

### III. THE MAKING OF THE TEACHER

#### The need for training

The best teachers are skilled members of an exacting profession, trained to a high level. Goodwill is a poor substitute for technical competence in teaching; academic ability cannot overcome failures in communication skills. Inadequate teaching can, quite unwittingly, reinforce the pupil's poor self-image or fail to spark his innate abilities, and neither the teacher nor the pupil may ever be aware of the avoidable tragedy caused by professional incompetence. The key to educational quality is the quality of the teaching force as a whole and individually. The need to ensure the best utilisation of national resources, develop each individual's innate capacity and improve the professional status of teachers, all reinforce the argument in favour of specialised teacher training. In many countries the presence within the profession of large numbers of teachers with inadequate education and little or no professional training prejudices the credibility of the teaching force as a professional body worthy of respect and consideration and leads to divisions within the profession: particular groups of teachers, perhaps graduates or those working in prestige schools or in further and higher education, tend to dissociate themselves from the generality of the profession in an attempt to make apparent their special claim to higher public recognition. The anomalous situation is not unknown whereby more prestige may be attached to an untrained teacher because of the level of the institution in which he is working than a trained teacher in another type of institution. Only now is the recognition growing that specific teaching skills are important and cannot be acquired by simple exposure to the working situation through a process of professional osmosis.

#### Motivations of prospective teachers

Individuals offer themselves for teacher training from a variety of motives. Some have a deep sense of vocation and wish to work in a humane situation; some see teaching as a bridge to the university or other destination of higher prestige; some come to teaching as a last resort. Those in this last category are not without merit, for they include in the developing countries many primary school leavers declared too old for secondary school and many competent secondary school leavers who do not succeed in squeezing through the narrow door to the university; in the more industrialised countries the group contains an increasing number of mature entrants to the profession who after some years reject commercial or industrial occupations and bring with them to the teaching profession a wealth of experience and practical wisdom. Many come with mixed motives and the surprising and encouraging feature is how high a proportion develop a sense of vocation out of an initial sense of resignation.

The social origins of the teaching force in any country influence educational practice. In the more industrialised countries teachers tend to come from modest backgrounds, with parents among the minor professionals or skilled craftsmen, although this pattern is changing in some countries as teaching attracts children of higher social groups. It is perhaps of interest that the majority of children of teachers do not become teachers themselves, for the teaching profession often forms a bridge enabling teachers' children to advance socially and materially where this cannot be achieved in one leap. When considering the composition of the teaching force it is noteworthy that in a significant number of countries teaching, at least at some levels, is predominantly a female profession.

## The qualities of a good teacher

The good teacher resembles the elephant in one respect: he is difficult to describe but impossible to mistake. It is obvious, however, that the competent teacher of high reputation has attributes covering all three domains of Bloom's taxonomy, cognitive, affective and psychomotor: his knowledge, attitudes and skills should match the demands of the job, and all can be affected positively by suitable training. The reputation of the teacher depends largely on the value judgments of those with whom he comes into professional contact, pupils, parents, employers, higher level teachers and other members of society. He is good in so far as he is judged to be good: objective criteria cannot be exhaustive in this regard. Nevertheless, to be competent the teacher must have knowledge - of child development, of the material to be taught and suitable methods of teaching it, of the culture of his pupils (which may not be of his own) and of some interest of his own; his skills must enable him to teach, advise and guide his pupils, administer and manage his professional activities and respond sensitively to the pupils, community and culture with which he is involved; his attitudes should be positive without being aggressive, so that his example is likely to be followed as he transmits explicitly and implicitly the national aims and ideals and moral and social values.

The good teacher is expected to obtain results but, as has already been indicated, his objectives may not coincide at every point with those of parents, pupils, employers and authorities. Success for his pupils in formal examinations, for example, remains a major consideration in many places. Whatever the level of his work the good teacher maintains a sympathetic relationship with his pupils, warmly affectionate towards younger children, understanding towards the adolescent, companionable with the adult student. While his older pupils and students may take issue with his values, his educative role will be maintained if he holds those values firmly and rationally, indicating that it is possible to disagree without ill-feeling and maintain a position without seeking to impose it arbitrarily on others. In essence, the good teacher has self-respect and professional pride.

