhibits that follows after return is immensely valuable activity, exercising as it does powers of observation and accuracy. And the organisation of the material finally in show cases into a miniature museum is scientific training of a high value. As the climax of field activity there is great psychological satisfaction in it.

In the different zoological gardens there are circles for animal lovers, where again under expert scientific guidance the particular boys and girls interested in zoology can express their individual personality through the study of animals, their habits, and their care—for they are allowed to help keepers. In other places such as museums, as for instance in the Hermitage Museum in Leningrad, there will be circles for boys and girls interested in a particular epoch, civilisation or people.

Another form of leisure activity, quite definitely educational, is the children's railway and the children's fleet. In 1940 there were twelve children's railways run entirely by

boys and girls, again under instruction, this time of a railway engineer. Since the war those that were destroyed by the Germans have been restored and some new ones added. The carriages are large enough to accommodate boys and girls—and even an adult if he is so fortunate as to be invited. The engine driver, firemen, guards, linesmen, signalmen, ticket collectors and any other staff are boys and girls, usually between the ages of eleven and seventeen. To run one of these railways successfully demands considerable training, the foundations of which are the class lessons, and considerable self-discipline and organisational ability.

Close to some of the ports, both sea and river, there are children's fleets, sailing and motor craft, again manned by boys and girls under expert guidance. The railways and the fleets are used mostly in the holidays and on the weekly holiday.

Sport receives considerable attention as a leisure activity. In 1943 there was founded the School Sports Association known as SMENA with membership fees (very small) and rules, for the encouragement of sports. For those who are particularly interested in sport there are a number of special sports schools, which they can attend in their free time. The sports circles are staffed with trained instructors and sports grounds and gear are available. In the larger cities there are special children's sports stadiums, and along rivers there are special sections set aside for children for sports activities which included not only rowing, diving and swimming but also water polo.

Great attention is paid to leisure reading. The production of children's books is in the hands of the youth publishing enterprise. Periodic conferences of writers are held on children's literature. It is considered so important that the government and the Communist Party issue statements on the subject from time to time. Children's books must be lively, interesting, well-printed and well-illustrated, and be related to life. They must encourage the best qualities in human beings, lead to a respect for work and a positive love of the native land. Sadism, brutality, gangsterism and horrors are taboo. Above all, children must not be

written down to. The scope of children's books is as wide as the world, fairy tales, folk tales, nature stories, science stories, stories of popular heroes and of everyday people, and rhymes, verse and poetry classical and modern, Russian and foreign.

In the large cities, there are special children's libraries and bookshops with trained people to guide and explain.

It is impossible to give a completely exhaustive list of all the leisure provision and of all facilities for creative self-expression, because any body of people, any institution may organise a club of some kind where the need is obvious. Once organised, it will be linked up with some central organisation for guidance and advice.

Activity on the part of boys and girls is one side of this out-of-school education. The other side is the professional presentation of drama, music, art and cinema. For it is as important to provide the opportunity for the appreciation of the best and most mature art as for self-expression within the limits of youthful ability and experience.

A Soviet law prohibits boys and girls under sixteen years of age from attending adult cinema or theatre performances in the evening. It is not difficult to keep this law since the authorities provide their own theatres and cinemas for youth. There are about one hundred such theatres in the Soviet Union. In Moscow there are five such theatres, and in Leningrad two. In addition, Leningrad has a regional children's theatre with two companies which take plays to the children of the Leningrad region, and to hamlets beyond the Arctic Circle. Some Moscow theatres have touring companies which travel south and east, particularly during the summer holidays. Some of the theatres have their own schools for training both actors and producers. They vary in size from the considerable First Children's Theatre in Moscow to a comparatively small one for three hundred or so children in Leningrad.

The companies are excellently trained permanent professional ones. A children's theatre has its own permanent orchestra, producers, scenic designers, and workshops for making properties and dresses. Generally, an educationist

is on the staff. He, or more frequently she, is the active link between the school and the theatre. The collaboration between the two is very close even to using the theatre as an aid to discipline. A pupil may be excluded from visiting the theatre as a punishment. Schools may ask for a special play which may either be in the syllabus or linked with the syllabus of some subject, to be put on. As a general rule though, the theatre makes its own production plans for the year.

The audience is divided into age groups, seven to eleven and twelve* to seventeen or eighteen years, and plays are given accordingly. The performances for the younger ones are in the afternoons—school finishes by one o'clock for these—and for older ones about six p.m. They generally come in school parties and the ordinary adult is very definitely discouraged. In Kiev, up to the war, the general practice was for the children to do their own booking of seats at a specially designed booking office. The Germans destroyed this theatre. The price of seats would correspond to sixpence and a shilling and tickets are provided for needy cases.

The repertory is extraordinarily varied. For the younger age group fairy tales of any land, presented as plays and as operas, play a predominant part. Dramatised versions of Kipling's *Just So Stories* and of *Mowgli* are exceedingly popular. Adventure stories too are very popular, and during and since the war they have naturally dealt with heroes in the struggle against the Nazis and with incidents from the war.

The same topics presented differently may also be used for plays for the older age group. For these too, plays may deal with the great adventure of socialist construction or they may be about scientists such as Lomonosov. Latterly the classics of other lands had begun to be introduced.

Boys and girls are encouraged to be critical and to send in their criticism. The theatre circle—the enthusiasts who attend regularly—will meet the producer, playwright and actors and discuss a production.

The theatres have the usual lounge accommodation, a large hall which here is used for games, dancing or even performing while waiting for the play to begin. Children may arrive half to an hour before the performance begins to indulge in these activities. A buffet provides refreshment, including excellent ices, at a very reasonable cost.

For the under-sevens there is an increasing number of puppet theatres, which today have considerable experience and training behind them. The central puppet theatres are housed in spacious buildings, with workshops and libraries. They vary considerably in style according to the particular puppet theatre. Vocal music is always an important part of a spectacle. Animal stories and fairy tales are the general topics, but anything may be used. Children come in parties from the kindergarten or from a block of flats. Performances are also given in the children's sections of the adult clubs. There are also travelling companies which give puppet shows to children in collective farms, in mountain villages, Arctic settlements, in fact anywhere where there are children. A Children's Book Theatre, in which all the plays are based on children's books, was a great joy to the under-eights on my last visit, and used quite deliberately to encourage a love of books.

Children's cinemas receive considerable attention from the authorities. These have their lounge rooms like the theatres, for different activities until the performance begins. It is particularly valuable here, for one is not allowed in the auditorium once a film has begun. There is a special section of the film industry for the production of children's films. Here again the children are divided into age groups. The subjects for films may be historical or geographical, and they will certainly also deal with modern Soviet life and its problems. Latterly there has been severe criticism, of the film industry for not paying sufficient attention to children's films. Special children's concerts, and exhibitions for children are a regular feature of Soviet children's life.

It should be evident from all the above that the Soviet authorities regard leisure education with great seriousness. Whatever the provision is, it is such as must evoke respect

for the particular activity, a feeling on the part of boys and girls that they are being treated seriously, and that something is demanded from them. Effort is stimulated and encouraged. The purpose of all this provision is not to keep the young amused or just to keep them off the street. It is profoundly educational and social in its conception.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Home and School

THAT THE FOUNDATION of the child's character is laid in the home is a maxim firmly held in the Soviet Union. That the school will be successful if it has the active intelligent support of the home, is another widely held conviction. But the school and the home do not instinctively come together nor necessarily follow the same paths in the bringing up of children. Co-operation between home and school, so desirable, indeed so essential, had in the first instance to be nurtured and encouraged until it became a habit. Today it is a habit that is spreading to more and more homes and schools.

The Soviet teacher comes from the people. The school which he or she attended was a people's school attended by the children of the factory workers, the shop assistants or the peasants. There are no social barriers between the teacher and the children's parents.

The visits, at least once a term, which a teacher must pay to the pupil's home, give opportunity for becoming acquainted and establishing friendly relations. It is not always achieved easily, and a tactless teacher can do much harm.

Every school has a Parents' Association on the committee of which sit the Head and the Instruction Supervisor. In addition to the School Association and School Parents' Committee there are Parents' Class Committees on which the class teacher sits.

Parents' Associations and Committees were particularly important in war time. In 1943, during the war, over the

signature of the late Commissar for Education, V. Potemkin, regulations governing Parents' Committees were issued.

The object of the Parents' Committee, which is a voluntary body, is to help the authorities and the school. Its aims and organisation were stated as:

- (a) To ensure the reality of universal compulsory education.
- (b) To arrange for help for needy pupils.
- (c) To provide continuous care for children of men in the forces, war invalids and orphans.
- (d) To ensure that there is some supervision of children and to deal with any neglected ones.
- (e) To guide children's leisure activities.
- (f) To see that children observe the rules of behaviour.
- (g) To see that the school lacks nothing.
- (h) To popularise educational ideas among parents.

The Parents' Committee consists of two or three representatives of each class, elected by vote at the beginning of each year at the class parents' meetings, and of the school Head.

All the parents should be prevailed upon to attend the the election meetings.

For the day-to-day work, the Parents' Committee elects a working committee consisting of a chairman, vice-chairman, secretary and two to four other members. In schools with less than eight classes, the three officers are sufficient.

The Parents' Committee is guided in its work by the School Head and the School Staff Committee.

The Parents' Committee must meet not less than once a month.

The work of the Parents' Committee is planned for each term; the plan is adopted at a meeting of the committee and approved by the Head.

Decisions are valid if at the meeting not less than fifty per cent of the committee members are present. Decisions of the Parents' Committee and of the Parents' Association require the approval of the Head.

Members of the committee organise an active group of parents in a class and with their aid the work is carried on.

Committee members maintain close contact with the rest of the parents through visits to the home, through talks with individuals, and through group discussions. A full class parents' meeting must be held not less than once a term.

General meetings of all the parents are organised by the Head and the Parents' Committee not less than twice a year.

Under the guidance of the Head, the Parents' Committee maintains the closest contact with the school's patron organisation. A committee is empowered to apply to the patron or to any other body for help for the school.

With the cognisance of the Head, the Parents' Committee can set up a temporary sub-committee of parents, to carry out any part of the plan of activities. The Parents' Committee is empowered to have supplies and finances, obtained from voluntary subscriptions by parents, from the proceeds of concerts, plays and other such activities.

The money is kept in a current account at a savings bank and may be disbursed by the Head on aid to children of serving men, of war invalids, orphans and other needy children, and on out-of-school activities, in accordance with estimates adopted by the general school parents' meeting.¹

It should be realised that the instructions enumerated above are more in the nature of recommendations. It depends on the school to what extent they are carried out.

These Parents' Committees were found invaluable during the war. Their members, or others directed by them, took duty during breaks between lessons as well as in the long break in the playground. They helped with school meals, and carried out all those tiresome non-academic duties which in England are the burden of the teacher. These activities, augmented during the war, continue today.

At every school excursion there are parents to help teachers. Many of them do regular duty in the school circles, taking an embroidery class, or carpentry class.

¹ For the rights and duties of the Parents' Committee see *Appendix III*.

In a school in Kiev before the war the parents formed themselves into patrols. Every evening, between eight and nine, they were on the streets of their neighbourhood to see that no children under twelve years were out after nine p.m.

Like parents elsewhere, they help with costumes for plays and with school parties, often preparing the food, as well as decorating the school. Everything that helps the school comes within their sphere.

After the liberation from the enemy much rebuilding of schools was done by the parents. During the war, and after, there were Parents' School Days, when a thousand mothers and fathers marched off with tools and paints and brooms to clear up, repair and redecorate the schools in their district ready for the new school year.

Even before the war, in districts with a slack or inefficient education authority, parents and collective farmers, in their own time, built secondary schools for their children, providing the materials as well as the labour.

The school in return helps the parents in their task of bringing up children. It is regarded as of the utmost importance that there should be a common approach to the child at school and at home, that what is held to be wrong at school should also be wrong at home, that the authority of the teacher should be upheld in the home and the authority of the parent upheld in the school.

It is considered equally important that the mother and father should be in agreement on child training. The practice common to every country of one parent allowing the child to do something that the other has prohibited, is regarded as detrimental to desirable discipline, and may result in giving the child a dual personality with its resultant disintegration. To achieve this agreement between parents much education in the art and science of bringing up children is necessary.

The school has regular discussions for groups of parents on problems that worry them. These are generally led by a teacher or by the Head. From time to time however, specialists, educationists, psychologists, social workers and

doctors will give either a single lecture or a course of lectures. Many lectures and courses will be arranged by the Parents' Committee. Parents may come to the school for individual consultations.

It is much more difficult to obtain the co-operation of parents for modern ideas among the smaller nationalities that only began to emerge from primitive tribal existence with the coming of the Soviets. From time to time districts are found where it is necessary somehow or other to convince parents that school is important, to persuade them to have their children at school at least until the age of fourteen.

In *Ouchitelskaya Gazeta*, (the *Teachers' Daily*) of March 1946, is the story of a Buryat-Mongol teacher, and how he solved the problem in his district, a populous one for his republic, with twenty-three schools. None had existed there before 1920. As late as 1940 attendance was very poor, ten being considered a full class. The majority were boys, since the parents still considered that girls did not require education. They had not yet completely thrown off their centuries-old superstitions and prejudices.

Even before the war, very concerned about this, a young teacher, Baltakhanov with some of the others, started an educational campaign among the parents to introduce them to modern ideas. As a result the numbers in the school grew noticeably. The war intervened, then Baltakhanov returned invalided out of the army, and found the situation worse than ever. He was now director of the District Education Authority. Once again he began a campaign for school attendance. First came visits to the home, not by the teacher but by a parent, by the most respected citizen in the village—the Party Secretary, or the Collective Farm Chairman or the highly respected elder, who traditionally wielded great authority in the community.

On visiting the schools in the different villages himself, Baltakhanov was shocked to find how few children remained at school after twelve years, when parents considered the time was ripe for them to earn their own living as shepherds or huntsmen.

Now when the hunting season begins, all the inhabitants of a settlement from the oldest to the youngest, must send the hunters off on their journey with much ceremony, and with expressions of their care and love. Great tea-drinkings and dinners are arranged at which the seats of honour are given to the hunters. The tastiest dishes are placed before them. Those who remain behind make farewell speeches to each of the departing hunters, giving him orders to kill so many animals, foxes, wolves, and so on.

Baltakhanov decided to use this ancient custom, so deeply rooted in the lives of these people, to the school's advantage. Why not organise a similar ceremonial send-off for the pupils who have finished the primary school in their village, and are due to move on to the nearest Junior Secondary School? The suggestion was warmly approved by the Buryat chief of local organisations, and as an experiment, national farewell festivals were organised for the twelve-year-olds in several schools. The success exceeded all their expectations.

With all the traditional customs the children were dressed in their best and given places of honour. The whole village took part; each pupil received his instructions, under no circumstances whatever was he to run away from school, or leave for home before the year ended. He must work hard at school so as not to bring shame on the community.

The feasting over, the children were placed in the vehicles which were to take them to the village with the Junior Secondary School. All the villagers followed the vehicle for a considerable distance. This simple method resulted in filling up Class V in several Junior Secondary Schools and in the one Senior Secondary School in the district.

But this was only the first step. Baltakhanov knew the Buryats, and knew that while the children would do their best to obey the behests of their elders, unless proper living conditions, clothing and equipment were ensured, they would not stay away long from their families.

Once again he turned to the parents, in the first instance to those who were holding positions of responsibility. They responded generously, with the result that a hundred

pupils, from a people that never in its history would be separated from its children, were living in two boarding houses, and attending the school regularly. Other schools in the district have been influenced and are greatly improving.

Now, as a result of this astonishing success, the district is faced with a new problem—insufficient accommodation. All the schools in the district were originally private houses of the better-off, which served the early attempts to start education well enough. Now, when there are as many as fifty to seventy children in a school, instead of the fifteen to twenty which was the case previously, overcrowding became serious.

Once again, after consultation and discussion of their resources with the chairman of the district council, the parents' help was sought. As a result, two secondary schools were built by the autumn of 1946. One was a large two-storey building in the district centre and the other, large additions to an existing school. The schools were each to have a green belt round them, with orchards and flower gardens. All the inhabitants took part in the construction.

With great satisfaction the teachers noted the increasing generosity of the Buryat people to their schools. Baltakhonov explained this as being very natural, for the people could see the benefits the school had brought them. The parents owed it to their children in school that their diet now included vegetables; they owed the increasing cleanliness and hygiene in their living condition also to the school.

This example of home and school co-operation is given somewhat in detail because it typifies many difficulties which are peculiar to the Soviet Union, because it illustrates how local initiative works, and how the home and the community become linked up.

The effect of the war years has by no means been wiped out. Parents have not all become wise. Improved standards of living and higher incomes have in some cases led to a slackening of discipline in the home. Thus, today, in 1955, the Parents' Committees have as great a role as ever to play in the total education of the country's children. It is

again emphasised that it is wrong to put the whole responsibility for the child's training on the school. Only a proper combination of home and school can give satisfactory results. The important question for Parents' Committees is how the child is brought up in the home. Discussing the question in Leningrad, it was agreed that child upbringing must become a topic for the factory newspaper and periodical. Collective opinion and collective interest would have an effect on the bad families. The result of this in one factory was that problems of bringing up children began to be discussed at factory and trade union meetings.

Instances of bad homes and bad training were publicly discussed and measures for improvement adopted. One measure was collective responsibility and collective help. The teacher who visits the home is to do more than just pay a visit. She has to take part in a family council to which all relatives living near, and later neighbours, are invited, and later still other members of the Parents' Committee. Only in this way is it possible to get at the root of the matter.

This practice was adopted by the Parents' Committee of one school, and the case is given of one family where the father rarely returned sober at night. His noisy arrival stopped all the youngsters, including his son, doing their homework. All the neighbours who were concerned took part in a meeting and approached the factory management and the factory's social organisation for help. As a result of this collective activity the father was brought to see where his duty lay. His son (who had for long received bad marks in school), passed from Class VIII to Class IX.

In some schools in Leningrad members of the Parents' Active Group or a teacher, will "adopt" a particularly difficult boy or girl. Occasionally a teacher or a member of the Parents' Committee, far from being welcomed in a home, is turned out. In such a case they will turn for help to the Children's Room in the Militia (police) station. Those in charge of the room and its two inspectors, who work very closely with the Parents' Committee, are a tower of strength. There was the case of a twelve-year-old who was absent

from school for some time, then took to drink, swore, fought with the other boys, and gambled. The concerted efforts of the teachers, the Militia Children's Room, the Active Group of the Housing Committee where the boy lived, and the School Parents' Committee had their effect. The boy has now become a satisfactory member of the school and the family.

One of the problems the parents and the community is faced with is the supervision of the primary school child for whom school finishes about 12-30 p.m. and whose mother is at work, and there is no grandmother.

More and more facilities are being provided in schools, factories and clubs, where these children can spend their time happily and fruitfully. The initiative for this provision frequently comes from the Parents' Committees.

School No. 46 in Ivanovo, with 1,000 children, mostly of textile workers, but also of brickworkers and woodworkers, is a good school, with excellent results in every way. The Head acknowledges that the Parents' Committee which has the respect and confidence of the whole staff, contributes greatly to the success of the school.

The committee strives to bring in all the parents and carries on much education among the population. In one year many lectures were arranged both in the school and in the factories on such topics as: The Communist Upbringing of Children, The Development of the Highest Moral Qualities in Soviet Man, Planning the Home Regime for the School Child According to Age.