## Selection for training

For some Commonwealth countries selection is not difficult, because the number of training places available exceeds the number of applicants with minimum entry qualifications. The question of minimum entry qualifications itself presents problems: so many legitimate exceptions can be identified to standard entry qualifications that to establish rigid regulations may exclude many valuable potential recruits. Academic qualifications should provide no more than a general guide, for many more things are necessary in a teacher than his own acquired knowledge. Many mature entrants to the profession, for example, may not have had the opportunity to acquire formal academic qualifications.

Some broad criteria, however, can be identified, including desirable academic and personal qualities. As an individual the prospective teacher should be known to have some interest in teaching and a lively mind receptive to new ideas; he should demonstrate some understanding of human relations with people of different ages. In addition to basic academic qualifications he should be free from physical characteristics likely to impede his effectiveness as a teacher. Overall, however, flexibility in interpreting entry qualifications is desirable, for in selection for teacher training, unlike the legal world, hard cases do not make bad law; they may make very good teachers.

Procedures for entry into training vary widely among Commonwealth countries. In some, students are nominated by employing authorities for training places (sometimes on a "quota" basis whereby a proportion of secondary school leavers are required to go for teacher training) and required to teach for a specified period on successful completion of their courses; in others, students have no sponsors (and consequently no guarantee of employment on completion of their training); elsewhere, modifications of these two systems obtain.

Methods of selection vary according to the nature of the entry process and the competition for places. Little indication is yet available to relate entry procedures with the performance as teachers of successful candidates; nor is control possible using unsuccessful applicants, so that little can be deduced with regard to rejected applicants who were potentially good teachers. Meanwhile, in addition to academic qualifications the evidence of an experienced interviewing panel, despite the known disadvantages of the interview as a technique, remains probably the least objectionable form of selection. Valid and reliable batteries of tests, including aptitude tests, have not yet been developed. Information concerning criteria for selection for teacher training and suitable aptitude tests could usefully be collected and made available widely: if the material readily available is inadequate a project might be developed to prepare material designed to identify the characteristics of general suitability for teaching in applicants for training places. (These characteristics would necessarily vary according to culture and projects should take account of this.) This activity might form part of a wider and more comprehensive investigation of what qualities, skills, knowledge and attitudes are necessary as an initial basis for admission into the profession, how these are best provided, where and by whom. An investigation of this nature should attempt to distinguish clearly between the characteristics which might be sought in entrants to training and those which would be expected of the successful graduates from a training course.

#### The organisation, location and patterns of training

No predominant pattern can be determined in the organisation of teacher training in Commonwealth countries. Governments (central and regional), local authorities, teachers' organisations, voluntary agencies and external aid bodies may provide training facilities recruiting generally or from specific catchment areas, on a sponsorship basis or with no specific promise of future employment. Training takes place in universities, colleges and centres, as part of a larger unit or self-contained. Teachers preparing for work in different sorts of education may or may not be trained together. Fees may or may not be charged. Pre-service and in-service provision assume different levels of importance in different countries. The compilation of a directory listing details of training and certification facilities for each Commonwealth country, periodically updated (perhaps biennially), could provide a useful course of reference. Useful research, too, could be undertaken to evaluate different organisational patterns in terms of their effectiveness in training all types of teachers. A part of such research would be the evaluation of selected training programmes in the light of the efficiency and effectiveness of new teachers in the classroom: this research might be undertaken on an interdisciplinary, international basis to facilitate an assessment of comparative data.

Different organisational patterns are inevitable since they must develop in the light of such variables as the general economic and social conditions of the area, the stage of national development, the urgency of the

need for teachers and the demand for different types of teacher. The location of the training depends to some extent upon the organisation of education. No consensus has been reached about whether teacher preparation should take place in integrated institutions such as universities or polytechnics or in institutions designed specifically for the purpose. Where training takes place in an integrated institution, the local educational and community work structures will determine whether separate provision should be made for training in the professional disciplines. In this regard, it may be noted that some success has been achieved with common-core courses designed for a range of workers likely to be involved in community development and welfare activities.