The committee members helped by the active groups, carried out much work with parents whose children had failed in their class work. They studied the home life and family situation and talked with the parents. Sometimes long and continued effort was needed before proper conditions in the home for living and studying were obtained, before the parents realised that children require continuous, though unobtrusive, supervision. Here too the Parents' Committee frequently turned for help to the trade union and the Communist Party organisation in the place of work for help. In one case a member of the factory committee

was attached to the family to help remove the cause of a boy's bad work at school. Thanks to this help this "adopted" pupil passed up. In this school the Parents' Committee has decided that one of their chief tasks for 1955 is to be the mobilisation of the parents for excellent attainment in class work as well as excellent discipline.

One of the tasks School No. 662 in Moscow found it had to undertake, was to help parents understand how to treat the 16-year-old boy. Parents appeared to ignore the fact that their boys grew up and persisted in treating 16-year-olds as children. Discussing the problem with a sympathetic teacher one boy said, "Mother demands obedience even when she's wrong." Another said, "She's always grumbling at me, tells me I'd better not come home if I get a 2 mark," while yet another said, "My little sister interferes when I'm doing homework and if you send her away, mother goes for you." It wasn't their fault that they were bad at home.

This teacher first had a discussion with the boys pointing out where they were mistaken in their ideas and views and then had a meeting with the parents of her class. At every turn the importance of the co-operation of school and family is brought out.

Many are the methods used to interest parents in the school, and in the welfare of their children. A special periodical, *Home and School*, deals with many problems that arise in the home. Professors of psychology carry on a vast educational correspondence with parents over the whole Union. From time to time the questions and the answers are published in book form at a very low cost. The difficulties appear to be very much those found in any family anywhere in the world.

Perhaps the most interesting form of education of parents is the "Parents' University." They are not universities as the term is generally understood. They have no special buildings or special equipment, and they have only one faculty, which might be termed "the bringing up of children." They are generally to be found functioning in the school attended by the children of the "undergraduates." And, like so much that is valuable and stimulating

in the Soviet Union, Parents' Universities arose out of local initiative.

In 1939 a meeting was held of the workers and staff, both men and women of three large factories in Moscow: a boot factory, a textile factory, and an engineering works. The subject for discussion this time was not fulfilling the works plan, or raising output per head of the inefficient worker. The subject was "Our Children—Their Work at School, Their Leisure, Their General Behaviour." As the meeting proceeded, and fathers and mothers took the floor, it became evident how inexperienced many young parents were, and how great was their desire for knowledge in their home profession—as parents. They asked many questions about education and psychology. It was obvious that they must be taught.

The factory newspapers supported the initiative of their workers. The Head of the biggest school in the Kirov district of Moscow placed his school at the disposal of the parents.

Professors, teachers and doctors expressed their readiness to give one or two lectures free. The Principal of the Moscow Municipal Institute for the Further Training of Teachers, and a member of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, offered to take charge of the University. Thus was the "Parents' University" born.

Three hundred parents attended the first lecture. The majority were women, young and middle-aged, but there were also a good few men.

At the end of the first lecture there was an avalanche of questions, written and oral. As the lecturer answered them, so new questions were put. The clock showed a few minutes to midnight, and still the questions came. It was clear to all; "Parents' Universities" were essential.

In that first year the parents attended nine lectures, then came the summer holidays. In the second year in 1940 the parents came again and now they studied once a week on Thursday evenings. Gradually there was a regular audience. The majority who registered tried not to miss one lecture. Many brought new students, neighbours, or

mates from the factory. And the new ones became enthusiastic, and as great propagandists for the "Parents' Universities" as the old students.

The lectures dealt with the most varied questions, each one very real to the parents. The care of the children's health, adolescence and its problems, a rational diet for children, the authority of the parent and personal example, the training of will and character, friendship and comradeship among children, the choice of a profession, children's leisure, and many more subjects were thrashed out.

The staff of this "Parents' University" was very highly qualified. Professors of international reputation, authors of books on education, psychologists and eminent doctors, members of university staffs, all gladly gave their service.

If the students were satisfied with their lecturers these in their turn were equally satisfied with their students. Said Professor Arkin: "I have never had such an attentive, disciplined, enquiring and grateful body of students."

They were indeed attentive, these weavers and cutters, locksmiths and housewives, who always came with a notebook.

No sooner was the lecture over, than the lecturer was surrounded by a group of eager people and discussion continued.

Then parents began to turn to their teacher in between lectures. It was thus that a "telephone contact" was established between many parents and Professor Ivanovsky of the Institute of Medicine who had given a lecture on children's health, and with Professor Arkin after his lecture on "The Problems of Adolescence, Physical and Psychological."

An interesting result of these lectures was the growth of interest in psychology and the request for books to be read on the subject and later an interest in other subjects. A lecture on "Children and the Cinema" had the desired result of reducing visits to the cinema. At that period, before the decree prohibiting attendance during the day of children under sixteen, it was held that children were inclined to go too much to the cinema.

"Parents' Universities" are today found in all large cities. They are being greatly encouraged, and are receiving every help from education authorities, and from the community generally. The war years, with the break-up of family life for so many, and with the absence of parental supervision, have left many urgent problems for the home and school. In many towns these "Universities" are now regular two-year courses with attendance twice a week. Quite often such subjects as history, literature, or the role of science, are taken in the course on the request of the parents. This voluntary genuine education creates a desire for more education. The fact that the courses are nearly always held in the school, with the co-operation of the school Head and often the participation of the staff, binds home and school once more closely together.

In addition to these courses, attended on week evenings, there are "Parents' Sunday Universities." A course of this kind was begun in the Moskvoretsky district of Moscow in 1945. The "University" has opened consulting centres where experienced teachers and doctors give advice to parents, and where exhibitions, excursions and similar activities are arranged.

The Academy of Educational Science is publishing a magazine for parents dealing specially with the problem of bringing up children. The value of this and like publications lies in their being in the hands of educationists and free from any commercial implications.

The whole country is realising that there must be the fullest co-operation between home and school and that this can primarily be achieved through first educating the parents.

A more up-to-date illustration of this co-operation and of local initiative is the case of a school opened in September 1953 at the railway junction of Vasilievo on the Kazan railway. Here an industrial enterprise was drawn in. It illustrates too the value of the combined help and interest of the different organisation committees in a factory. The teachers in this new school found it very difficult to create a community from the mass of individuals. Discipline was

far from satisfactory. The school appealed for help to the Party organisation of the Vasiliev Timber Combine where the majority of the parents worked. The Party Committee held an open meeting for all the workers on the subject "How Communists Bring Up Their Children." The attendance of parents was excellent, and it was the beginning of a close contact between school, workers, and social organisations. The school, in a comparatively short time, was able to put into effect the points agreed to at the meeting. They were: educational propaganda in the different shops of the combine, daily attention of the Party and trade union bodies in the factory to the question of the upbringing of children in school and home, improvement of out-of-school and circle activities in school and in the Combine Culture Club. As a result the school achieved a considerable improvement in attainment and discipline.

Reports from Kirghizia, the Asian republic bordering on China, show what great aid both factories and farms give schools. Grants are made to build schools and additional class-rooms. The stud farm Berlyk provided materials, transport and labour for a new Seven-Year School. In the same way a Ten-Year School was built in Prestayn village, as well as one secondary and three Seven-Year Schools in the Frunze Region. Altogether factories and farms here were instrumental in providing 23 new schools and 107 additional class-rooms in one year.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Problem of the Delinquent

IT IS DOUBTFUL whether any civilised country was ever faced with the problem of child and adolescent delinquency on so vast a scale and in so acute a form as was Soviet Russia in 1920 and the years following.

The war of 1914 was followed by the civil war, by the terrible famine of 1921, by foreign intervention and a blockade which would not even permit a ship with drugs for typhus-stricken areas to sail from London to Leningrad. The country was in the grip of starvation. All energies for the time being had to be directed to the fighting of the combination of enemies determined to prevent the setting up of this new workers' state. It was therefore not at once possible to adopt serious measures to deal with the increasing number of homeless youngsters who, bereft of kith and kin, roamed the countryside searching for food and shelter, and became an ever-growing menace to the law-abiding citizen. Violence, robbery, arson, and murder assumed grave proportions.

The problem became so insistent that measures of some kind had to be adopted. It was not the destruction of property, however, which caused the gravest anxiety to Lenin and those around him, but the destruction of humanity in the children. It was the appalling waste of lives with their potentiality for human endeavour and human greatness which so perturbed the Soviet leaders.

It was decided in 1920 to set up homes for these delinquents and both the Commissariat of Justice and the Commissariat of Education took up the task.

At that period, in reaction from tsarist education, Soviet educationists went over to full and complete freedom for children. No restraint, no coercion, no punishment, no discipline might be employed. That would be violating the child's personality. Kindness, freedom, a pleasant environment and moral persuasion were the principles adopted. It became evident, however, after a time, that these methods were inadequate to solve the problem. So many of the children had become hardened in crime, so many of them had become completely callous through their experiences that the vague sentimentality of their mentors was merely a cause for mockery and ribaldry.

Then the GPU tackled the problem. They set up colonies in charge of men who had gone through the civil war, men who had learnt to understand the criminal, and they were successful. But the outstanding achievement in this great work of reclaiming youth belongs to Anton Makarenko, a great educationist and writer, who was a teacher in a rural school when he was asked to organise a colony for young delinquents.

By 1936 there was no problem of juvenile delinquency in the Soviet Union. There were badly behaved children, there was the boy, very rarely the girl, who stole habitually, there were other cases of anti-social conduct, but they were exceptions. As a problem, delinquency had disappeared.

Do not, however, let us be misled into thinking that the problem was solved by education alone. While it was education that had achieved a ninety per cent success in the re-education of the anti-social boy or girl, it was the combination of a number of factors which, by aiding the work of educationists, resulted in the prevention of delinquency. For the problem of delinquency is not so much a problem of cure as one of prevention. It is a social problem more than a problem of education. Likewise it is not more policemen or remand homes that are needed, but more understanding of the causes, and the will to attack the causes; and this cannot be done "on the cheap." The prevention and cure of delinquents cost money and effort, and need genuine co-operation of all social forces.