If future requirements for teachers are anticipated as far as possible the need for crash courses is minimised, although, it is true, very real success has been achieved with emergency training programmes where the entrants were both mature and highly motivated.

Much scope for training provision appears to be within the competence of teachers' organisations. As an essential part of their professional function they can influence and participate in training for their members and potential members, whether this training is initial or in-service, institutional or informal, statutory or voluntary. Subsequent problems of recognition for attendance at their courses may be overcome if the co-operation of employing authorities is sought from the beginning. Useful courses may in many cases be organised on a modest scale by teachers themselves, supported by their association's personnel, especially where they are not working in large towns or cities. As a concomitant to this acceptance of responsibility for professional training, organisations would expect in the longer term to exert principal control over entry to the profession, such control being generally accepted as one of the major criteria for the status of a profession.

While educational considerations should prevail when decisions are made regarding the organisation, location and patterns of teacher training, other factors cannot be ignored, particularly that of finance. Capital and recurrent costs of training are supplemented by the requirement to pay teachers according to the level of their training. It may be, indeed, that financial circumstances might lead to teachers, aides and auxiliaries being trained to different levels for different functions; some countries have already arrived at a degree of financial embarrassment consequent upon the existence of a highly qualified and expensive teaching force. The potential role of the para-professional merits further investigation, as does the development of training courses for teachers who it is hoped will assume a catalytic role in the community where they work.

### Pre-service training

#### (a) Purpose

The purpose of pre-service teacher education may be defined as preparing the novice to participate in his country's educational system effectively, by enabling him to acquire the necessary academic competence, skills and attitudes. The difficulty of defining the characteristics of the good teacher and the frequent absence of precise national objectives for education together compound the problems of constructing courses and establishing methodologies for the training programme. For this reason, if for no other, pre-service training must be considered only one stage in the ongoing process

of facilitating the teacher's professional growth. If pre-service training enables the new teacher to begin his career with some awareness of the situation which he is entering and with sufficient technique to avoid the most obvious pitfalls it can be deemed to have been successful. The certificate awarded at the end of a pre-service training course is less a licence to teach than a licence to learn to teach, an endorsement not of competence but potential.

#### (b) Course content and methodology

Too often course content results from accretion over time rather than an assessment of the needs of the various types of new entrant to the teaching profession. In too few instances are courses flexibly conceived to cater for differences of academic level and previous experiences between intakes and among members of the same intake. The same students who will be taught to consider the individuality of each child will often be taught themselves as a block, whether they are young people recently out of secondary school, untrained teachers with some years of experience in schools or mature newcomers to the profession with a broad experience of life. The same considerations which suggest that children should learn in small groups with common interests also point to the desirability of much pre-service training being carried out on a seminar or tutorial basis.

The temptation is great for teacher education to seek academic respectability by following closely the pattern of non-vocational university courses. It is perhaps strange that exclusively vocational university courses for other professions - medicine, engineering, the law - feel no such necessity to prove their status in this way but concentrate on imparting factual knowledge and practical skills. Evidence tends to show that educational studies do not gain in status from this manoeuvre and should therefore concentrate on doing what needs to be done. Some academic content is desirable. In those cases where entrants are of relatively low educational background it is essential, but even where the student has had a high quality of school education there is much to be said for his training to include one elective topic with a largely academic content. Teacher education is designed to produce a rounded individual, aware of the world about him and able to think and work logically and constructively. Without entering too deeply into the theories of transferability there would seem to be merit for the teacher to be exposed during his training to an academic study which is rigorous yet appropriate to his needs, different both from full degree studies in the same area and from secondary school approaches to the same topic. Opinion varies as to whether these academic studies should be necessarily related to the subjects which the student is likely to teach later; on balance this would seem to be desirable but not essential, for the attitudes and approaches learned are probably of more importance and durability than the content.

Controversy remains strong with regard to suitable proportionate divisions of course time between academic and professional aspects of the training. Much depends on the length of the course and the educational background of the student but in general it would seem that if the curriculum is to be broadened to include those areas which are now seen as of direct importance to the teacher in his work then some reduction is likely to be necessary in the non-professional aspects. The problem, as always, is not to decide what should be added to the curriculum but what can reasonably be left out. The devising of modular courses in which students can select areas of interest can help to overcome this persistent difficulty. In addition this

policy would take account of the individual differences of students. If, too, pre-service training is devised as one element in an outgoing process of teacher formation sacrifices can be more easily accepted, in the confidence that gaps can be made good through later in-service provision. The urgency of the overcrowded course is reduced and the pre-service course can be made more effective by concentrating on essentials instead of trying to cover all the ground at one time.

Initial training should provide the basic knowledge and skills necessary for the new teacher to begin his work. He must know enough about his subject to teach it; he must know enough about his students to elicit their response and he must have sufficient technique to be able to satisfy their desire to learn. Further research could usefully be undertaken to identify with some precision the basic skills and knowledge essential to beginning teachers. Particular attention might be paid to the elucidation of means by which student teachers can be oriented towards a problem-solving approach to their lives and work, so enabling them to be receptive to change and adaptable in their professional activities.

While the traditional educational foundation studies cannot be neglected, there is a strong case for additional emphasis to be placed on studies in child development (leading to studies of adolescent and adult psychologies for those whose work is likely to be among these groups) and the nature of the learning process. More research is required into these areas in many countries where insufficient is known of local factors.

Recent investigations have shown that most teachers spend an appreciable proportion of their time in administrative or managerial tasks, yet preparation to undertake these does not feature largely in pre-service training. Teacher educators should plan their courses in the recognition that even within the school the teacher must do more than teach.

The trainee teacher should be exposed to the practice of teaching during his course but opinion varies as to how this can best be done. Something is to be said for all students to have had some teaching experience before entering the course at all, so that they have at least an inkling of the situation for which they are to be prepared. During the course teaching practice may be undertaken in blocks of time ranging from one day weekly or one week each month up to a sandwich-type course with perhaps the second year of a three-year course spent in a teaching situation. The relative effectiveness of these different approaches would bear further investigation. In preparation for their teaching practice and their subsequent careers, student teachers should be given some guidance in the techniques necessary to work successfully in the less than ideal circumstances which most of them are likely to find - inadequate equipment, unsuitable buildings and furniture, crowded classes, rigid administration. As far as possible they should be prepared to withstand any "culture shock" when they move from their training location to a school.

It is urged increasingly that teachers should play an active role in the community in which they are working and so should be trained to this end. Not infrequently, however, the teacher finds himself in difficulties. Few teachers in Education Priority Areas in England, for example, live in the areas in which they work, so that the opportunity for chance informal meetings and influences does not occur, while formal involvement may be viewed with suspicion or resentment. Elsewhere, young teachers cannot advance to a position of local leadership in societies where seniority by family, age or

length of residence determine status. The paradox of the teacher in his relation to the community among which he works is that he complains often that he is expected to do too much when he is regarded as a community leader yet regrets his loss of status when the demands slacken. The solution may lie in providing the prospective teacher with the techniques necessary to establish himself as a catalyst, working in partnership with existing local leaders and other professional people to encourage and facilitate community activities without himself necessarily adopting the leadership role; leadership may thus become dispersed on a broader basis than hitherto through the community.

### (c) Qualifying and induction

In many countries the successful completion of a course of training carries with it the assumption of entry to the teaching profession. Increasingly, however, teachers' associations are seeking to control the registration of teachers, in the same way as medical, legal and engineering associations. Increasingly, too, confirmation of full status is delayed until the end of a probationary or inductive period.