It was considered at first by many in Soviet Russia that the cause of delinquency was economic only. But when, the abolition of unemployment in 1932, and the improved standard of living which followed, delinquency persisted, though in a greatly diminished form, more attention was paid to other factors. The first of these was the children's leisure. Nothing is so conducive to naughtiness, which may imperceptibly grow into delinquency, as having nothing to do, and nowhere to do it. Boredom is responsible for much destructive activity.

Bad housing is another factor. Not only does the child in overcrowded conditions become involved in the emotional complications of adult life, but what is very important, he has no place where he can be left in peace, no corner that is his own.

Another very important factor is home life. The ignorance of parents (however well-meaning), the absence of proper parental guidance, the lack of understanding and appreciation of the child's interest and of his emotional needs, and the example the parents themselves set, all play their part. Again bad health and an undetected deficiency of vision or hearing, may often be responsible for acts of delinquency.

The school can play a great part alike in the prevention and creation of delinquents. A school which is negative, which makes no contribution to the life of the child, or the community, merely stuffing it with knowledge, must share some of the responsibility for the anti-social activity of the young. Even more serious than this, the wrong approach by a teacher can be a decisive factor in a child's life.

Finally, there is the social environment, what may be termed as social sanctions, the adult standard of values which the child meets and reads about, the kind of advertisements he sees on the hoardings, the kind of films he sees, and the jokes he hears over the wireless and elsewhere.

The Russians do not believe in the inherent criminality of human beings. They believe that it is the factors mentioned above and possible variations of these, all man-made factors, that produce the delinquent.

The economic factor was in a great measure eliminated by 1940. Not only was unemployment nothing but a memory in the Soviet Union, but the increasing production had so raised the standard of living for the masses, that shortage of necessities and of primary luxuries was no longer in itself a cause of criminal acts. The serious extremes of riches and poverty, present in other countries, were absent in the Soviet Union.

Housing was rapidly improving and families no longer had to live huddled in one room. The custom of the Children's Corner in a room, in cases where it was not possible to give up a whole room to them, was spreading widely. This corner, furnished with a table or desk and chairs and the belongings of the children, was sacred to them. Here they could be busy, uninterrupted by mother having to lay the table for a meal, or father waiting to sit just there. It gave the youngsters a feeling of importance, of counting for something and the opportunity of uninterrupted play or work.

In the chapter on "Leisure," I have described the provision that is made for Soviet children's leisure. Its success is due to the underlying conception of the whole subject of leisure, to the understanding of the needs of the children, and particularly the importance of the early training while the child is still in the kindergarten and the school. The purpose of the leisure facilities is to allow for the satisfaction of the universal need for beauty, present in every child, to provide opportunities for creative and free self-expression. Generous as the provision through clubs of all kinds is, it is not yet sufficient to serve all the children. Much is done by families themselves in co-operation, to provide some place in a block of flats or a street, where children can be occupied. Before the war, in the cities of Ukraine particularly, an institution called "Forepost" was very common. It was the simplest form of youth club, run by the flats' committee or a street committee of housewives. The house-manager of the block was prevailed upon by the tenants' committee to give up one or two rooms to the children. Funds and equipment were collected, the rooms decorated

and furnished by the committee and there was a club on the children's doorstep. Often the factory, where the people of the street were employed, would make contributions and appoint a young trade unionist member as leader. The secretary or chairman quite often was an elderly housewife whose own children had grown up.

The school has very definitely been made to feel its responsibility for the children outside, as well as inside the school. The improved training and the continued training of the teacher, the co-operation of the staff, and the close links with the family have made the school a better instrument in the upbringing of children.

As for the home, that has been dealt with in some detail in the chapter "Home and School." It is generally recognised that today, for the Soviet Union, the core of the problem lies there. The increasing facilities and measures for parental education and the increasing number of parents who avail themselves of the opportunities, contributed greatly to the disappearance of delinquency. Finally, the social environment is such as to help every special measure adopted. The adult standard of values is that which is demanded from youth. Work for the community and not possessions, brings honour: "Labour is a matter of valour, honour and glory." The slacker, the bureaucrat, the cheat, is discovered, shown up and publicly dismissed from responsibility.

Society provides endless opportunity for adventure; building new towns, discovering riches under the earth, producing new varieties of fruits and plants, taming rushing torrents, conquering mountain peaks—life is calling to youth continuously and insistently to do great deeds and quite deliberately these deeds and tasks are given the glow of romance. The cinema, newspapers and books, in more or less degree, all support this standard of values. The moral and civic teaching given by teachers and parents in school and home is not nullified by society, but supported by it.

In spite of all these measures, or because they were still insufficient, because Soviet citizens were by no means perfect nor omniscient, there were still cases of delinquency

that required to be dealt with. Almost invariably they were found to be due to home conditions. According to Soviet law, children under twelve years cannot be prosecuted for any offence. From twelve to fourteen years, they may be prosecuted "for such offence as theft, violence, causing bodily injury, murder or attempt at murder, and for actions against state property, such as acts leading to the wrecking of trains, etc."

From the age of fourteen, minors are responsible for any crimes committed and are tried in the ordinary court. Minors are not prosecuted for such offences as petty thefts or similar slight misdemeanours. The whole aim is to keep children out of the court, to bring all the social influences to bear, so that the child may be cured at home without the stigma of an appearance in court. Cases of such minor offences will be handed over to the teacher, to the school parents' committee or class committee, to the trade union committee or to the factory committee; also, the place where either or both parents may be working will be drawn in to help. The first step is a careful enquiry into home conditions, and efforts are made to put right whatever is wrong; these efforts may take the form of material aid, of regular visits by someone appointed, of talks with the parents, of public reproof of the parent before the work-mates. The pupils' committee at the school is enlisted to help, and the members will do so by taking the youngster to the theatre or cinema, on rambles, and by drawing him into class responsibilities. These measures are generally found successful in cases of minor offences. The more serious offences of the over-twelves are tried in the ordinary criminal court, under somewhat special conditions. There are no special children's courts in the Soviet Union. Under the age of sixteen, they are generally tried in specially allotted Regional People's Courts where the People's Judge is highly experienced, and where the People's Assessors, or lay co-judges, are either educationists or children's doctors, or people who have worked with children. When a case for a minor offence is brought to court the investigating authority, on dismissal of the case, takes steps to see that the child will be under

proper care, either in the home or (where there are no parents, or the home is hopelessly unsuitable) in a special Children's Home.

Serious young offenders are detained between arrest and trial in special rooms in Houses for the Detention of Minors. Less serious offenders remain at home with their parents who give an undertaking to ensure proper supervision and care; that is, they are put on probation. For children without parents, there is a place of detention that might correspond to a remand home, or again an ordinary home for those guilty of minor offences.

The period between "arrest" and trial is from ten to fifteen days' duration, the period being employed on thorough investigation into the circumstances. Soviet law permits no corporal punishment. Anyone found guilty of employing this is liable to criminal prosecution.

A common punishment for a serious offence is direction to a labour colony for a period according to the law, from one to ten years. The average period is found to be about two years, more than five years never being given. A more common measure is placing the young offender under probation at home with responsibility on the parents or guardian. In rare cases compulsory labour is applied. This would be the punishment for an offence committed in the place of work, the factory or the office, the offender having to work a certain period on reduced pay.

The Soviet Union does not keep statistics for young delinquents. Since the numbers diminished so sharply after 1936, it was not a problem and was therefore not considered to warrant the special labour and resources required for keeping statistics.

Between thirty and forty per cent of young offenders are directed to a Labour Commune and the treatment is successful in ninety per cent of cases. From seventy to eighty per cent of crimes committed by juveniles are crimes of theft. Girls rarely appear as offenders. Among minors under sixteen, ten per cent of crimes are committed by girls.

Crimes of sex are exceedingly rare among juniors, or anywhere for that matter, the whole set-up of society being such as to make them unnatural for young people. For compelling minors to prostitution the minimum punishment is five years' imprisonment.

THE LABOUR COMMUNE

In Russian, this has a very attractive sound, partly because labour is an honoured term, partly because the Labour Communes have produced first-class citizens, many of whom today are holding positions of great importance and high authority.

Labour Communes which are now all based on the principles as worked out by Anton Makarenko, are the Soviet equivalent of approved schools. There is no Borstal system in the USSR. As previously stated, offenders under sixteen found guilty of a serious offence or of serious and continuous anti-social behaviour are sent to these labour schools.

They are boarding institutions, and are particularly well equipped with workshops and work-rooms where the effervescent energy can be used up. There is good provision for leisure activities which make demands on the mind and the personality, satisfying emotional needs and giving the satisfaction of free creative work. There are good facilities for sports.

School education is carried on in a school building. A Commune's large estate provides a farm for cattle and dairy produce, poultry, fruit and vegetables and quite often, grain. To a large extent the community is self-supporting. It almost feeds itself, and the income derived from the sale of the goods produced in the workshops covers the expenditure.

The Communes are well staffed. The educational staff includes the director, assistant director, and teachers, all of whom are experienced in the work, as well as instructors for workshops and factory. There are also a bursar, a secretary and a book-keeper, a visiting doctor and domestic workers.

Though self-supporting, the school is not isolated. A farm, a factory, a theatre, an army unit in the nearest town or district will adopt the school, from which relationship there results an exchange of visits, letters and gifts. Boys and girls, who have no homes, will stay on until they get a job, for which they will have been adequately trained in the Commune. If at fourteen or fifteen any of them show any special aptitudes and their behaviour is satisfactory, they will be sent to a technicum in the nearest town as day pupils where they may be trained for art, music, drama or other professions. Parties from the colony are taken to the nearest children's theatre, to an ordinary performance, and in the twenty-minute intervals they mix with the ordinary children in their games. Open days are held when visitors, the leading lights of the city or rural district, will mingle with the pupils. Authors, poets, actors and musicians come to the school and read, act or play, and discuss their work.

These Labour Communes today have a tradition of achievement, of good work and good discipline. The new arrival finds himself in an environment that slowly begins to act upon him beneficially.

In all the work of the early successful School Communes there is no indication of special psychological measures being used or of psychiatric treatment being given. No intelligence tests were used on the boys and girls admitted to the Labour or School Communes, though intelligence tests were used in ordinary schools till 1932.