The tests currently in use to determine whether students have completed their course successfully range from the traditional forms of achievement test in which factual knowledge is reproduced in formal examinations to novel systems of assessing attainment and potential. Some consideration should be given to the appropriateness of a pass/fail concept in this regard, since in many countries failure may result in the individual being placed on a lower point on the incremental scale but does not preclude him from teaching. If a "failure" may practise in the profession, either the nomenclature or the profession is at fault. Further investigations should be made into the pass/fail concept. Details of alternative forms of assessment and evaluation of individual levels of understanding, attainment and potential (not related to specific curricula) could usefully be compiled and published for the benefit of Commonwealth countries.

It is generally agreed that the year immediately after the completion of a pre-service course is crucial for the student's development as a practising teacher. This is when he endeavours to put theory into practice in a classroom and school situation. Unlike the teaching practice period he cannot hand back his responsibility when the going is bad. Although the length and precise purpose of this induction period will vary among countries it is essential in all cases to institute a deliberate and well-planned process of induction as a continuation of the training programme to give the student the opportunity to discuss, evaluate and obtain support for what he is doing in consultation with those who are best able to advise him. The costs of such support may be appreciable in absolute terms but should be considered in relation to the overall efficiency of the teaching service. For the process of induction to be successful the co-operation, involvement and support of teachers, head teachers, inspectors and college staffs are essential. They should all have a formal link with the new teacher and take responsibility for supporting him in the early stages of his career. They should, therefore, be specifically trained to carry out the induction process effectively. While fulfilling these duties inspectors should not be involved concurrently in assessment; their function at this time should be to guide and support, not to make decisions regarding the future career prospects of the new teacher. This support will be particularly necessary if the new teacher is not to lose ground and professional self-confidence in the face of his new lowly status in the educational hierarchy. His potential should be recognised and his participation encouraged.

(d) Possible areas of research and development

Much of the research completed so far in the field of education relates to specific situations and tends to have a restricted implication. More attention should perhaps be paid to wider problems affecting wider areas; in this connection the use of small interdisciplinary multinational terms may be useful to inject an element of comparative study when appropriate. As has been indicated earlier, both basic and field research is needed, the latter offering opportunities for direct participation by teachers.

Among the specific areas in which research might be useful there may be included:

- (a) the determination of the criteria of a good teacher;
- (b) the identification of the basic skills and knowledge essential to beginning teachers;
- (c) the identification of characteristics of general suitability in applicants for training places and the development of aptitude tests (to be followed up by comparisons with future performance);
- (d) the evaluation of different organisational patterns in terms of their effectiveness in training competent teachers (including comparisons between the classroom performance and training performance of new teachers);
- (e) the investigation of suitable programme balance between academic and professional content;
- (f) an evaluation of the methodology of teacher education;
- (g) a reconsideration of the pass/fail concept in teacher education;
- (h) the undertaking of studies in child development related to specific environments and the production of suitable tests of ability and aptitude to provide teachers with knowledge and skills essential for their work in providing optimally for each individual pupil.
- (i) methods of teaching in adverse circumstances;
- (j) objective criteria for the assessment of teaching practice;
- (k) means by which teachers might play the role in the community which their training expects of them, and a study of the constraints which militate against this.

Among activities which would be of value on a Commonwealth basis there may be cited:

- (a) the compilation of a directory listing details of training and certification facilities in each member country (to be updated at regular intervals);

- (b) the publication of information concerning criteria for selection and suitable tests;.
- (c) the dissemination of results of research projects and the exchange of information regarding the theory and practice of pre-service teacher training.

### In-service training

While some countries have developed integrated systems of continuing teacher education, for many the concept of in-service training is that of the emergency service compensating for deficiencies in the educational system. If teachers and schools are to continue to serve rapidly changing societies relevantly, the construction of comprehensive and structured systems of in-service training appears to be essential. For a number of Commonwealth countries this may be an academic question because unless funds and staff can be redistributed from elsewhere in the system in-service provision will not be possible. Controlling authorities should reappraise existing facilities and establish new priorities; the longer term interests of the nation may best be served by such an adjustment of educational resources even though in the short run it may appear to conflict with urgent needs. Additional resources could in some cases accrue from the encouragement and support of increased participation by teachers' organisations in the provision of in-service courses.