Existing educational literature, Russian or foreign, was also found to be of little help with the task. Most of the homes for the vagabond children that based themselves on "freedom" were to a great extent failures. The really successful teachers were guided by the teachings of Lenin and Stalin on education and on concern for the human being. To bring up the young generation with a communist morality was their goal, and as part of this to inculcate an attitude to labour which would consciously accept the necessary discipline. It was generally held that work, intellectual,

manual and artistic, rightly approached and taken, would act as the re-educative agent.

Success did not come at once, and there was no royal road to it. Koofayev of the Dzerzhinsky School Commune attributes their success to the flexibility and variety of the methods and measures used, always bearing in mind the conscious communist goal.

There was much searching and testing and replacing of one method by another, and it was agreed that every boy and girl required an individual approach. This necessitated a careful study of the pupil. As defectives were not sent to ordinary homes it was accepted that the delinquents in a Commune were, basically, intellectually and psychologically healthy, and therefore their behaviour defects could and must be remedied.

The first acquaintance with the Commune was held to be of great importance. Makarenko was emphatic in his conviction that the dossiers and case records accompanying the boy and girl should not only be ignored, but should not even be read. The children themselves must be the source of information on their past life, behaviour and conditions, and the information must be given willingly on the initiative of the boy or girl, which implied a situation of mutual confidence and respect between pupil and staff.

Others considered it useful to learn something about the children—both from their case-book and from their former teachers, but never in the presence of the children.

On arrival the youngster was met by the director or his deputy in the attractively furnished staff sitting-room, where the Commune and its activities and rules were described to him. He was then introduced to the chairman of the Council of the Children's "Active"—the council of elected representatives from the different children's sections and committees—who accompanied them on a tour of the building. On the way the new arrival learnt of the home's regime.

After viewing the house, school, workshops, etc., came a bath, a set of new clothing which fitted, a meal served by monitors, and a visit to the bedroom where the new

arrival made his bed with a set of clean linen, and lay down to rest. Before finally going to bed he was allocated to his brigade and told where he was expected to go in the morning—to school or to a workshop. Beyond this, there was no special attention directed to him.

No act which could in any way wound his susceptibilities was permitted. In the Dzerzhinsky Commune no reprimands or corrections were used for the first two or three weeks.

Experience has shown that generally the delinquent is quiet and submissive for the first two or three days, "smelling out" the place and making up his mind whether to stay or to abscond. In the Dzerzhinsky Commune they divide the delinquents into five types: (a) the social type who defends his pals and works with them—he adapts himself comparatively easily to the ordered life of the home; (b) the egoist, the boy who steals or commits other offences on his own, and is a much more difficult case; (c) the over-sanguine type who sets out with great confidence and loses his confidence quickly; (d) the sham gang-leader who is in reality an exhibitionist, and holds his position by blustering and bullying; (e) the boy who can do nothing, who is completely lacking in self-confidence, and who presents some of the greatest difficulties. Each type demands a different approach and different treatment, and it may take months before his personality is sufficiently well known to the staff.

There is complete agreement on the great value of self-government, and of children's organisations; and it is realised that self-government in a residential home for delinquents is not the same thing as self-government in a day school. In the latter, the children are also subject to home and parental influences, while in the School Commune the teacher and the warden have to take the place of the parents, the other children that of brothers and sisters. Hence the self-government must be guided with great care—by the teacher or warden.

Children's organisations take a variety of forms. Class committees, hobbies committees, work committees, house duties committees are all used. In the Dzerzhinsky Com-

mune, children were in addition divided into mixed age groups called brigades. A brigade shared the same bedroom, sat at the same table for meals and so on. It was small so as to allow for intimacy and a close-knit family feeling.

Makarenko in his Labour Commune had an organisation known as the Institute of Commanders. The boys were organised into teams for special jobs or work, with the most energetic and resourceful appointed as commander. Makarenko conferred with the commanders on all important decisions affecting the colony.

It is important that every member of a Commune be given some responsibility, which, however, must be commensurate with his capacity to discharge it. After the first two or three months, during which period any necessary extra help was given, a good standard of work in the classroom was demanded. Intellectual development and achievement are held to assist in the elimination of behaviour difficulties. There is close co-operation between class instructors and wardens as well as with domestic workers.

Lack of space precludes a full and detailed description of methods and approach. One can sum up by saying that the first requisite is the experienced psychologist-teacher with a profound love for and faith in children. Then comes adequate accommodation for work and leisure. Close ties with the world outside are also very important. There must be an ordered existence and a firm discipline, the purpose of which is obvious and which is accepted by the community. Life must be made imposing and colourful and present the boys and girls with a perspective, with heights to scale. The teacher and warden must, as soon as possible, discover the positive or the good in the newcomer and work from that. This may all sound very simple but the results have proved the Soviet approach to the problem of delinquency wholly sound—at any rate for the Soviet Union.

The number of failures in the School or Labour Communes has been insignificant while many of the former boys and girls are today in leading positions in every sphere of life, and the rest are useful and respected citizens wherever they may be.

Between 1934 and 1937, one hundred and thirty-nine adolescents left the Dzerzhinsky School Commune and with the exception of six, that is, less than five per cent, they were either working in factories or farms, attending technical schools or in one case continuing education in the university. The six fell under the influence of criminal elements. The blame for this is laid on the Commune.

POST-WAR CONDITIONS

The war left its mark on Soviet children as on everything else. The need to concentrate all forces on winning the war, temporarily shut out for many people the permanent essentials. Schools with their leisure provisions were commandeered. Many Pioneer Houses and Clubs were closed. Many of the other institutions restricted their activities. "Foreposts" almost completely closed down in the Ukrainian and other cities. No one had time to supervise Children's Rooms in the apartment blocks or streets. Homes were left without fathers. There were whole villages without a man in them. In the cities particularly, women went off to work and the children were left without parental control. Thousands of children were evacuated long distances, the journey on one occasion taking one month. Hundreds of thousands, who had not succeeded in being evacuated, were caught up in the German occupation. These had to learn to steal, to cheat, to lie, in order to survive and secondly to work against the enemy. Very many missed education for long periods.

It is, therefore, not to be wondered at that hooliganism, foul language, stealing and cheating and the minor misdemeanours reappeared. But it should be made clear that there was no crime wave among juveniles as a result of the war. Already in 1942 it was realised that special measures must be taken to prevent difficulties. And it was the community that awoke to their responsibility for the children as a whole. It was the community that realised that the combined efforts of society would be needed to prevent delinquency from becoming a problem. And society in

practice meant the trade union members in a factory, the residents of a street or an apartment block, the members of a collective farm.

As early as 1942 some schools began the practice of the extended school day. When lessons were over, dinner was provided in the school. After dinner two hours out-of-door activities were organised. In the meantime, class-rooms had been turned into club-rooms or homework-rooms. The boys or girls remained under supervision, occupied the whole time, until the mother, having finished work, called for them.

In many factories, on the initiative of the women members of the committee, the factory equipped a room as a club-room, and appointed a leader to take charge of the boys and girls whose mothers were working in the factory. Here they remained until their mothers were free.

After the war a great drive was made to restore and increase all the leisure facilities. A report in *Ouchitelskaya Gazeta* of March 2, 1946, is typical of the way in which the problem of behaviour among juveniles was being tackled. Fedyakino is a large village in the Vologda district; its collective farm embraces five hundred families. During the war, the village was left almost entirely in the hands of the women folk. Young boys replaced their fathers, taking on adult tasks and duties. The result was not altogether good, for they copied indiscriminately the bad as well as the good habits of the adults, including smoking and swearing which Russians disapprove of for the young. Youngsters roamed the streets late at night and, so it is reported, hung around the older courting couples.

The collective farm called a meeting of its members to discuss their children. All came, and each made a critical contribution, particularly the men returned from the war. One member was especially bitter about the lack of care for war orphans. The meeting went on for four hours and then finally decisions were taken. The collective farm would take full responsibility for the orphans and build and equip new homes for them. Children who had lost their fathers only, would continue to receive aid, that is money, provisions

and clothing. School feeding would be organised before the end of the month. Concerts, excursions, visits to the nearest children's theatre were to be planned.

Every parent undertook to supervise homework and to keep a watchful eye on behaviour outside the home. The meeting assigned two thousand five hundred roubles for books for the children's section of the village library, and further funds were assigned for regional study and other out-of-school activities.

Finally, the meeting of peasants demanded regular consultations between teachers and parents, instructing the collective farm chairman and the Head of the school to call special general meetings not less than once in two months to check up on the work for the children.

The steps taken by the workers of a Moscow factory are equally typical of the people's approach to the problem. A weaver, Varvara Pavlova, herself bereaved of a son in the war, approached the factory committee with the suggestion that they should organise a guardianship scheme for families of fallen men. The suggestion was received by everyone with warm approval. After discussion, a committee of seven was elected, a representative from each of the main shops of the factory where meetings were held. All agreed to work an extra day for the fund to be created. The first contribution was twenty-four thousand roubles. This was increased by forty thousand roubles from the factory management. The help of forty young Komsomols was enlisted. They visited the families and discovered their needs. Soon the factory was caring for one hundred and fifty-seven families with one hundred and fifty-five children of school age and seventy-six under school age. The guardians made themselves responsible for seeing that all the children were able to attend school. Help was to be given irrespective of whether the mothers continued to work in the factory or not. If the fathers or they had worked there for some time, it was to be sufficient. A decision was also taken to restart the "Forepost" clubs.

The war orphans, and particularly those children who had spent a long time under Nazi influence, or lived in

forests and dug-outs, might easily have created a serious situation. Special receiving centres were set up to which the Militia (police) took any child found wandering about. Here they received careful initial treatment. They were cleansed, clothed and fed, and re-introduced to human decencies. From these centres they were sent to orphan homes, most of which are run by the government, but a great many supported by different sections of the community. Every house has a Guardianship Committee whose members pay frequent and regular visits. All homes are inspected at frequent intervals. Cases of neglect by officials are published in the press and the officials are summarily dismissed.