#### (a) Purpose and motivation

It is understandable that many teachers will require more motivation to attend courses than a sense of vocation and professional responsibility, although these should not be underestimated. The demands on the teacher change considerably during his career and in any case it is demonstrably impossible to equip him during the short years of pre-service training with all the knowledge and skills which he will require. In-service provision ensures that teachers become acquainted with new methods and new teaching and learning resources as they become available and also ensures that they can keep up to date with changes in the knowledge content of the subject-matter with which they are concerned. In-service provision can also be used to prepare serving teachers for new roles as head teachers, inspectors, counsellors or administrators. The public image of the teacher, too, is likely to benefit from his involvement in professional activities as in-service training.

Although the "fire-brigade" emphasis of in-service provision should be reduced, some activities of this sort will continue to be necessary in many countries. Teachers will have to be retrained to work in new areas, at new levels, with new technologies or with new types of pupils; poorly qualified staff will have to be upgraded; ex-teachers (such as married women) returning to the profession after an extended absence should be reoriented and updated in their knowledge and practice; part-time specialist staff need help in acquiring basic teaching skills. These emergency courses will probably need little advertising because for those whom they are designed will be highly motivated towards attendance.

This is less so with the ongoing regular in-service provision. Compulsory attendance is rarely possible although powerful inducements can be held out in terms of eligibility for promotion or the acquisition of recognised qualifications. The establishment of such a qualification obtainable on a

"credits" basis deserves consideration as a means by which a series of in-service attendances may be accumulated to an eventual goal.

(b) Location and frequency of in-service courses

No single optimum pattern can be discerned for the location of in-service courses. Universities, university extension centres, teachers' colleges, teachers' centres, schools, and such facilities as may be provided by teachers' associations can all be brought into use for the purpose. The only major criterion is that in-service provision should be brought within the reach of every teacher. In some cases this may mean taking the course to the remote area; alternatively, teachers may be posted temporarily, perhaps for periods of up to one year, to a school nearer an in-service training centre; sabbatical leave and schoolmaster-fellowships may be possible in certain countries. Finally, in-service provision can be taken to the teacher in his home through the use of the media and correspondence courses, although in this case some element of face to face contact with tutorial staff and other students is highly desirable.

The frequency and length of in-service courses will depend on both educational and administrative criteria, a balance being struck between the needs of the teacher and the staffing and financial resources which can be realistically made available.

(c) Possible areas for research and development

For many countries the need is to develop structured systems of in-service training articulated with pre-service provision and integrated into the overall educational system. Comparative studies of approaches and innovations in Commonwealth countries could assist to this end by surveying means by which problems have been tackled, such as those of communication over long distances and in scattered communities, the contribution of in-service training to a sense of cohesion in the teaching force, or the training of para-professional staff for roles in education.

Other training needs

The needs explored here relate primarily to teachers working in the institutionalised school situation with normal children and adolescents undergoing general education. Consideration of the principles and practice of the professional training of teachers is incomplete without some reference to the needs of other members of the profession such as technical teachers, specialist teachers of cultural topics; teachers of the mentally and physically handicapped; teachers of minority groups, the disturbed, maladjusted and delinquents; teachers working among immigrant or cultural or ethnic minorities; teachers in further and higher education; and teachers working in non-formal educational settings. In some of these cases, such as school teachers with specialist duties, training is often provided in their specialism after they have gained experience in a general setting; the desirability of immediate specialisation by new teachers during pre-service training is still undecided and useful research could be undertaken to assess the relative advantages of immediate and later specialising. In some cases, technical instructors and teachers in higher education particularly, professional training has so far been considered largely superfluous to their needs; only recently have universities begun to develop initiation and in-service courses for their staff members.

### Quality in education

The quality of the teaching force depends in no small measure on the quality of the training given; the key figure, then, is the teacher educator. Only if the system is sound at this level can teachers expect to reach a competence which will enable them to view as realist the aims formulated recently by the Chief Education Officer for Grenada:

"As true professionals we must strive to attain the highest standards which should be reflected in the quality of the products of the educational system and in behaviour patterns indicative of attitudes of commitment, pride and an awareness of a changing role."