Many children on arrival in a home were problem children. They had seen so much horror and cruelty! The staff, however, were people with a boundless love for children, a deep faith in them and great understanding which they combine with infinite patience. No special measures were used with such children, but there was one unbreakable rule, never to ask them questions about their past. Everything was done to find out the interest that might act as a healing agent. For one boy who had stolen on his first night, cursed everybody and decided to run away, this interest turned out to be playing the accordion. An accordion was the only thing he had managed to save when the Germans killed his family and smashed his home. Then they had burnt the cottage in the loft of which he had hidden the accordion.

A twelve-year-old girl who had been wounded in the face was so horrified at the disfigurement on the removal of the bandages, that she lay down on her bed, refused to leave it, refused food and would answer no questions. A watchful teacher had noticed her interest in the small children, and told her that the little ones in the sick bay were asking for her. This was her salvation.

When the children in the homes appear to have reached normality they could be adopted. Adoption is very widespread and is greatly encouraged, for it is held in the Soviet Union that nothing can really replace a home. The rules

governing adoptions are very strict. The agreement of the education authority and the Executive Committee of the District Council must be obtained. An inspector sends in a written report after investigation into the home conditions. A medical certificate is required on the health of the would-be parents and a psychiatrist's report on their mental health. After adoption, the home is visited at regular intervals.

A village, Kulikovo, which today is a happy friendly place where young and old are polite, and there is mutual help, was in 1952, on the way to producing a local problem of delinquency. When the new secretary of the Regional Rural Soviet arrived he met children smoking in the streets, insulting older people, using obscene language. No one paid any attention. Indeed the adults themselves were behaving badly. The new secretary went to the secondary school and talked with the staff, then he talked to the parents. In the evening he held a meeting of all the Party teachers in the schools. He insisted that all the children were the responsibility of a communist, not just his own. They must immediately start an educational campaign among the parents. The discussion lasted all night. The first step was to talk to the badly behaved adults, and if they didn't respond, Soviet authority was to be invoked.

Some days later the village council discussed the matter and decided to support the initiative of the Party members. They decided that the children must be fully occupied and that facilities for creative leisure were to be provided. There was little result at first. The situation began to improve when the adults learnt to behave, realising that the children were merely imitating them. Gradually the adults began to demand a better standard of behaviour.

The village intelligentsia is now carrying on much educational work among the population. Nearly every Sunday there are well attended lectures on the upbringing of children. Special attention is paid to mothers with no husbands. Work is so arranged for them as to allow time for looking after their children. The village council publicly praises the good parents. It has provided facilities for youngsters to learn to drive tractors, to help workers on the

railway and on the farm. It has provided material for construction play, physical apparatus in the new sports ground, and a park, and it runs sports competitions. Children's films are now shown in the club. Now adults help in children's play. The older children's organisation helps the younger ones. Senior pupils help in the kindergarten.

This is another typical example of the Soviet approach; no theoretical discussions, no psychological investigations and above all no court proceedings, just plain common sense that leads to practical steps.

It is by means of these varied and widespread measures, and because of the social responsibility there is for children, that juvenile delinquency has not anywhere in the Soviet Union reached the proportions of a problem. There is every expectation that the maladjustments caused by the conditions of war will in time be dealt with successfully, for the Soviet Union has the experience, the suitable people, and it is prepared not to stint itself over the financial outlay involved.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The War And After

SOVIET SCHOOLS were on holiday when the country was attacked by the Germans. Many children fled with their parents; the less fortunate who were too late had to remain under occupation.

In September, when schools were due to begin, instructions were issued to towns in danger zones to evacuate schools. Sometimes, with the forward thrust of the Germans, a second evacuation further east had to be undertaken.

There had been no months of paper planning of evacuation, nor was there a wholesale exodus of children to towns or villages unprepared for what they ultimately received. A member of the school staff, the school bursar where such existed, was sent forth scouting for a new home. This found, he made any arrangements possible with the local people concerned. When the school arrived, it was expected.

This, however, did not eliminate evacuation problems and difficulties. First there was transport. The war was actually raging in the Soviet Union when evacuation was undertaken. Troops and war materials were being transported from the east to the west. Great dismantled factories were going east in endless train loads. Transport for schools had to be fitted in, to be shunted out of the way and often sent round another way because the enemy had already destroyed some part of the line.

The journey often took a week, while there is a case on record of one school whose journey to their reception area took a whole month. All this meant careful detailed planning and preparation. Food, occupations, washing and

laundry had to be arranged for, the organisers being wholly uncertain of the eventualities. As far as was practicable, schools took their own equipment, well aware that their hosts would have little to spare.

While there is no case on record of hospitality being refused to a school or the children, many other problems confronted the school staff on arrival. The accommodation was rarely, if ever, adequate both for boarding and teaching. Children were rarely boarded out. Hostels and class-rooms were improvised from a village hall, a barn, the offices of the local education authority or whatever could be spared.

There were problems of sanitation arising from totally inadequate provision, the urgent problem of securing a stock of fuel for the winter (a crucial matter in that climate), and problems of stocking the larder for the winter with the nearest town sometimes sixty or so miles away. In rare cases, the first encounter with busy collective farmers, who were themselves very worried, was not very friendly. But Soviet adults cannot for long be unresponsive to the needs of children. A tactful approach on the part of the teacher invariably resulted in practical help, almost always in the formation of local committees to help the evacuees. The farmers placed land at the school's disposal, helped them with seed and stock, and evacuated schools reached a stage when they were self-supporting for vegetables and even relied on their own resources for some dairy produce and meat.

A very friendly exchange of experiences developed. The city school invited the local population to concerts, to lectures and discussion, and in the summer older pupils from the evacuee school helped the farmers. In their turn, the school was invited by collective farmers or the villagers to their concerts and evening socials. Children were invited to the homes, and there was an increasing stream of gifts to the school.

Every attempt was made to keep up the standard of education in spite of the difficult conditions of evacuation. Since, however, evacuation was not compulsory, not all children left the cities. In Moscow, owing to lack of fuel

and teachers, all primary schools were closed and many secondary schools too. Thus there were numbers of children receiving no education. Tutorial classes in the homes were organised and examinations were held, but this could not cover all the children, nor the complete course.

In besieged Leningrad the children whom it had not been possible to evacuate continued to receive education in dug-outs and shelters. Here it was found that those children who could attend school regularly survived the famine conditions far better than the children kept at home. The problem of teachers during the war may be gauged from the figures for 1941 and 1943-44. Just before war broke out there were one million two hundred and twenty-two thousand, eight hundred and five teachers in the Soviet Union. Two years later the number had gone down to seven hundred and seventy-four thousand, seven hundred and ninety-five, a drop of nearly forty per cent. The accommodation situation was nearly, if not quite, as difficult. While hosts of children were pouring in from front-line towns and villages, schools were commandeered by officials and departments. The official who, when placed in a position where he requires accommodation for a new department says: "Let's take a school," appears to be a universal type. Several thousand schools were commandeered, and it took more than two years, and much agitation in the educational press and repeated instructions, for the decree of 1943 ordering the de-requisitioning of school buildings to be carried out fully.

Educationists too were seconded to other work, though in 1944 an order was issued directing them all back again to their jobs.

To deal with the shortage, the shift system, which had functioned in the post-revolutionary period, was re-introduced. School buildings were used throughout the day and often late into the night. Three schools, consecutively, in one building was a common situation, and there were individual cases which earned severe strictures from Potemkin, the then Commissar of Education, where education went on throughout the day beginning at eight a.m. for

the primary grades and ending at two a.m. for a technical school. The size of classes was increased to forty-five and to thirty for infants. Yet in spite of all these efforts there were some thousands who missed school for varying periods; and to these should be added the thousands in the occupied territories where the Germans rarely troubled to provide education for the Soviet children, except in the few cases when they decided they would need labourers who could just read and write, and for whom they provided a two-year school. Here, much education, of course, was carried on in secret, both teachers and children being aware of the penalty of discovery. And in the territory held by guerillas, education functioned with great enthusiasm, there being instances where it was almost normal.

It was the final terrible destruction of all educational establishments by the retreating enemy, (eighty-four thousand schools, technical schools, universities, institutes, training colleges and libraries) which faced the Soviet authorities with an immense task. In Stalingrad alone, during the fighting, five hundred and sixty-seven schools and one hundred and eighty-six Children's Homes were destroyed. Rehabilitation of schools, however, began almost before the last German left. In villages where the schools were wrecked, the best available buildings were offered to the teachers. When there were no such buildings, collective farmers offered their homes. Parents, teachers, villagers and older pupils took part in rebuilding the schools. In the evening, the air resounded with the noise of these voluntary builders. Everyone took a hand in making the necessary furniture and equipment. In one village, the teachers, in the evenings, wrote, illustrated and bound sets of readers.

Sometimes neither teachers nor children could wait till the school was furnished. There is the story of a village teacher who had nothing but the four walls and the floor as her class-room and an apology for a blackboard. She marked the floor with squares, one for each child, provided each with a piece of chalk and a damp rag and proceeded with a writing lesson. The children copied a word or a

phrase from the blackboard onto the floor. After inspection and correction these were rubbed out and the process was repeated.

The government was not indifferent. Special teams of engineers and technicians were sent to the liberated areas to take charge of the school building, and architects produced designs for the erection of temporary buildings. A decision of the then Council of People's Commissars (now the Council of Ministers) ordered an increase in the production of school furniture and already in 1943 Stalingrad, Rostov, Kursk and Orel regions received thirty-five thousand desks. In Rostov, within four months of its liberation, five hundred and twenty-four schools, serving fifty thousand children, were functioning. The Smolensk area was liberated in August 1943. By February 1944, one thousand two hundred and seventy-two schools were open, attended by one hundred and forty-three thousand, six hundred and nineteen pupils.

To help teachers in their task, special decrees for the improvement of their living conditions were published. Teachers were placed in the same food rations category as industrial and transport workers, and were supplied with lunch at school.

Today, as in the period of great shortage, definite quantities of goods are assigned for children. This reserve ensures the essentials in clothing and footwear for children in the different kinds of educational establishments. Again, special attention has been paid to the health of the children who lived in the occupied territories. Free sanatoria, sanatorium camps, summer holiday centres, all under medical supervision, served these children for varying periods. In 1943 one million city children spent their long summer vacation in such establishments. In 1945, the number of children accommodated had increased to one million, six hundred and seventy-five thousand. Over three thousand holiday camps and one hundred summer health centres were used for these children during the summer. In 1947 over two million children spent periods of four

to six weeks in holiday camps. Areas and republics which had not suffered the Nazi invasion sent gifts of text-books, pens and pencils to the less fortunate districts. Vologda Region in the RSFSR, for example, collected thirty-nine thousand five hundred and forty-five books for public libraries and ten thousand books for school libraries, and themselves arranged for the transport to Leningrad and other regions. Book collecting campaigns resulted in considerable contributions to bare shelves. Irkutsk, another example, collected one hundred and seven thousand, five hundred and thirty volumes.

By December 1945, the education system in the war-ravaged land was in a great measure restored, while in some districts restoration was complete. For example, in Belorussia, the Germans destroyed six thousand three hundred and eight schools, most of the higher education institutions and technical schools, and all the kindergartens and Children's Homes. They destroyed or looted all furniture, equipment, laboratory apparatus and text-books. The degree of voluntary rebuilding in Belorussia was very high, and aided considerably in restoration. It is estimated that in the Vitebsk region alone, the value of this voluntary work reached four million, four hundred and fifty thousand roubles. In the year 1944-45, ten thousand three hundred and sixty-two schools, primary, Junior Secondary, and Senior Secondary, catering for one million two hundred and sixty thousand, nine hundred and twenty-five pupils were open. The two hundred and five restored Children's Homes accommodated twenty-five thousand orphans. For the 1945-46 school-year, the Ministry of Education for the RSFSR, the sister republic, sent sixty thousand subject teachers to Belorussia. It also sent two hundred thousand exercise books, and books for fifty school libraries, as well as quantities of visual aids.

In every region, there was the same encouraging tale of restoration. In the Lvov Region, nine hundred and sixteen primary and secondary schools were functioning in 1944-45. In addition, such schools as the thirteen special schools for young workers and the one hundred and seventy-three for

young peasants were something entirely new for this region, set up after liberation.

In the trans-Carpathian Ukraine, united to the mother country after liberation, in place of the old three gymnasia there were in 1949 sixteen secondary schools. Also new for this area, were the four schools for blind children and deaf mutes, an art school, and a school for Feldsher-obstetricians.¹ The development in these lands recently joined to the USSR has been swift. The same region had six trade schools instead of two—and something entirely new—four technical and two music schools.

In the Ukraine in 1945-46, there were twenty-seven thousand, two hundred and forty-eight schools attended by five million, twelve thousand pupils—eighty-three per cent of the pre-war attendance. They are taught by one hundred and sixty-six thousand, five hundred and fifty-nine teachers.

Both Latvia and Lithuania set about restoring their education with speed. The former now has one hundred thousand children at school. In the latter, it is interesting to note that the old terminology is still in use, for a report gives sixty-one gymnasia, one hundred and fifty pre-gymnasia² and two thousand primary schools opened in 1945.

In the RSFSR, by 1949, the schools reached their pre-war level in numbers—one hundred and eleven thousand, six hundred and fifty schools with over fifteen million pupils.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher education suffered in proportion, even more seriously than general education as a result of the war. When war broke out, front line universities and institutes were evacuated and their activities were cut down by half. Thousands of students joined the forces. No higher education establishment functioned in Nazi-occupied territory.

¹ Feldsher is a medical practitioner with an elementary training working under a doctor.

² School from 11-12 to 14-15.

The Germans destroyed wholly or in part, three hundred and thirty-four higher education institutions. They looted and wrecked laboratory equipment, precious instruments, libraries and priceless collections, particularly in Kiev University. They wrecked and looted one hundred and thirty-seven teachers' institutes lying in their way.

By the academic year 1942-43 the number of higher education institutions had shrunk to four hundred and sixty with a student body of two hundred and twenty-seven thousand as compared with the seven hundred and eighty-two institutions and seven hundred and twenty thousand students in 1940 .

In 1943, higher education institutes began to return. Restoration was started and by 1944, one hundred and ninety-eight institutions were opened again. The tempo of restoration increased and by the 1944-45 academic year, there were seven hundred and twenty higher education institutions with an enrolment of four hundred and fifty-five thousand, two hundred and thirty-eight students. By the following year the numbers had practically reached those of pre-war times: five hundred and sixty-one thousand, four hundred and twenty-nine students and seven hundred and sixty-two institutions.

New higher education institutions, sixty in number, were built during the war, including fifteen industrial and engineering institutes, nine agricultural and three transport and communications institutes. Of the whole number, five were opened in the Urals, five in Siberia and twelve in Central Asia.

The post-war picture for higher education seems particularly encouraging for the non-Russian republics of the USSR, many of whom had no higher education in pre-Soviet days.

Outside what was called Russia, and the western territory of the old Russian empire, only Georgia had a university. Today there are over one hundred and sixty higher education institutions in these former Russian colonies. Georgia's one university has increased to twenty-one institutions: Armenia has eleven, Uzbekistan thirty-six,

Kazakhstan twenty-six, Kirghizia five, and the same progress has been made in other republics.

In the Tajik republic, for example, the appropriations for education increased every year throughout the war, being twenty-five per cent greater in 1945 than in 1944. This republic has today seven higher education institutions as well as twenty technical schools.

The Fourth Five-Year Plan for the Union envisaged a further development of higher education. Provision was made for an increase in the number of students from six hundred and seventy thousand to seven hundred thousand by 1950, which allowed for one hundred and forty-five thousand to one hundred and fifty thousand students to graduate yearly.

The end of the Five-Year Plan saw the number of post-graduate research workers raised to ten thousand which provided the country with an annual complement of highly qualified personnel of two thousand six hundred to two thousand eight hundred. The budget for 1945 assigned two thousand eight hundred and fifty-six million roubles for higher education, an increase of eight hundred and twenty million roubles on the previous year. In addition to that the eleventh session of the Supreme Soviet made an additional assignment of ten million roubles for rehabilitation of higher education institutions and the building of new village schools.

The purely educational problems which confronted Soviet educationists in the post-war period were not so easy to solve as the problems of building and equipment. Almost every issue of *Ouchitelskaya Gazeta*—the teachers' bi-weekly—and every issue of the numerous educational journals carried criticism and discussion of some aspect or other of education. One of the problems with which almost everyone was concerned was that of the boys and girls who failed in the passing-up test or examination. Teachers, inspectors, education authorities and syllabus content were discussed and frankly criticised. The suggestion, hinted at only, by a few teachers that there might be children whose mental equipment made failure natural and who required a longer

period to reach the same transfer level as brighter children, met with strong opposition from educationists and psychologists and was rejected by those responsible for educational theory and practice. Nor was extra coaching regarded as a solution.

Inevitably, in a country where education is so closely geared to life in its every manifestation, it reflects not only the impact of war but the urgencies of reconstruction, and the preoccupation with international security, as well as the need for leisure and culture. There is a great and continued educational ferment in the Soviet Union, for the problems of discipline, and of the development of those qualities which the Soviets consider essential in a citizen who is to build a communist society, when seen against a different background, take on different aspects and may require a different approach. The encouraging feature is the keenly critical attitude of Soviet educationists themselves, as well as the high regard in which education is held by the whole community. They will continue to discuss and to argue about every kind of educational problem and because they are free from financial preoccupation either for themselves as individuals or for education as a whole, they are likely to make valuable contribution to educational theory and practice not only for their own country but for other countries too.

SOME ACHIEVEMENTS UP TO DATE

Speaking at the second session of the Supreme Soviet, reported in *Ouchitelskaya Gazeta* of February 9th 1955, Kairov, the Minister of Education, stated that the budgetary allocation for this year was 68.4 milliard roubles. It is the basic sum for the general school, kindergarten, the school for worker and peasant youth and for teacher training.

Compared with 1950 there has been a total increase of 4,111,000 pupils in Classes VIII to X, that is in the senior grade of the secondary school. In rural areas the increase was 1,644,000. This year (1955) 117 towns in republics, provinces, regions and industrial centres have full secondary education

for all their children. The RSFSR had 12,000 secondary schools in 1954. The same year 940 new schools for 279,000 pupils were built, and 151 million text-books were published. With the help of patron factories and undertakings, of parents' organisations etc., 1,360 work rooms and workshops were set up in schools. Over 37,000 rural schools now have experimental plots.

In Moscow in September 1954, sixty new secondary schools were opened. Nearly 1,000 new teachers started work in the capital. In the rural towns and villages in the Moscow region there were 3,200 primary, Seven-Year, and Ten-Year Schools with 764,000 pupils.

The vast virgin lands which are being brought under cultivation are an example of the attention paid to education however unpropitious the conditions. Long before permanent housing begins to be put up schools and libraries are already functioning. In the Essil region of Kazakhstan where eleven new state grain farms have already been set up, and thirty-eight more are in process of organisation, every farm has its new schools properly staffed and well equipped. Every school has received a "Little Teachers' Library" for the use of the staff. As yet the numbers in each school are small, but new people arrive daily. These schools make special demands on the teachers. In the same school the children will have come from different places and with different backgrounds, while the families have come from a settled life to a pioneering one. At first upbringing will be more important than instruction and the best experience and practice is being adopted here in this all-important task.

The state farm or sovkhos management is deeply interested in the education of its children and gives practical help, as for example the Yaroslav Sovkhos which provided the fine school building. The young people who have left school are also being catered for. Evening schools have been opened for them at eleven new farms.

The city of Khabarovsk on the confluence of the rivers Usuri and Amur had in 1954-55 seventy-three Ten-year and Seven-Year Schools, three institutes, railway engineer-

ing, teachers' and medical, as well as cultural institutions such as libraries, cinemas, and two museums and theatres. Khabarovsk has the largest scientific library in the Far East, with one million volumes. The children's music school this year received a fine new building. This city in 1918 was a neglected sprawling village.

The city of Baku, the oil city of Azerbaijan, has 127,000 children at school. Of these today 12,000 are receiving general or specialised secondary education. There are eleven higher educational institutions with some 20,000 students. Before the revolution four-fifths of the city's population was illiterate. Azerbaijan's own Academy of Science has more than fifty research institutes.

The Ukraine, which suffered so much at the hands of the Germans, today has 31,000 schools attended by more than 6,600,000 children. The 147 higher education institutions have nearly 390,000 students, full-time and correspondence, which is an increase of 25,000 on the previous year. There are over 280,000 attending the specialised secondary schools. In the western regions of the republic before their union with the rest of the Ukraine there were five higher education institutions. Today there are twenty-five such, as well as 129 specialised secondary schools.

In Belorussia, another war devastated land, in September 1954, 12,000 educational establishments opened their doors to over 1,500,000 children and nearly 40,000 students. Over 150 new secondary schools were opened this year as well as several specialised secondary schools and institutes.

In Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, on the island of Sakhalin, a teachers' institute, the first higher education establishment on the island, has been opened. Nearly a thousand students, children of fishermen, lumberjacks and oil workers are now studying at the four faculties either full-time or by correspondence.

Over to Tajikistan, and we find the same tale of achievement. The Stalin Collective Farm in the Leninabad region has 2,500 children from its villages at school. The farm built a new school this year for the children of the stock-breeders in a large grazing area. This farm has today three

Ten-Year Schools, five Seven-Year Schools and four primary (4-year) schools.

Karaganda, the centre of the Kazakh coalfields is only twenty years old, yet it has 103 schools of three grades for its 49,000 children, nine specialised secondary establishments, including three technical schools opened this year. Four thousand workers are continuing their education at nineteen evening schools and by correspondence. The city has a coal research institute and branches of related institutes. The mining, teachers' training, and medical institutes are attended by 4,600 students.

The tale of progress could be extended over many pages. These random samples however are sufficient indication that the law which gives the right to education to everybody is vigorously being put into practice.

Appendix I

THE RULES FOR PUPILS

Every pupil must :

1. Stubbornly and persistently master knowledge, so that he may become an educated and cultured citizen and make the greatest possible contribution to the Soviet fatherland.
2. Study diligently, be regular in attendance and punctual at lessons.
3. Unquestioningly obey the orders of the Head and teachers.
4. Arrive at school with all the requisite text-books and writing accessories; have everything ready for the lesson before the arrival of the teacher.
5. Come to school clean, with hair brushed and neatly dressed.
6. Keep his desk clean and tidy.
7. Immediately after the bell, go to his place in the class-room. The teacher's permission must be obtained to enter or leave the class during a lesson.
8. During lessons, sit straight, not have elbows on the desk or sprawl, listen attentively to the explanations of the teachers and the answers of pupils, not talk, nor do things that have no relation to the lesson.
9. Rise and greet the teacher and Head on their entry into the class-room and on exit.
10. When answering questions stand up straight, and sit down when told by the teacher. When wishing to answer or ask a question raise the hand.
11. Write down accurately in the homework-book or in a special exercise-book, the homework for the next lesson and show this to his parents. All homework must be the pupil's own work.
12. Be respectful to the Head and teachers. When meeting a teacher or the Head in the street greet him with a polite bow, boys raise their caps.
13. Be polite to those who are older. Behave modestly and becomingly in school, in the street, and in public places.
14. Not use rude or abusive language, not smoke, not play games for money.

15. Take care of school property. Take care of his own things and those of his comrades.
16. Be attentive and thoughtful towards old people, small children, the weak and the sick, move out of their way, give up a seat, and help them in every way possible.
17. Listen to his parents, help them and help with younger brothers and sisters.
18. Keep his room clean, look after his clothes and footwear and tidy his bed.
19. Carry on his person the pupil's card, look after it carefully and not hand it over to anyone else, and show it on request to the Head and teachers.
20. Treasure the honour of his school and his class like his own honour.

Infringement of "The Rules for Pupils" is liable to punishment which, in extreme cases, may be exclusion from school.

To see these rules of behaviour in their proper perspective, they must be placed against the whole Soviet background: the great and varied facilities for creative self-expression through voluntary leisure occupation, where movement and activity and relationships with other pupils and instructors are free and unconstrained. We should relate the rules to the feelings of great affection and respect which Soviet adults have for children and the general absence of the feeling of possessiveness over offspring or, indeed, over other people. We should sketch into the pattern the freedom of intercourse and the confidence there exists between children and adults.

A part of the pattern must be drawn by Soviet educational history: the wholly unrestrained freedom that was allowed to children, the complete absence of any form of constraint, the absence of any demands by the adult on children which was current in the first post-revolutionary years.

Soviet educationists have seen life shorn of all formality and of all rules, of external expressions of respect for human beings as such. They have seen it shorn of all the graces of life, and they have not found it good. They argue that this kind of life makes human relations poor and arid, a sort of sub-standard human living. They argue that inconsiderate behaviour, ill manners, rowdiness, etc. are not necessarily an expression of a free personality, just as civilised behaviour is not necessarily a sign of repression. Indeed it may well be the other way round. They consider that in the Soviet environment the reasonably early acquisition of civilised habits will free the individual for growth, and add serenity and graciousness to the life of the people.

There is a careful procedure with the "rules." They are discussed with the pupils and even argued about. It is emphasised

that a formal mechanical approach—handing out the cards and telling the children they must obey—has no value whatever. The pupils must understand the rightness of the rules and their purpose, and only when the boy or girl approves of them, will they become valuable.

One or two of the rules may perhaps bring a smile, but most of them are the things we strive for in our schools and our homes, but with apparently little hope of achievement; and since we in Britain have never had a revolutionary break with Victorianism, we should be afraid, lest we be accused of Victorianism, to put the rules in print.

Having as a nation lived through a period of no conventions, the Russians are no longer afraid to use convention as a servant, not a master. They are reviewing the traditions of ceremonious behaviour, which used to be, and is today, the index of the dignity and importance of people as human beings. It appears to be in no way inhibitive. (For an enlargement of this theme see *How Do You Do Tovarish*, by Ralph Parker. Harrap.)

Appendix II

THE VALUE OF THE ROUBLE

It is impossible to translate the rouble into English currency. The Soviet Union has a managed currency, which is designed to enable the workers by hand and brain to consume the goods produced and enjoy the services supplied. Thus the value of the rouble increases with increased production. In the abnormal conditions of war, the rouble decreased in value, owing to labour being used non-productively, but the decrease was negligible for rationed goods in state shops, and there was no increase in rent. The value of the rouble is high for goods or services in plentiful supply and low for non-essential things in short supply. For example, I remember in 1936, when oranges were a rare luxury, paying the equivalent of two and sixpence for an orange; on the other hand, I paid the equivalent of thirty shillings for a journey that in England would cost four pounds. One can only compare the goods and services the teachers in the Soviet Union and Britain get.

The cost of living in the USSR has been falling steeply since 1945. In June 1947 unrationed dairy products, fruit and vegetables, fell by thirty to forty per cent.

Since then there have been repeated reductions in prices. As regards basic foods, the Soviet teacher lives better than his English colleagues.

The Soviet teacher is worse off than his English colleagues as regards housing, which is to be expected, in view of the war devastation; and women particularly are, on the whole, worse dressed, *i.e.*, clothing is poorer in quality, than that of the English teachers.

On the other hand, the Soviet teacher does not pay more and may pay less, than ten per cent of his salary as rent. He has a free medical service, which ensures the best and most specialised services that may be required. The children—the majority of women as well as men are married—receive free education up to fifteen and, if they do good work, free higher education. Pensions, sickness benefit, etc., are non-contributory. Travelling within the Soviet Union—a sixth of the land surface of the earth—is very cheap. In the clubs run by the teachers' unions they can enjoy first-class professional music and theatre, free or at little cost. A certain number of tickets to the theatre, concert hall, opera or ballet can be obtained during the year. Thus, whilst in worldly goods Soviet teachers are at present somewhat worse off than their British colleagues, in social services and in cultural opportunities they are better off.

Appendix III

THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE MEMBERS OF THE PARENTS' COMMITTEE

The chairman of the Parents' Committee sits on the School Staff Committee representing the interests of the parents.

Every member has the right to introduce for the consideration of the committee, and of the Staff Committee, questions which affect the school. The chairman of the Parents' Committee and the Head of the school must see that the matter raised is put on the agenda for the next meeting.

The decisions of the Parents' Committee, after approval by the Head, are binding on every member of the committee and must be carried out in good time. Members of the Parents' Committee who take no active part in the life of the school, on the representation of the chairman, may be recalled by those who elected them, until the next election.

The Parents' Committee is responsible to the Head of the school, and to the general meeting of school parents. The individual members

of the committee are responsible to their working committee (presidium) and to the general meeting of class parents.

The Parents' Committee must present a report to the Head not less than once a term, and to the General Meeting of School Parents twice a year.

Individual members of the committee report to the general meeting of class parents once a term and as and when required to the Parents' Committee at its meetings.

At the end of the year, before the election of the new Parents' Committee, the chairman presents a report of the committee's activity to the Staff Committee.

The Parents' Committee must keep Minutes of its meetings and of the General Meeting of school parents.

The Minutes are to be kept in a special book numbered and threaded, and must have the school stamp and the signature of the Head.

All Minutes are kept in the school.

All correspondence concerning the business of the Parents' Committee is signed by the Head of the school and the chairman of the committee.

At every committee meeting there must be a check-up to see that the decisions taken have been put into effect. The school inspectors supervise the activities of Parents' Committees and must help them in every possible way.

General guidance of Parents' Committees has been placed in the hands of the local education authorities.

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